



# The Grace Temple Baptist Church COVID-19 Reopening Plan



SINCE MARCH 15TH, our world has been at the mercy of a coronavirus (COVID-19) causing our church building to remain closed for worship services and other ministry meetings. As a result, we have had to shift to online streaming and our parking lot for worship, and virtual meeting platforms for ministry meetings and Bible Study. We have also had to cancel all “in-building” events and have tried to maintain connection with our church community through phone calls, video conferencing, texts, emails, and car parades.

During these unprecedented times, what I’ve come to realize is nothing compares to gathering together in our church building. For the past few months, I have been meeting with our Reopening Committee comprised of clergy, health professionals, building managers, technologists, and key administrators. We have been meeting to assure that when our building reopens, we will offer our members the safest possible plan for indoor public worship. We have closely followed the news and have used recommendations from the Center for Disease Control’s (CDC) as our guide to ensure the safety of everyone who will come inside.

Honestly, we know everything we have planned can be changed at any moment. A resurgence of infections can send us back to square one. What we have learned, however, is this virus does not discriminate. So, as we prepare to reopen, we caution those who have pre-existing conditions to be even more careful if they intend to attend indoor worship. As a 105-year-old, multi-generational church, some may fall into this category.

Here we present to you our official plan for re-opening our church building for public worship. I ask that you read it thoroughly and if possible, join us for worship indoors. Also, be patient during this process and know that whether we gather in the building, our parking lot, or online, we are still a church united, and we will remain that way as we slowly begin to gather inside once again. Remember the words of the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Philippians: “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:4-7)

May the peace of God dwell richly in you and your household.

Be safe and blessed,

Pastor Charles L. McNeil, Sr.





## GTBC Reopening Plan for Public Worship

### Gathering In Our Building

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On **August 2nd**, Grace Temple Baptist Church members will ease back into indoor gathering for worship. The Reopening Committee has considered many precautions in preparation. To be successful, your help is needed. This means, strictly practicing social distance, pre-registering for a seat in worship, wearing face masks, continually using hand sanitizer, and not touching doors or handles unless necessary.

Anyone allowed inside the church building must adhere to the following mandatory rules:

- A face mask must be worn at all times. (A limited number of masks will be available for those who may not have one.)
- Maintain adequate social distancing of at least 6 feet apart. (This does not apply to family members of the same household.)
- Bring your own hand sanitizer or visit the sanitizer stations located throughout the building.
- Adhere to a health screening prior to entering.
- Temperatures will be taken.
- Bring their own Bible and notepads.
- Hand-held fans will be single use only and must be disposed of after use.

NOTE: We would gladly accept donations of hand sanitizer, wipes, Lysol, etc. You can drop them off in the buckets available in each worship location.

#### Worship Services Times and Locations

We will continue providing YouTube, Facebook, and phone conference line. Hymn books and Bibles have been removed from the pews and only a limited amount of church fans will be made available and must be discarded after use. Each person is encouraged to bring their own Bibles and hand-fans. Neither will be given out in church. Beginning August 2nd, worship services will take place as follows:

**Service Time: 10:00 a.m.** (Health Entry Checks will begin at 9:00 a.m.)

**Location: Main Sanctuary**

For seniors aged 60 and above or those with pre-existing health conditions.

**Service Time: 10:00 a.m.** (Health Entry Checks will begin at 9:00 a.m.)

**Location: Fellowship Hall**

For families who live together and those 59 and younger without pre-existing health conditions.

NOTE: Each worship location will be disinfected and cleaned prior to services. If you would like to serve on the cleaning team, please call the church office. We will still have our services online for those who are high risk, or just not ready to return to in-building service yet.





# GTBC Reopening Plan for Public Worship

## Church Building Guidelines

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### **Mandatory Health Screening**

Before entering the building, each person must go through a mandatory health screening. Since each person has a responsibility to look out for the welfare of others, if you suspect that you or a member of your family have COVID-19 symptoms, stay home until the period has expired and/or testing has occurred.

