

Strategic Reopening Outline

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Step 1: Define Parameters

1. Identify resources
 - a. City, state, and federal guidance
 - b. City, county, and state case counts and trends
 - i. Count total and active cases
 - ii. What are the criteria and levels of community spread?
 - c. Trends for surrounding areas
 - i. Neighboring counties
 - ii. Across state borders as applicable
2. Define Terms
 - a. Risk
 - i. What is risk?
 - ii. Who, in your church and community, are most at-risk?
 1. Homeless, English as Second Language, poor, transient, 60+, < 18 yrs, immune-suppressed, etc.
 - b. Spread
 - i. Droplet v. Aerosol
 - ii. Community; human-to-human; touch
 - iii. How long can Coronavirus live on various surfaces?
 - c. 14-day downward trend
 - i. 14 consecutive days?
 - ii. Day 14 is lower than Day 1, and it doesn't matter what happened between?
 - d. Physical distancing (be consistent!)
 - i. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 ft? Pick one, and that's your distance for all things.

Step 2: Key Community Partners (what are they doing/recommending? What are their resources/needs?)

1. City, County, State, and Tribal Health Departments
2. Local Government
3. Local Healthcare
 - a. Hospitals
 - b. Ambulance/Emergency Services
 - c. Long-term care facilities
4. Other churches and community organizations

Step 3: Define Trigger Points (what do you do if things get worse/better/remain the same?)

1. Congregational survey
 - a. Lifeway Survey <https://factsandtrends.net/2020/04/22/what-your-church-must-know-before-reopening-your-building/> (Also see bottom of page)
 - b. How informed/scared/engaged/resistant is your congregation/community?
2. Define non-negotiables => what are you **NOT** willing to risk?
3. Community indicators (What are restaurants, city buildings, parks, etc doing?)
4. When and how often do we review?
 - a. Create a decision timeline

Step 4: Protocols

1. Safety & Mitigation

- a. Major questions to ask:
 - i. Who wears, cleans, and enforces?
 - ii. What are consequences for non-compliance?
 - iii. How will we accommodate? What is within our purview?
 - iv. How do we enforce these protocols?
 - v. Are these a part of our non-negotiables?
- b. Basic things to consider:
 - i. Masks and face covers
 - ii. Gloves
 - iii. Communion
 1. Process
 2. Materials/implements
 - iv. Baptism
 - v. Offering
 - vi. Flow of traffic in space
 - vii. Spacing (this is where distance comes into play)
 - viii. Greeting rituals
 1. Do you have someone outside to greet to help people navigate new set up?
 2. How do you ensure people don't hug/high five/etc one another?
 - ix. Singing
 1. Aerosol spray isn't protected with masks and lingers longer in the air than droplets
 - x. Choirs of any kind
 1. Who washes the robes and the gloves?
 - xi. How many staff and volunteers? Who does screening?
 - xii. Training and education
 1. Proper mask application and removal
 2. Proper glove use and removal
 - xiii. Coffee and fellowship
 - xiv. Hand sanitizing stations
 1. Who sanitizes the sanitizer buttons?
 - xv. Having separate protocols for:
 1. Ushers/greeters
 2. Money counters
 3. Musicians of any kind
 4. Liturgist
 5. Preacher (if everyone is masked, are you masked?)

2. Sanitizing & Cleaning

- a. Cleaning schedule
- b. Who cleans, what do they wear, who enforces, what are consequences of non-compliance?
- c. Documentation of when and what things are cleaned
- d. Proper cleaning equipment and training
 - i. EPA approved cleaners found here: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>

- ii. Sitting time of disinfectants is CRUCIAL!
 - e. Training and education around proper cleaning techniques
 - i. New rag/wipe for every new surface (can't use same wipe for every light switch)
- 3. Response to exposure in the church
 - a. What do you do?
 - b. Who do you contact?
 - c. Who contacts you?
- 4. Alternatives & Suggestions
 - a. What other worship options do you provide? Who should use these services? (i.e. if you're at-risk please use online worship until [blank date])
 - b. Abundant communication through multiple channels
 - c. Signage around building of protocols, what's been done, and gentle reminders

Step 5: Create a multi-tiered plan

- 1. Red, Yellow, Green plans a la Iowa Annual Conference
 - a. <https://www.iaumc.org/newsdetail/iowa-annual-conference-of-the-united-methodist-church-crisis-response-re-entry-plan-13653399>

Step 6: Practice with Leadership

- 1. Run your plan with leadership to find any adjustments of what is feasible for you and your church
- 2. If any issues arise, rewrite the plan run another practice exercise on a different day

Step 7: Praise Jesus!

