

ROADMAP FOR REOPENING OF SOUTHPORT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FACILITIES

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven. Ecclesiastes 3:1

For people all over the world, including us at Southport Presbyterian Church, this has been a season of change. The Reopening Task Force has been given the responsibility to create a plan for church activities during this time of change.

We are guided by the core values of Southport Presbyterian Church:

- ***Celebrating a God whose love never fails.*** The Good News of Christ is not silenced by the shuttering of the church building. We continue to celebrate God's love and to be a vibrant community of faith. We discover new ways to worship, communicate, and care, both together and apart.
- ***Embracing and supporting all people at any stage of life.*** Keeping people healthy is our vital priority. The physical, social, and spiritual needs of individuals differ, so their comfort and ability to engage in activities will also differ. We stress the importance of diverse and personal timetables for face-to-face re-entry.
- ***Nurturing growth in each unique faith journey.*** We will be adaptable, flexible, and patient as we meet peoples' various needs. Therefore, our plans for re-opening are thoughtful and clear, but not rigid. As we go forward, we may discover the need to adjust our plan.
- ***Serving others with humility, compassion, and justice.*** We continue to see our mission as outward-focused. We seek not only to care for our church family, but to seek justice and protect the vulnerable in our community and beyond.

With these core values, the Reopening Task Force offers the following Roadmap for Reopening Southport Presbyterian Church Facilities.

Faithfully submitted by:

Mike Blau	John Ferraro	Pastor Ann Jahnes
Linda Daily	Laura Cacchione	Pastor Joanna Hipp
Joe Lhotsky		

July 27, 2020

INTRODUCTION

This Roadmap was developed by the Reopening Task Force (RTF) established by Session and is in compliance with Federal, State, County and Local Government regulations/guidelines for reopening of church facilities. The RTF obtained information from the various governmental agencies and municipalities which have authority over the activities of our church in Southport as well as guidance documentation. The RTF also acquired guidance documents from PCUSA and the Coastal Carolina Presbytery.

The Roadmap was created with the concept of ultimately reopening the church for worship services, classes and meetings while also maintaining a virtual presence for the church. The Roadmap provides for a “phased” reopening of the church facilities, however, the Roadmap does not include projected dates for each Phase since we will not know if we have reached that point until certain milestones have been reached to enable the church to move into that Phase. The Phases reflect what Pastor Ann called the “Trickle in Theory of Return.” It starts small and works to larger and more expansive use of the church facility. The RTF will be monitoring ongoing regulations and guidance from the government and church authorities as well as statistics relating to COVID-19 in the County, the local municipalities and throughout the state and region in the assessment of moving into the various Phases as included in this Roadmap. The RTF will determine when it is appropriate to move between Phases and that decision will be communicated to the church family.

The RTF believes that it is important to impress upon our congregation that participation in every form of worship available from Southport Presbyterian Church is respected and that no person should feel pressure or any obligation to attend worship in the church until they are comfortable in that decision.

ESTABLISH POLICIES/PROCEDURES TO CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR CONGREGATION, STAFF AND VISITORS

In order to start the development of a Roadmap for any activity within the church, it is necessary to take the following steps to assess the requirements for each Phase.

- General Inspection of property to determine issues throughout facility.
- Identify areas to be used by congregation, staff, and visitors/renters in each phase.
- Identify areas that are not essential and should not be needed or occupied in each phase.
- Restrict access to areas deemed not essential.
- Appropriate cleaning of areas to be utilized in church facility.
- Maintain appropriate cleaning in areas identified in each subsequent Phase. Develop a schedule of increased, routine cleaning and disinfection.
- Promote healthy hygiene practices.
- Require use of face masks while in church property. Face coverings are essential when physical distancing is difficult or cannot be guaranteed and will be mandatory at all times within the church facility. Obtain an inventory of face masks to provide to people coming to the church but impress upon everyone to bring their own face mask.
- Encourage staff and congregants to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or inside of their elbow.