### **Reserved Seating**

Be advised that seating will be limited. Each seat in both worship locations will be marked. Group seating will only be available to families that live together. Each person must pre-register for service and location. All seats will be on a first-come, first-served basis. To be guaranteed a seat, register by calling the Church at: 856-546-6130 or online at: [www.gracetemplebaptist.org](http://www.gracetemplebaptist.org).

### **Entering and Leaving**

In order to follow proper distancing guidelines in the sanctuary, ushers will make sure people are seated according to safety guidelines. We will clearly identify and specify “entrance” and “exit” doors. Please refrain from gathering in the narthex, giving handshakes, fist bumps or hugs. We will also discontinue meet and greet times in worship and maintain social distancing at all times.

### **Bathrooms and Water Fountains**

Bathroom use will be for one person at a time unless accompanying a child. All bathrooms will be sanitized after each use. The upstairs bathroom will only be available to those worshipping in the main sanctuary. The downstairs bathroom will only be available to those worshipping in the fellowship hall. Water fountains will be off-limits. Bottled waters will be available instead.

### **Housekeeping**

Prior to reopening, the church will be professionally sanitized, and in between services, pews, chairs, doors, doorknobs, bathrooms, etc. will be cleaned/disinfected.

### **Communion and Baptisms**

Upon entering the building on first Sunday, each person will receive a disposable, prepackaged communion set as preparation for the communal Lord's Suppers. Baptisms will be cancelled until further notice.

### **Tithes/Offerings**

Giving Stations will be located in each location where you will be able to drop your tithes/offering upon entering or leaving the building. We also encourage you to continue online giving, drop offs, and mail-in for tithes/offerings.

### **Transportation Service**

Those requesting van service must pre-register through the church. A limited number of people will be allowed in the van per service.

### **Worship Music**

Choirs and rehearsals will be temporarily cancelled until further notice. A rotating praise team will be used during worship services.



## GTBC Reopening Plan for Public Worship Meetings and Events

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Bible Studies, Sunday School, business and ministry meetings, or any other planned event will continue but virtually as scheduled below:

Event	Day and Time	Platform
Women's Conference Call	1st Mondays @ 7:00pm Call: 605-472-5416 Code: 694107	Audio
Reopening Committee Meeting	Tuesdays @ 7:30pm Call: 872-240-3311 Code: 584698141	Audio & Video
Prayer Meeting	Tuesdays & Thursdays @ 12noon Call: 605-472-5416 Code: 694107	Audio
Stewards Ministry	2nd Tuesdays @ 7:00pm Call: 872-240-3311 Code: 584698141	Audio & Video
Youth Leadership Meeting	2nd Tuesdays @ 7:00pm Call: 605-472-5416 Code: 694107	Audio
Women's Leadership Meeting	3rd Tuesdays @ 7:00pm Call: 605-472-5416 Code: 694107	Audio & Video
Pastor's Bible Study	Wednesdays @ 7:00pm Call: 872-240-3311 Code: 584698141	Audio & Video
Elders' Council Meeting	2nd Thursdays @ 7:00pm Call: 872-240-3311 Code: 584698141	Audio & Video
Deacon's Meeting	3rd Thursdays @ 7:00pm Call: 872-240-3311 Code: 584698141	Audio & Video
Clergy Meeting	4th Thursdays @ 7:00pm Call: 872-240-3311 Code: 584698141	Audio & Video
Youth Fellowship	4th Fridays @ 7:00pm Call: 872-240-3311 Code: 584698141	Audio & Video



