

# Children's Ministry Regathering Plan

In order to meet the needs of children's education safely and with consideration for parents and teachers, we provide the following Sunday School Regathering Plan. We focus on two areas: (1) the gradual, cautious, regathering of classes in phases, (2) implementation of guidelines for safely meeting in classes.

## Part 1 - Regathering Stages

### Stage 1- June 21-July 5 Kids attend Worship Gathering with parents.

This stage provides time for everyone to enjoy corporate worship again and to get comfortable with larger groups. An area will be available in Studio B during stage 1 and 2 where parents can sit with children as well and view the livestream.

### Stage 2 - (July 12-August 16) Combined Children's Church

During this stage, we offer a combined class for Pre K children up to grade 3, either outside weather permitting or in the Activity Center if not. This gives families the option to participate in children's programming or to have the children remain in the service. During this stage we will discontinue online Kid's Messages. At the end of this period, we will evaluate if it is appropriate to move forward with regular classes or continue longer in stage 2. We will not offer nursery at this time.

### Stage 3 (target date: August 23 ) Regular classes begin

We return to regular class structure coinciding with local public school resuming. Students will be moving into their new classes when they return. During this phase we will continue to keep safety protocols in place, but will be open to make changes as necessary to ease certain practices. We will look to resume offering nursery during this phase.

## Part 2 - Safety Protocols

As we regather, we want to consider the guidance of the State of PA and the CDC recommendations<sup>1</sup> for safety practices. We look to the [CDC Interim Guidance for Faith Communities](#) for direction, which states: "If a nursery or childcare will be provided during services, refer to CDC's ([Guidance for Childcare programs](#)) and *adapt as needed for your setting.*" There are six considerations the [Guidance for Childcare Programs](#) recommends churches address, which are listed below. The procedures we are looking to adapt for our Nursery and Sunday school are taken from this document and listed under the six headings. These policies are primarily for Phase 2. We will reevaluate these for entering into Phase 3 when school starts.

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<sup>1</sup> See also :[Preliminary Guidance for Phased Reopening of Pre-K to 12 Schools](#) & [Considerations for Youth and Summer Camps](#). These documents are insightful, but do not directly relate to our programs.

## **1. Implement social distancing strategies**

- Emphasize that classes are optional, so parents can elect to keep children in worship service.
- Classes should gather outside whenever possible during summer months in the fenced playground area.
- Seating in classes should be spaced out, whether around a table or in a large room. If seating is on the floor, we can mark sitting spots with tape.
- While difficult to maintain, we should encourage children to keep distanced/respect personal space.
- We will not offer snacks.

## **2. Intensify cleaning and disinfection efforts**

- Teachers should arrive earlier to the classroom to disinfect high contact areas (door knobs, light switches, tables, toys that will be used, etc.). Teachers should also wipe down the area after class is over.
- Hand sanitizer will be made available for use during class.
- Children's books and paper-based material are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need to be disinfected.
- Used or soiled toys need to be set aside and disinfected before being returned to the box.

## **3. Modify drop off and pick up procedures**

- Children's Church:
  - Children will join the worship service for the first part of and may attend Children's Church when dismissed. Teachers will help escort children to Children's Church.
  - Parents will need to pick up children after the worship service has ended.

## **4. Encourage volunteers and families to assess health before coming to church**

- Volunteers who are sick or show symptoms should stay home. On call volunteers should be available in case of cancelation
- Parents should assess family health before coming to church. If anyone in household has a fever, any coronavirus symptoms, or an unprotected exposure to a confirmed COVID-19 case, they should not attend any Church Gathering for two weeks or bring kids to Sunday School

## **5. Maintain and adequate ratio of staff to children to ensure safety**

- We will schedule four teachers each week to oversee Children's Church during stage 2 as needed.

## **6. When feasible, staff and older children should wear face coverings within the facility. Small children do not need to wear face coverings.**

- When indoors, in consideration of the CDC Recommendations and the State of PA Guidelines, all those in attendance (except small children and those unable due to health or conscience) are asked to wear a face covering, especially when appropriate physical distancing is difficult to maintain. Teachers who are not able to wear a face covering should notify their ministry leader (Jan Null or Randy Clifford) to make accommodations.
- When outdoors, masks are not necessary so long as social distancing is maintained.
- We will reevaluate face covering policies in keeping with PA State Guidelines.