- Preregistration for all activities to assure appropriate numbers of participants for each Phase and to maintain lists of people in the church facility (names, phone number and email address) should contact tracing be necessary.
- Document attendance of each staff member, congregant, and visitor/contractor daily.
- Remove frequently touched and shared items and items not easily cleaned and disinfected from pews and other areas of the church facility (hymnals, Bibles, envelopes, prayer cards, pencils, nametags, etc.).
- Promote physical distancing by limiting the size of gatherings and providing physical guides on floor and in sitting areas.
- Encourage staff and congregants who are sick to remain home.
- Temperature checks will not occur to gain access to the church. However, a thermometer will be purchased and available to the hosts should they determine that it is in the best interest of the participant that their temperature must be taken.

PRACTICES FOR GATHERED WORSHIP

The ultimate goal of the RTF Roadmap is to provide the congregation and visitors the opportunity to worship in the church. The Roadmap provides the following as requirements in each of the Phases, with the exception of Phase 1. The Phases are described later in this Roadmap.

Reference to the term “attend service” means in-church attendance and not virtual attendance. The following shall apply to all gathered worship noted in the Phases in this Roadmap.

- Worship service shall be thirty (30) to forty (40) minutes in length (less than one hour).
- The time of worship shall remain as usual schedule. 10 a.m. during June, July, and August. 11 a.m. during the remaining nine months.
- The church shall maintain a virtual (on-line) presence.
- Face masks shall be worn at all times when a person is in the church facility and participating in worship, classes, counseling, etc. Children under the age of six (6) shall be exempt from wearing a face mask. Request that participants bring their own face masks and hand sanitizer.
- The Pastor, Associate Pastor, Music Director, worship leaders and anyone in the chancel area shall wear face masks when not speaking, singing or playing an instrument.
- Participants will be asked to bring their own hand sanitizer.
- Church will procure masks and hand sanitizer for those participants who do not bring these items.
- Physical distancing shall be maintained to the greatest extent possible. During worship service, locations where people will sit will be designated so as to maintain social distancing.
- That portion of the church facility to be utilized for in person activities shall be cleaned per CDC guidance (on Friday before worship on Sunday and appropriate days associated with other use of the church facility). The cleaning company utilized by SPC is

knowledgeable of the CDC guidelines, is performing cleaning for other entities per such guidelines and has been contracted by SPC to perform such cleaning in our church.

- Maximum capacity shall be established during each Phase in order to maintain physical distancing.
- The maximum capacity established shall include a number for members of the church and another number for visitors desirous of attending worship at SPC. The maximum also takes into account worship leaders.
- Preregistration is required for congregants to attend worship service. Congregants, for the purposes of this Roadmap, are members of the church, their family members, friends and neighbors and people who are not members but are regular visitors to the church for worship. Hosts, greeters and ushers shall also fall into the category of congregants and shall be preregistered by the church member who scheduled their participation in the service. Preregistration is not required for new visitors since the number of visitors who may attend worship service is limited. Those walk-in visitors will be registered at the desk.
- In order to assure that congregants who want to attend worship service have that opportunity, the preregistration sheet will be reviewed and congregants who have not had the opportunity to attend worship service will have priority.
- To assure that everyone who so desires is able to attend worship, it is likely attendance will be restricted to twice per month. The RTF will evaluate attendance to determine if it is necessary to maintain this restriction.
- Doors shall be designated for ingress and egress to limit the amount of contact and to maintain physical distancing. The doors will be marked as well as where people may stand while waiting to gain entrance to the church.
- Use of the bathrooms will be discouraged. Sanitizing wipes shall be placed at the doors to the bathrooms. Doors to the bathrooms will be propped open.
- Bulletins will be sent out with Friday's Eblast and participants for the Sunday service will be asked to bring copies with them. Additional copies will be produced, and one placed in locations where participants directed to sit.
- "Roadmap" explanation will be sent in multiple Eblast and a "Welcome Back" snail mail letter prior to the commencement of gathered worship.
- The RTF will determine when it is safe to commence Communion.
- No passing of offering plates. Offering plates to be located on tables in back of the Sanctuary.
- No Passing of Peace by physical touch.
- A "Covenant of Care" shall be developed which will serve as an agreement between the church and individuals in the congregation to abide by the regulations and guidance established in this Roadmap. The Covenant of Care is designed to provide for voluntary compliance with the regulations and guidance in the Roadmap. The Covenant of Care is included with this Roadmap as Appendix A.
- Socialization after worship shall be discouraged in the church.
- It is the hope that enforcement of the Roadmap regulations and guidance will not be necessary; however, should enforcement be required, the person not in conformance will be informed of the regulation or guidance and asked to comply. Should the request not

