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To: BSBC Deacon Body
Date: August 4, 2020
Subject: Options for Worship during Current Health Crisis

Top Sheet Summary

Current situation: Due to the current health crisis, we have modified our means of Worship. We have sought to continue active and nurturing forms of worship while also discerning the most effective ways to do so and provide for the safety of the church family. Initially, a pre-recorded service was created and sent out. Now, Drive-in Worship and Zoom worship are the ways in which we have returned to live forms of worship. Going into the coming months, we are now needing to discern what the plans for BSBC should be. The Transition team was tasked to compile options/considerations for our next steps and to make a recommendation to the deacons.

Phases of Worship:¹

- ⇒ Phase 1: Drive-in Worship & Zoom Worship
- ⇒ Phase 2: Outdoor Worship & Zoom Worship
- ⇒ Phase 3: Modified Indoor Worship
- ⇒ Phase 4: Modified Sanctuary Worship
- ⇒ Phase 5: Sanctuary Worship

Primary Recommendation of the Transition Team: At this time, the transition team recommends that BSBC adopt a phased progression in how we engage in Worship and that we avoid having services in the sanctuary and that we either remain in Phase 1 or transition to Phase 2.

Significant Recommendations/Points of Information:

- In all Phases of reopening, it is to be expressed that maintaining a physical distancing of at least 10 ft. between sitting families should be maintained
- We will follow the state mandatory requirement for wearing masks for all phases of transitioning back into the church facilities.
- All modified services should be kept to approximately 30-40 minutes.
- All indoor services would be considered “full” when 25 % capacity (approx. 100 in the sanctuary) has been reached and no one else allowed in and any after capacity would have to join by another available option.
- The LEC and the Fellowship Hall will not be used because of the COVID-19 restrictions for the Daycare from the NCDHHS

¹ These phases are subject to change based upon the trends in our area.

Phase 1: Drive-in Worship & Zoom Worship

This option allows for two live worship opportunities: on the church grounds through a Drive-in style and virtually over Zoom. These two worship services will not meet at the same time to allow staff to assist at one or both services and for church members who wish to attend both to do so as well. Both services are also recorded and made available for others to view later.

Drive-in Worship:

- Coordinated by Pastor Keith McKinney
- Masks provided for those who may need to get out of their cars
- Hand sanitizing stations available
- Opportunity to give offering
- Lasts approx. 30 minutes

Zoom Worship:

- Coordinated by Assoc. Pastor Candy Wilson
- Lasts approx.. 30-35 minutes

Is this a safe option currently?

⇒ Yes

Why?

⇒ This option limits the amount of in-person contact while also providing a live, enriching worship experience. This is our current mode of worship and it appears to be serving many if not most of our church family along with others who have been able to join.

Pros

- Natural physical distancing
- Limited to no contact between people in different cars
- Able to be present in a shared space with church family

Cons

- Continual running of cars

Phase 2: Outdoor Worship & Zoom Worship

This worship service would incorporate a way for people in chairs to hear the service along with the people in vehicles. An area for outside seating would be designated for individuals to bring their own chairs in the Prayer Garden. Families would be asked to maintain 10 ft. between their seating area and the seating area of other families. There are ample areas of shading to put chairs and keep proper distancing. Masks should be worn by those who choose to sit outside their cars.

Zoom Worship would also continue as described in Option 1.

Is this a safe option currently?

⇒ Moderately

Why?

⇒ This option increases the chance of exposure since we are gathering together in relatively close proximity, but the open-air area provides for excellent “air exchange” and less of a risk of transmission than sitting together inside.

Pros

- Allowing others to have distanced but greater amounts of interaction with each other
- May give some a greater sense of gathering together
- Does not pose same level of risk as gathering in an enclosed space

Cons

- Decreases the number of protective barriers that slow spread of infections
- Dependent on the weather
- Additional logistical complexity

Phase 3: Modified Indoor Worship

This service would incorporate many different ways for any who wish to come on the campus to be a part of the service.

- People could drive-in and tune-in to the service on their car radio
- Outside seating as described in Phase 2
- One room, not the sanctuary, would offer a live stream view of the pulpit area that all who wish to wear a mask could go
- Another room, not the sanctuary, would offer a live stream for those who do not wish to wear a mask
- The same live stream service would be available to those who wish to view the service in their home
- Physical distancing will still be maintained in all seating arrangements.

With this option, the in-person service would occur at 9:00 AM and Zoom Worship would continue to occur at 11:00 AM.

Is this a safe option currently?

⇒ Moderately to Less Safe

Why?

⇒ Given the current trends within Cleveland County, this option does put the BSBC community at a greater risk for an outbreak within our church family. Meeting indoors increases the chance of transmission. The group who chooses not to wear masks would take significant risk of transmission if anyone came and unknowingly passed COVID. To ensure the protection of all, the rooms used would need to be on separate HVAC units.

Pros

- Allows for the possibility to meet indoors
- Variety of ways in which people can participate in worship
- Provides a sense of “normalcy”
- Rooms that are on separate air systems would not cause cross-contamination
- Certain rooms in the Church are on separate air circulation units

Cons

- Significantly increases likelihood and ease of infectious spread
- All areas used would require sterilization after the service
- Logistically complex
- The LEC is unavailable as a possible space
- No childcare would be available

Phase 4: Modified Sanctuary Worship

This service would be held in the sanctuary with separate seating available for masked folks and non-masked folks. This option will also require proper distancing as well.

Is this a safe option currently?

⇒ Not at the current time.

Why?

⇒ Given the current trends within Cleveland County, this option does put the BSBC community at a greater risk for an outbreak within our church family.

When would this be a safer option?

- ⇒ Once there has been a 14-day decline in the number of cases in our area
 - ⇒ After the Gardner-Webb student population has returned and we see what impact they will have on the infections in the community
 - ⇒ Cases of positive tests are sustained at a rate of 5% or less
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Pros

- Having a singular worship service

Cons

- High chance of infection
 - Enclosed space where everyone is breathing the same air
 - Modifications to air system would help this issue, but not completely eliminate
 - Placing masked individuals and unmasked individuals in the same room would put both groups of people at risk because there would be a group of unmasked individuals.
- Exposure of the staff
- Though we will be together, it would not be the same
 - People would likely still be unsatisfied
- Would need to screen individuals as they came to the service for temperatures and symptoms

Phase 5: Sanctuary Worship

This service would be return to the normal form of worship that was available prior to the outbreak.

Is this a safe option currently?

⇒ No

Why?

⇒ Due to the current level of cases in the area, choosing this option would greatly increase the risk of transmission and an outbreak within our church family.

When would this be a safer option?

⇒ Once the above criteria have been met and the NCDHHS and CDC indicate that in-person gatherings of this size and in this manner do not pose a significant risk for an outbreak.

Recommendation of the Transition Team

The current situation requires significant discernment and creativity for us to be able to navigate the current health crisis, continue ministering to our church family, and continue to spread the Gospel through our community and the world. However, this is not impossible. The BSBC Transition team advises that we avoid having services in the sanctuary and that we either remain in Phase 1 or transition to Phase 2. Based on the current viral trends in our area, Phases 3 and beyond pose a significant risk for our church community.