

SECOND BAPTIST WORSHIP PROTOCOLS as of May 11, 2021

Introduction

At Second Baptist Church your spiritual, mental, and physical health and well-being is a priority. As a result, procedures being implemented as we reopen the church building are for the safety of all who enter this sacred place. It is important for all of us to have a safe place to congregate, but we know that in today's world "a new set of rules" is necessary for this to occur. Our prayer is that in the relatively near future these protocols will no longer be necessary; however, to minimize the exposure to all who enter these doors we are instituting the procedures outlined below. Please note that this is a working document and we expect that as conditions change, we will revise and update this document.

Building Accessibility

Elevator: People will be allowed to use the elevator at their own risk, and according to your own comfort level.

Restrooms:

- Restrooms near the lower parking lot doors will be the only ones available for use. They will also be outfitted with step-openers so that touching the outer door handle will not be necessary.

Entering and exiting the Church/Sanctuary:

- Only the main front doors and lower parking lot door to enter and exit the building.
- If you will need to use the restroom prior to entering the Sanctuary, please use the doors from the lower parking lot. Before utilizing the stairs to come up to the Sanctuary, please ensure that your face mask is in place and that appropriate social distance is maintained on the stairs.
- Please be aware that the pastor(s) will NOT be greeting people as they exit the Sanctuary
- You may use the Main, or lower parking lot doors to exit the church.
- If you are using the lower parking lot doors, please maintain at least six feet between family units and do not pass others who are not members of your household on the stairs

Face masks, covering nose and mouth, must be worn by everyone entering the church and for the entire time you are in the church building.

- Please make every effort to have your mask with you when arriving at the church. There will be some cloth and synthetic masks that may be picked up if you accidentally forget yours.
- For the safety of everyone involved, if you are unable to wear a mask it is probably best to stay at home and stream the service. We know this isn't easy but it is necessary for now.

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- Anyone who has had a fever, or been ill in the last two weeks (with fever, chills, respiratory issues, cough), should stay home until you have been symptom free for at least 14 days. If you have knowingly been in contact with someone infected with COVID-19, we ask that you not come to church for at least 14 days after that contact or after recovering from the illness if you contracted it. Please stay home if there is any question about you possibly being sick.

Physical/Social Distancing: Physical/Social distancing:

- CDC Guidelines specify at least six feet of separation between non-family members or those not living together. This distance must be maintained at all times. We want to make sure we maintain spacing, when seated in the Sanctuary as well as when entering or exiting the building.
- To maintain social distancing please follow any arrows or markings on the floors, doors, and walls. Ushers will be on hand to help guide us. See above for information about entering and exiting the Sanctuary.

Cleaning:

- All surfaces, doors, pew seats and backs, door handles, door frames, rest rooms, and floors will be cleaned with CDC recommended sanitizing agents before each service by our custodian.

Worship Service

Seating:

- All pew cushions, Bibles and hymnals have been removed from the Sanctuary until further notice.
- Pews will be sectioned off and everyone will sit in a predesignated place for worship that adheres to social distancing guidelines (at least six feet apart).
- Families should plan to sit together.
- Seating in the Sanctuary will be conducted as follows:

Every other pew will be roped off, and the ushers will assist people in finding appropriately distanced seating.

The Balcony will be closed until further notice.

Ushers/greeters – There will be a person at each post as follows:

1. Outside back entrance - check for masks and reinforce social distancing protocol;
 2. Inside the back entrance – check people’s names off list as they walk in
 3. In Welcome Center near the stairwell to move people along;
 4. Entrance to sanctuary - direct people to appropriate section;
 5. Narthex entrance - check people’s names off list as they walk in;
 6. Inside sanctuary doors - direct people to appropriate section;
 7. Additional ushers to assist with seating.
- Seating will begin at approximately 9:30 AM

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Singing and Music:

- Unfortunately, congregational singing will not take place until further notice.
- Various staff members have been studying the latest research measuring the potential impact of singing on the spread of the Corona virus.
- With that said, there may be a singer – or a few singers – in the front of the Sanctuary or Chancel with significant distance between singers and the congregation.
- We are looking forward to the return of congregational singing as well as the contributions of our choir when it is safe for these practices to be reintroduced.
- Other forms of music may include organ or piano, hand bells, and videos.

Bulletins: There will be no printed bulletins, the order of service will be projected on the wall at the front of the Sanctuary.

Communion:

- On Communion Sundays someone will be at each entrance to supervise the acquisition of the elements as people leave the building.
- Each element will be in an individual, sealed container prepared by the Deacon responsible for that month's experience. When preparing the elements, the Deacon will be wearing gloves, mask over the mouth and nose, and wearing a sanitary gown. Juice will be dispensed using a pre-sanitized dispenser.
- The bread and juice will be pre-packaged before the service and not touched by anyone except the partaker on the Sunday in question.
- The Deacons will NOT serve the communion elements to members of the congregation.

Greeting one another:

- Greeting one another is encouraged, but please make sure that all greetings are non-contact and maintain appropriate social distance.
- No physical touching can be permitted, unless you are family members sitting together.
- Hand sanitizer (70 % alcohol or more) will be placed around the entrances to the Sanctuary and as you are coming into and leaving the building. Please use sanitizer liberally.
- All service participants will wear masks, except for the Pastor(s), who will always maintain six feet or more of separation from the congregation. Pastor(s) will wear masks if he/she is touching or handling anything that parishioners may contact.

Offering:

- There will be a station as you enter and leave the Sanctuary where you may leave your offering/pledge.
- The plates will not be passed for the foreseeable future.
- Contributions may also be made through the secure PayPal link on the church website: www.secondbaptistsuffield.org

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Children's Message & Service

- Sue is planning to sit in her usual spot, but children will **not** be invited to come forward to sit with her.
- Children who are unable to remain in the Sanctuary for the entire service may be escorted to the Activity Room by their parent(s) who will then stay there to supervise their child and ensure that social distance is maintained.
- Christian Education will have prepared activity bags, by age group, for children to use.
- At the end of the service, the activity materials will be placed back in the bag and the entire bag placed in a separate container so the contents can be sanitized.
- Parents will be able to listen to the service through the speakers in the Activity Room.

Streaming:

- We will continue to stream our services every Sunday for the foreseeable future.
- Services will be streamed through our YouTube channel and Facebook.
- For anyone who is in a high-risk category, for example, those 65 or older, folks with underlying conditions, autoimmune concerns, or those unable to wear a mask for the duration of the service, we encourage these members and friends to continue to connect with us via our live-streamed services.

Sunday School, Nursery, & Child Care

Sunday School:

- Whether/when Sunday School meets will be determined by what the schools decide to do about reopening, so there may not be any face to face classes for the time being.
- If this turns out to be the case, there will be packets for the children to take home with activities that relate to the theme of that Sunday's service.

Nursery & Child Care:

- Nursery care will not be provided for the foreseeable future.
- The Activity Room, under the Sanctuary, will be available for adults with children who are not able to remain in the Sanctuary for the entire worship service.
- Parents will be able to listen to the service through the speakers in the Activity Room.