prompt compliance, the person will be informed that failure to comply will result in worship being closed down and should compliance once again not occur, the worship service will be closed down immediately.

- Gathered worship, per this Roadmap, is a labor-intensive undertaking. The RTF will be requesting the assistance of Elders, Deacons and other volunteers and training will be provided for people who agree to assist the RTF with this Roadmap.
- Volunteers will be asked to fill the following positions:
 - Greeters – to be stationed outdoors (weather permitting) or indoors to guide participants in gathered worship to where they should then go once inside the Narthex or other entrance area (Phases 3 and 4), to answer questions and provide masks when necessary.
 - Hosts at Narthex table and other entrance areas (Phases 3 and 4) to check people in should a need arise for contact tracing.
 - Ushers – all gathered worship participants will be ushered to their seats.
 - Parking lot hosts – to be stationed at the entrances to the parking lots to direct people to appropriate parking areas in Phase 4.

COMMUNICATIONS

Communication will be imperative. Clear, consistent compassionate communications with members, visitors, staff, and renters will commence regarding reopening and shall continue during each Phase. Care will be taken to communicate that personal and community safety is our major concern. Communication will impress that participation in all forms of worship as individuals or groups, together or apart, online or in-person is respected. Specific re-opening messages will be derived from Task Force deliberations. Staff and members of Administration and Communications Ministry will distribute messages according to most appropriate Communications Plan channels. Staff, Elders, Deacons, and members of the RTF will reinforce messaging.

Upon approval of the Roadmap by Session the following actions will continue/begin:

- Weekly communications including e-blasts, website notices and member care calls/emails will continue to specify changes in use of facilities and necessary requirements.
- Staff will be regularly updated on safety precautions, requirements, and new developments.
- Office voice mail will be adjusted as i.e. regular office hours, worship and other activities resume.
- Messages and signs intended for people entering/using the facilities will stress 3 W's: "wear" a mask, "wash" hands and "wait" – physical distancing and be posted at entrances, exits, lavatories and kitchen area. Please stay at home if sick.
- A personal "decision tree" will be developed and shared with the congregation which will focus on the importance of each person making his/her own decision as to when they feel they are comfortable returning to church, since we are responsible for our own health decisions and these need to be respected by all. The "decision tree" is a self-assessment

of readiness to rejoin “in-facility” gatherings and is a way to communicate “safety features” in place at SPC.

- A worship preregistration webform will be designed to manage the physical distancing requirements.
- Gratitude will be expressed for cooperation during each of these changes.

As Phases may not be linear, messages will alert the congregation to any setbacks. Setback examples include new stay at home orders by federal, state, or local governments; a participants’ diagnosis of COVID 19; or a request to assist in contact tracing following a diagnosis. Should a diagnosis be made known, each participant at that event will receive an email or telephone call stating they may have been exposed. Care will be taken to protect the privacy of the infected participant.

In regard to contractors working in the church and renters of space within the church, rental agreements and contracts will be reviewed/ revised to specify safety measures required, as well as describe safety precautions taken by SPC.