## GTBC Reopening Plan for Public Worship

### Revised Calendar of Events

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Day	Date	Time(s)	Event	Location
<b>AUGUST</b>				
Sunday	2	10am	Worship	In-Building, Online, and Phone
Sunday	9	10am	Worship	In-Building, Online, and Phone
Sunday	16	10am	Worship	In-Building, Online, and Phone
Sunday	23	10am	Worship	In-Building, Online, and Phone
Sunday	30	10am	Worship	In-Building, Online, and Phone
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>				
Sunday	6	9am and 11:30am*	Worship	In-Building, Online, and Phone
Sunday	13	9am and 11:30am*	Worship	In-Building, Online, and Phone
Sunday	20	9am and 11:30am*	Worship	In-Building, Online, and Phone
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>9am and 11:30am*</b>	<b>Pastor's Anniversary</b>	<b>In-Building, Online, and Phone</b>
<b>OCTOBER</b>				
Sunday	4	9am and 11:30am*	Worship	In-Building, Online, and Phone
Sunday	11	9am and 11:30am*	Worship	In-Building, Online, and Phone
Sunday	18	9am and 11:30am*	Worship	In-Building, Online, and Phone
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>9am and 11:30am*</b>	<b>Church Anniversary</b>	<b>In-Building, Online, and Phone</b>
<b>NOVEMBER</b>				
Sunday	1	9am and 11:30am*	Worship	In-Building, Online, and Phone
Sunday	8	9am and 11:30am*	Worship	In-Building, Online, and Phone
Sunday	15	9am and 11:30am*	Worship	In-Building, Online, and Phone
Sunday	22	9am and 11:30am*	Worship	In-Building, Online, and Phone
Sunday	29	9am and 11:30am*	Worship	In-Building, Online, and Phone
<b>DECEMBER</b>				
Sunday	6	9am and 11:30am*	Worship	In-Building, Online, and Phone
Sunday	13	9am and 11:30am*	Worship	In-Building, Online, and Phone
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>9am and 11:30am*</b>	<b>Christmas Service</b>	<b>In-Building, Online, and Phone</b>
Sunday	27	9am and 11:30am*	Worship	In-Building, Online, and Phone
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>10pm</b>	<b>Watchnight Service**</b>	<b>In-Building, Online, and Phone</b>

\* Hours subject to change.

\*\* Event subject to change to virtual.

# FAQS

FREQUENTLY  
ASKED  
QUESTIONS

**How will we make sure people are not sitting too close to one another?**

We will utilize the CDC recommendation of 6' per person separation guideline. Every other pew has been blocked off for use. Family units, defined as people residing in the same home, can sit together.

**What if more people show up than we can accommodate in the sanctuary?**

Each member will be encouraged to register for service to guarantee a seat. All visitors will be guaranteed a seat.

**Where do I enter?**

We will limit access into the building to the front doors for the sanctuary for those worshipping in the sanctuary and the downstairs entrance for those worshipping in the Fellowship Hall.

**Should I wear a mask?**

According to the CDC, face coverings reduces the potential for transmission of the COVID-19 virus. Face coverings will be made mandatory for entrance into the building. We will have a limited number of masks available. (Masks are not guaranteed, so please bring your own).

**Will the bathrooms be open?**

Yes, but will be limited to one person at a time, unless accompanying a child. They will be cleaned after each use.

**How will the offering be received?**

Offering plates will not be passed between congregants. Giving Stations will be established in each location for tithes/offering drop-in.

**What about Communion?**

Communion trays will not be passed between congregants. Upon entering, each person will be given a disposable, prepackaged communion set.

**Will there still be Children's Church?**

There will be no Children's Church until further notice.

**What happens at the conclusion of the service?**

We know that you may want to stay and visit, however, you are requested to maintain social distancing while moving to your cars using any exit from the sanctuary. There will be no gatherings in the narthex.

**Who do I contact if I have questions I need answered before returning to church?**

You are encouraged to talk to your deacon or call the office with any questions.

**Special Thanks to the  
Grace Temple Baptist Church  
Reopening Committee**

Deacon Dwight Anderson  
Dr. Jacqueline Cooke  
Carla Davis  
Deacon John Emerson  
Pastor Cheryl Gourdine  
Erica Lacey  
Pastor Charles McNeil  
Dr. Lisa Reid-Johnson  
Deacon Sam Tillery  
Rev. Lawrence Scott  
Reggie Selden  
Dawn Walker



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**TRANSFORMING LIVES TO REFLECT GOD'S KINGDOM**

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