Other questions to consider:

- Traffic/walking patterns within your facility
 - o Are people passing through multiple rooms to get to the bathroom?
 - o Do people have to touch multiple door handles to get to where they need to go?
 - o Are there areas people are prone to congregate in?
- Who enforces what?
- What are the consequences of non-compliance at any point in your plan?

Lifeway Survey

Notes for Survey Administrator:

Swap in your church's specific names for the words in blue.

Remove any options that do not apply or that your church would not consider.

Thank you for participating in this confidential survey.

This survey includes several questions about your current feelings about returning to regular church activities when local government lifts its ban on public gatherings.

1. When our local government lifts its ban or guidance against churches meeting, which best describes your attitude toward returning to a worship service at church? Select one:
 - I will return the first opportunity we have.
 - I will return at first opportunity but with some concerns and precautions.
 - I will wait several additional weeks before I attend.
 - It may be quite a while before I return.
 - Not sure

2. In addition to our local government lifting its ban or guidance against public gatherings, are there other signals you would want to see before you return to attend a worship service at church? Select all that apply
 - Local businesses are open again
 - Local restaurant seating areas are open again
 - Schools are open again
 - The number of coronavirus cases near me is very small
 - Most social distancing recommendations have been lifted
 - None of these
 - Not sure

3. What precautions, if any, do you plan to take when you return to a worship service? Select all that apply
 - I will wear a face mask
 - I will stand and sit in places where I will be at least 6 feet from others (beyond my own family)
 - I will avoid shaking hands
 - I will avoid any physical contact
 - I will avoid crowded hallways
 - I will bring hand sanitizer
 - None of these

4. What precautions, if any, do you expect our church to take for worship gatherings? Select all that apply
 - Limit handouts of any kind (e.g., [worship guide](#), notes pages, etc.)
 - Use a new method for distributing [Lord's Supper](#) elements
 - Use a new method for collecting tithes and offerings
 - Encourage social distancing in [sanctuary](#) seating
 - Encourage social distancing in [small group](#) seating
 - Prop doors open so people do not have to touch handles
 - Set up one-way foot traffic entering and exiting the building and [sanctuary](#)
 - Provide hand sanitizer stations

- Discourage shaking hands
- Allow a longer period of time between worship service hours
- Other _____
- None of these

5. Would you be willing to attend your **small group** where it typically meets?

- Yes
- Not right away
- I do not have a **small group**

6. Do you have children age 18 or younger who live with you and typically attend church with you?

- Yes
- No

Ask if Q6=Yes

7. Would you allow your child(ren) to attend their **small group** where it typically meets?

- Yes
- Not right away
- My children do not typically attend a **small group**

Ask if Q6=Yes

8. What precautions, if any, do you expect the church to take in children's and student **small groups** when they resume? Select all that apply

- Reduce the number of people in each room or move to a larger room
- Seat children where they cannot touch each other
- Prohibit snacks that would cause children to put their hands to their mouths
- Require teachers to wear face masks
- Encourage kids to wear face masks
- Require teachers to wear gloves
- Ask kids to use hand sanitizer before entering
- Plan activities in which kids do not need to touch each other
- Other _____
- None of these

9. Which of the following describes the attendance level at which you would be comfortable attending a worship service?

I would be comfortable attending if the **sanctuary** is...

- Filled to capacity (every seat taken)
- Three-quarters filled (some empty seats throughout but no empty rows)
- Half filled (most people have empty seats either beside them or in front of them)
- One quarter filled (most people have empty seats beside them and in front of them)
- None of these (at least right away)

10. When our local government lifts its ban or guidance against public gatherings, which of the following would you prefer for our church?

- Resume in person worship services at our church immediately

- Meet in small groups in homes for a few more weeks before resuming in person worship services
- Not sure

11. Would you be willing to attend a worship service at a different time than you typically attend to allow people to be more spread out in the [sanctuary](#)?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

12. Would you be willing to attend a worship service in an overflow room to ensure people (in the [sanctuary](#) and overflow rooms) are spread out?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

13. How long have you been attending?

- I am new in 2020
- Less than 2 years
- 2-4 years
- 5-9 years
- 10+ years
- I don't remember

14. What is your age?

- Less than 18
- 18-29
- 30-49
- 50-69
- 70+
- I prefer not to answer