PHASES OF OPENING

In the process of reopening of the SPC church facility, the RTF is striving to create a welcoming environment for our congregants and visitors that is also as safe as possible and conforms to all CDC, Federal, State, County, Local, and Presbytery guidelines and recommendations concerning the COVID 19 pandemic. Please note the following from the North Carolina Safer at Home: Phase 2 COVID-19 restrictions (Executive Order 147). *Exempts houses of worship from stated limits of maximum of ten people for indoor events due to constitutional amendments guaranteeing Freedom of Religion. Mass gatherings are limited to fifty percent (50%) of room capacity if physical distancing and wearing of face masks are enforced.*

There may be specific requests or circumstances that are not incorporated into this Roadmap. The RTF shall address these matters on a case by case basis and shall have the authority to grant or deny the request.

There are five major areas for consideration

- Sunday Worship
- Spiritual Activities
 - Prayer time
 - Baptism
 - Weddings
 - Funerals/Memorials
 - Sunday School
 - Bible Studies
 - Children's activities or childcare

- Meetings
- Office Hours
- Outside Groups

PHASE 0 – Current condition

- Sunday Worship – Virtual Service only
- Spiritual Activities
 - Prayer time – Not available
 - Baptism – Not available
 - Weddings – Not available
 - Funerals/Memorials – Not available
 - Sunday School – Not available
 - Bible Studies – Virtual only
 - No childcare provided – Sunday Children's activities suspended
- Meetings – Virtual only
- Office Hours – Staff in church facility when they deem it necessary
- Outside Groups - Not available

PHASE 1 - OPENING OF SANCTUARY FOR PERSONAL PRAYER

One day per week, the sanctuary will be available for personal prayer for either individuals or families. The specifics of this reopening concept are:

- The sanctuary would be made available on selected days from 9:30 a.m. through 12:30 p.m. for periods of twenty minutes (six time slots), with ten-minute intervals between prayer sessions.
- People/families desiring to participate would sign up ahead of time for time slots.
- Notice would be provided from the church via email of the person/family and their time slot.
- Time slots would be noted on specific pews so that no one would be sitting in the same pew used by another prior to their opportunity for prayer.
- The person/family coming to the prayer sessions would enter through one door and exit through another door.
- Participants in the prayer session must wear a face mask during their entire time in the church.
- A person or persons representing the church would serve as shepherds and would perform the following:
 - Welcome and provide guidance when necessary
 - Maintain a register of names of persons participating in prayer on that day
 - Sound a bell or provide other form of notice at the end of the twenty-minute prayer period
- The time slot for the shepherd(s) would be 9:15 to 11:00 and 11:00 to 12:30 or 9:15 to 12:30, depending upon the number of volunteers willing to service as shepherds.

- All other church activities included in Phase 0 shall remain as noted.

PHASE 2 – UTILIZING OUTDOOR CHURCH PROPERTY FOR SMALL GROUPS

Small group (maximum of ten people) outside on the church property. A small group would consist of seven participants and two or three hosts. The small group sessions would include prayer groups, small committees, work groups and youth groups. The specifics of this reopening concept are:

- Participants must pre-register with the church office and the person serving as host(s) shall inform the church office where the participants will be conducting the event.
- Participants must wear their face masks.
- Participants must bring their own chairs. The rockers outside of the Fellowship Hall will not be available for use.
- The bathrooms inside of the church will not be available for participants.
- All other church activities included in Phases 0 and 1 shall remain as noted.

PHASE 3 – GATHERED WORSHIP IN SANCTUARY AND SMALL GROUPS INSIDE THE MINISTRY CENTER

GATHERED WORSHIP IN SANCTUARY

- Maximum number of people in the Sanctuary will be fifty-eight (58). Of the 58, there shall be no more than forty-two (42) congregants, up to ten (10) worship leaders (including the Pastor, Associate Pastor and Music Director) and six (6) visitors. The front pews will be available for worship leaders only. Pews for participants will start the third pew back as well as the pews along the sides and the chairs in the rear of the Sanctuary.
- People who want to be present at gathered worship shall register by previous Wednesday by 12 noon.
- People who require assistance to access the Sanctuary shall request such assistance when registering.
- Greeters shall stand at the entrance to the Memorial Garden Narthex doors.
- A table will be placed in the Narthex that people must stop at on their way into the Sanctuary. Hosts at the table will check off those people registered who are in attendance and make sure the church has their telephone number and email address (in case contact tracing is required).
- Doors into Narthex from the outside will be locked when worship begins. Classrooms, offices and work room doors will be locked to limit access to areas not in use. A sign will be posted on the unlocked fire doors to the Ministry Center to prohibit unaccompanied access.

