



## TWP Priorities during COVID-19 (8.5)

Updated January 2021

INTRODUCTION: “Those who fail to plan, plan to fail.” We plan to overcome this current COVID-19 crisis during which we will demonstrate God’s love and care to our church family and surrounding community. Moving forward and getting back to a new normal will be a process for which we must prepare. Below are our priorities which guide us in planning in-person meetings and worship gatherings at TWP.

1. **Mission:** Our highest priority is the salvation of souls. While life is a precious gift, life is more than the body. After this life, each one of us must face eternity with or without God. The mission of the church is to proclaim the Gospel in word and deed, calling all people to faith in Jesus Christ and making disciples of Jesus Christ.
2. **Religious Freedom:** By Executive Order, the Governor of Texas has defined essential services to include “religious services conducted in churches, congregations, and houses of worship.” The First Amendment to the United States Constitution and Article I of the Texas Constitution protect the right of Texans to worship and freely exercise their religion according to the dictates of their own consciences. In addition, the Texas Religious Freedom Restoration Act (“RFRA”) provides additional protections to faith communities, and government must ensure that it complies with RFRA when it acts, even during a disaster. While we value these rights, we choose to act responsibly with love for our members and neighbors during this COVID-19 crisis.
3. **Health and Safety:** In love for our members and neighbors, we have acted to slow the spread of the coronavirus. On March 16, 2020 TWP closed all public worship services and ministry activities at both campuses and shifted from public worship services to online virtual worship services only on March 22, 2020. Church offices were closed on March 25, 2020 and the staff started working remotely. The staff returned to working onsite on May 4. On June 15, we re-opened both campuses for small group meetings. TWP has published a social safety handbook. All are encouraged to wear masks when entering and exiting the building, and when the 6-ft. social distance cannot be maintained.

4. Virtual Ministry: We continue to provide online virtual worship services. Bible studies, Connection Groups, special events, and Pastoral Updates have been added to our menu of online services.

5. Individual Freedom & Responsibility: We want to emphasize that you do not have to attend in-person worship services. We respect your individual freedom to choose what is best for you. You are free to participate or not participate.

If you choose to attend and participate in services and activities at our facilities, please act responsibly and consider the safety of others. If you are sick, please stay home. If your immune system is compromised, please stay home. If you have an underlying at-risk health condition, please stay home and watch the services online. Join us when all is well.

6. Re-opened for In-person Worship: We reopened for in-person worship on Sunday, August 23. We are making every effort to conduct worship services in accordance with guidance from the Office of the Governor of Texas, the White House, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”), and local authorities in order to create a safe environment for public gatherings.

Finally, we ask that you do all things in love. In loving concern for one another, we wear masks, maintain 6-ft of separation, and follow social safety guidelines. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation. We hope to see you soon.

Kelly Barnett  
Maury Millican  
Janie Peak

**Protocol for Notification:** If you or someone in your ministry tests positive for COVID-19, it is the responsibility of the person who tested positive to notify others in the group who may have been exposed to them in the last 5-7 days. If the person who tested positive is unable to contact exposed members (i.e., because they are in the hospital), it is the responsibility of the team leader to assist with the notification process. Please remember to protect the identity of the person who tested positive, as much as possible.

Office of the Governor of the State of Texas

<https://gov.texas.gov/coronavirus>

The President's Guidance for Coronavirus Guidelines for America.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/coronavirus-guidance.pdf>

Updates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC").

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCov/>

Office of the Attorney General of the State of Texas: Guidance for Houses of Worship During the COVID-19 Crisis.

[https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/Guidance for Houses of Worship.pdf](https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/Guidance%20for%20Houses%20of%20Worship.pdf)



## **Social Safety Guidelines**

### **Members/Visitors/Vendors/Contractors:**

1. Check-in at the Welcome Center.
2. If you have pre-existing conditions that compromise your health, please return home.
3. If you have persistent coughing, sneezing, or a fever, please return home.
4. Please maintain the 6-ft. rule for safe distancing.
5. Please wear a mask if the 6-ft. rule is compromised. Masks are available at the Welcome Center Desk.
6. Please use hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes/tissues located throughout both facilities. Please wipe-down the surface areas you used before you leave.
7. Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or the inside of your elbow, and immediately go and wash your hands. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth as much as possible.

8. Frequently wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use hand sanitizer.

### **Screening Questions:**

1. Have you been diagnosed with COVID-19?
2. In the past 14 days, have you traveled out of the country?
3. In the past 14 days, have you experienced a cough, shortness of breath, or any flu-like symptoms?
4. Have you recently lost your sense of smell?
5. Are you willing to wear a mask and gloves while at our location?

## **Guidelines for In-person Small Group Meetings**

Recurring meetings previously scheduled on the master calendar began to meet once again starting June 15, 2020. As these meetings resume, your health and safety are our primary concern. Ministry Leaders should contact Karen Quillen one week in advance of meeting time and provide the number of attendees that will be present. If any of your team will need to join a meeting with Zoom, please advise when you contact Karen. This allows for scheduling each group in the most appropriately sized meeting room with the needs requested. As you contact your members of a meeting time and location, please remind them to bring their masks.

Meeting rooms will be set up to conform to safety and health guidelines. Please do not reset any of the furniture, equipment, tables or chairs. If there are any needs the day of the meeting please go to the Welcome Center Desk for assistance. Each room will have sanitizing wipes for wiping tables and chair frameworks after your meeting. We appreciate your assistance in following these steps to make the rooms safe and healthy for everyone.

Ministry leaders will keep a log of all attendees at each meeting and provide that to the Welcome Center desk after each meeting. These logs will be used should any follow-up communication be needed.

Ministry leaders may arrive 20 minutes prior to their meeting for set up and preparation. Please depart the building promptly at the end of your meeting to allow transition time for the next meeting.

Signs are posted on the outer doors to encourage a COVID-19 self-check before entering the building. Hand sanitizer is available upon entering and exiting the church facilities. To minimize traffic flow in and out of the office suite, please schedule an appointment if you would like to meet with a pastor or staff member. For everyone's safety, checking in at the Welcome Desk upon entering the building will be required.

Any new requests for meeting spaces need to be made a minimum of one week in advance of the meeting date. Information needed will be the duration of the meeting, number of attendees and any technical support needed. Requests after this time frame may not be able to be scheduled.

We will depend on our ministry leaders to ensure your group members follow these guidelines to keep us all healthy and safe. Thank you for your cooperation!

### **Additional Resources:**

<https://www.pennmedicine.org/coronavirus/visitation-policy-and-guidelines/tips-for-families>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/carolynrosenblatt/2013/11/15/six-action-tips-for-you-when-your-loved-one-is-hospitalized/#72d980476843>

[https://www.bswhealth.com/Pages/safe-care.aspx?utm\\_source=BSWHealth.com-SafeCare&utm\\_medium=offline&utm\\_campaign=99-ALL-133086-SafeCare&utm\\_term=BSWHealth.com-SafeCare&utm\\_content=redirect](https://www.bswhealth.com/Pages/safe-care.aspx?utm_source=BSWHealth.com-SafeCare&utm_medium=offline&utm_campaign=99-ALL-133086-SafeCare&utm_term=BSWHealth.com-SafeCare&utm_content=redirect)