- Restroom usage will be discouraged, but the bathrooms will remain available. A greeter, usher or host can lead that person to the restroom.
- All other church activities included in Phases 0, 1 and 2 shall remain as noted.

SMALL GROUPS IN MINISTRY CENTER

Small group (maximum of ten people) inside the Ministry Center. The small group sessions would include meetings, religious education, committees, ministries, etc. The room assigned will be dependent upon the size of the small group will control the room assigned. The larger the group, the larger the room.

The use of the Ministry Center for these purposes shall be subject to the following:

- An application shall be submitted to the Office Administrator for the use of a room. The application will be forwarded to the Chair of the Facilities Management Team for review and approval by either the Chair or the Team. Should it be deemed necessary, the application will then be submitted to the RTF for review.
- The participants, including the host/teacher, must preregister with the church office.
- Participants must wear their face masks.
- Use of the bathrooms will be discouraged. Sanitizing wipes shall be placed at the doors to the bathrooms. Doors to the bathrooms will be propped open.
- If the use of the room is related to an activity of the church and not all of the participants want to partake at the church, the activity will also be provided virtually.

PHASE 4 – GATHERED WORSHIP IN SANCTUARY AND FELLOWSHIP HALL

- In addition to the availability of gathered worship in the Sanctuary, the Fellowship Hall shall be available for worship. Forty-four (44) congregants, up to six (6) worship leaders and six (6) visitors will be permitted for gathered worship in the Fellowship Hall. All provisions for gathered worship in the Sanctuary, noted in Phase 3, shall continue. One worship service will be celebrated.
- The gathered worship in the Fellowship Hall shall be a mixture of virtual worship on the large screen and in-person worship with worship leaders. The sermon is streamed from the Sanctuary to the Fellowship Hall, but other aspects of the service can be live in each space: prayer and music. This concept will enable the Fellowship Hall to remain viable for gathered worship.
- Seats will be set up that maintain physical distancing in the Fellowship Hall.
- Doors into the Fellowship Hall) will be locked to the outside when worship begins. Classrooms, offices and work room doors will be locked to limit access to areas not in use. A sign will be posted on the doors leading into the Ministry Center to prohibit unaccompanied access.
- A table will be placed in the Fellowship Hall by the door designated for access into the Fellowship Hall that people must stop at on their way into the Hall. Hosts at the table will

check off those people registered who are in attendance and make sure the church has their telephone number and email address (in case contact tracing is required).

- Parking lot hosts will direct vehicles to the parking lot adjacent to the Sanctuary first and thereafter to the parking lot adjacent to the Fellowship Hall.
- Greeters to be stationed outdoors (weather permitting) or indoors to guide participants in gathered worship to where they should then go once inside the Fellowship Hall, to answer questions and provide masks when necessary.
- Ushers – all gathered worship participants will be ushered to their seats.
- When possible, the doors in the Fellowship Hall will remain open.
- The RTF will revisit the numbers for gathered worship to determine whether there should be a modification of the numbers.
- All other church activities included in Phases 0, 1, 2 and 3 shall remain as noted.

PHASE 5 – FULL OPENING OF CHURCH AND MINISTRY CENTER

- Sunday Worship
 - Virtual Service continues
 - Gathered worship continues
 - No restrictions for the number of participants, preregistration for attendance and assigned seating
 - Face masks will be required if the wearing of face masks is a recommendation of the CDC
- Spiritual Activities resumes in full
- Office Hours - regular hours
- Outside Groups - permitted per approval from Facilities Management Team

PROCEDURES FOR TASK FORCE TO EVALUATE MOVEMENT BETWEEN PHASES

The RTF shall be responsible for determining whether the church shall progress between Phases, or should it be necessary to regress to an earlier Phase. The church shall remain in a designated Phase for a minimum of four (4) weeks, with the exception of progressing between Phases 1 and 2. A decision may be made by the RTF to move between these Phases before the minimum four (4) week period. The four (4) week period will provide sufficient time for the RTF to obtain data and other information and evaluate directives and recommendations from appropriate entities in order to assess movement between Phases. The RTF will evaluate directives from appropriate governments as well as recommendations from the CDC, the North Carolina Department of Health & Human Services (Division of Public Health) and the Brunswick County Department of Health and Human Services. The RTF will review COVID-19 case numbers for Brunswick County, with specificity toward the communities served by SPC and where necessary the RTF will review COVID-19 cases in the counties surrounding Brunswick County.

GUIDELINES FOR ATTENDING LIVE WORSHIP SERVICES & EVENTS

1. SPC acknowledges that even following all the recommended governmental and presbytery guidelines a degree of risk for contracting the COVID 19 virus still exists.

Each individual must determine for themselves when they are comfortable with the risks of returning for live Worship Services and other live events. Please note that SPC Guidelines 2 and 3 below specifically must be followed. This conforms with CDC, State, Local and Presbytery Guidelines.

2. Anyone who feels ill, has a cough or running nose or has a fever must not attend live Sunday Worship Services as they pose a high risk to the entire congregation.
3. Anyone who has been ill or had a fever of 100* or higher within 72 hours prior to the gathered worship should not attend the gathered worship.
4. According to the CDC, anyone age 65 or above are considered a higher risk for the COVID 19 virus. If no additional factors exist (see item 5 below), each individual must determine for themselves when they are comfortable with the risks of returning for gathered worship.
5. Anyone of any age with underlying medical conditions including but not limited to, anyone struggling to control their diabetes, has a heart condition or heart disease, has lung disease or breathing problems including but not limited to COPD or asthma, anyone under medical care for any type of infection or taking an antibiotic, or anyone who has a compromised immune system should not attend gathered worship until the church enters Phase 5 of the Roadmap.
6. Anyone who has been exposed to someone who has been or is being tested for the COVID 19 virus **may not** attend gathered worship or any event or activity at the church until that person has met all CDC and Health Department requirements for returning to contact with others.

ACTIONS REQUIRED IS A CHURCH ATTENDEE TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

- Should a person test positive for COVID-19 after being present on church property, they should notify one of the pastors. This notification will be confidential.
- The pastor or their designated leader will communicate with staff and church members about potential exposure while maintaining confidentiality as required by the American with Disabilities Act or other applicable laws and in accordance with religious practices.
- Church members who have been exposed to the virus will be contacted by phone or email and be advised to stay home and self- monitor for symptoms and follow CDC guidelines if symptoms develop.
- The pastor or their designated leader will partner with the Brunswick County Department of Health and Human Services in contact tracing while maintaining confidentiality.
- The affected area of the church building will be closed off until cleaning and sanitizing is completed.

Appendix A

A Covenant of Care

For the Members and Participants of Southport Presbyterian Church

+ + +

*“I tell you the truth, as you do this for the least of my brothers and sisters,
you are doing it for me.” Matthew 25:40*

In response to Jesus’ command, we covenant to care for one another.

As we begin to open our buildings for individual prayer, small groups, and gathered worship, we commit to:

- Respecting our own health and preventing the risk of harming others. We will avoid the church property if we are sick or if we believe that we have been exposed to someone else who is sick.
- Practicing safe sanitation. We will keep our hands clean and disinfect them upon entering the church. We will cover any cough or sneeze with tissues or the inside of our elbow.
- Greeting people with affection but without physical contact (hugging or shaking hands).
- Maintaining physical distancing. We will remain at least six feet apart from people with whom we are not sheltered-at-home.
- Wearing a face mask to protect both ourselves and others.
- Praying for the health and well-being of all.