

May 16, 2020

Woodland Oaks Brothers and Sisters,

We want to thank everyone for your continued prayers and compassion during these trying times. By staying home, you have helped slow the spread of this virus and that not only protects our members, but it also helps those in the community that we are trying to serve.

As most of you are aware, the state of Texas has released updated guidelines on reopening, including [specific guidance for churches](#). As a result, we are planning to reopen our building for morning worship services on Sunday, May 24. This will be the first of a phased reopening plan, with subsequent phases addressing the reopening of classes, evening services and fellowship.

It is also worth noting that we appreciate and understand that there are many different opinions on the severity of COVID-19. There are many things about this virus that we do not understand. One thing we do know is that not everyone who is infected reacts the same. Many only suffer minimal health concerns and recover quickly. Others need significant medical treatments, extensive hospitalization and it can even become life-threatening. Regardless of your personal view of the virus and its impact, we all need to be respectful that the views, concerns and sensitivities of others may be different from our own.

That said, there are some factors that we want to highlight as you decide what is the best course of action for you and your family:

- Services will continue to be streamed <http://woodlandoaks.org/media-center.html> or <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3r3Z5p1jFwx1g7rDUclVYA>
- Those in high risk categories for infection are strongly encouraged to stay home and continue to stream our worship services for your safety. This includes those older than 65, diabetics, those with chronic heart or lung disease, those with immune deficiencies and some pregnant women. Parents with small children may want to consider staying home and streaming as well.
- For those planning to join us for our reopening assembly, we encourage you to read the attached "What to Expect" document. You need to be aware that there will be some logistical modifications in our assembly to protect our members. This includes some auditorium capacity restrictions and how we plan to handle any attendance overflow.

Finally, if you plan to attend on May 24, we ask you to self-screen before coming to the assembly. If you are running a fever or showing any potential symptoms (cough, chills, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, shortness of breath, etc.), please stay home and stream services.

We thank everyone for your ongoing cooperation, encouragement and prayers.

The Elders

What to Expect – Reopening services

Please note the following logistical changes as we reopen our assembly:

- Our reopening phases are tentatively set as follows:
 - Phase 1 (May 24) – reopen the Sunday morning worship assembly.
 - Phase 2 (Jun 21) – reopen Sunday morning Bible classes (1 adult class, 1 youth class and 1 children's class).
 - Phase 3 (TBD) – reopen Nursery.
 - Phase 4 (TBD) – resume all other ministries and assemblies.
- Our adult Bible class will be live streamed only and will begin at the new time of 8:30 a.m. If you are unable to watch the streamed class at 8:30 a.m., the class will be recorded and immediately available on YouTube to watch at a later time.
- Our worship assembly will begin at our normal time of 10:15 a.m.; however, we ask that you arrive at least 15 minutes early so we can get everyone properly seated. There will be seating restrictions and by arriving early it will be much easier to address.
- One of the requirements in Gov. Abbott's Guidelines for Reopening Churches is that we leave every other row in the auditorium open. The rows to be left open will be marked. Another requirement is that family members may sit together on a row, but non-family members are to maintain at least a 6-foot distance to the nearest non-family member. Under these restrictions, our auditorium has a maximum capacity of approximately 250 people. Anyone attempting to find a seat after capacity has been reached will be directed to the Chapel for seating. Secondly, additional overflow seating will also be available in classrooms A101 and A102. The services will be live streamed in all overflow rooms.
- Entrance to the auditorium will be through one of five entrance points. Two entry points will be through the glass doors on the east side (pulpit end) of the auditorium. Three entrance points will be through the west side doors at the back of the auditorium. As you enter one of these doors you will meet a greeter that will be able to assist with seating as needed. The greeters will not tell you where to sit, but we ask that you sit in the area of the building in close proximity to where you enter. This is to maintain appropriate social distancing and help us address any overflow requirements.
- As you enter the auditorium to be seated, please find a row and move as far to the inside of the row as you can. We are trying to follow the State's social distancing requirements and climbing over someone to reach an empty seat makes that very difficult to do. The reverse is also true as we need to remain in our seating areas once the service begins.

- As you enter the auditorium, there will be someone to provide you with a bag of communion supplies. For the time being we will not be passing communion trays during the worship services. After partaking, place your empty contents in the sealable bag and drop in a trash bin on your way out of the building.
- Following our communion service, we will be offering a prayer for our contributions; however, we will not be passing a contribution tray through the audience. If you bring a check and wish to make a contribution, we will have someone with an offering tray near the exit doors. You can drop your contribution in the plate as you exit. We do encourage you to continue using the online giving and secure mail box options that are available to you.
- Our “greeters” and “communion servers” will be wearing protective masks. This is for your protection and theirs. There is no requirement that members wear protective face coverings, but please bring and wear appropriate protective gear if desired. There will be masks available if needed.
- Once services have concluded, our greeters will assist in an orderly exit of the auditorium. We ask that we all exit one row at a time. As each row exits, the greeters will notify the next row to exit and so forth.
- We request that you avoid socializing in the foyer or aisles. We suggest waiting until you are outside the building to socialize. We are not saying don't visit, we are just requesting everyone to practice social distancing and that will be difficult to do if everyone chooses to visit in the foyer or aisles.
- There will be sanitizer stations throughout the foyer. There will be signage to remind everyone of hygiene practices and social distancing. There will be no paper bulletins. The Family Life Center and playground areas will be closed. Parents, please maintain control of your children at all times.
- Social distancing practices will also be needed in and around the restrooms.
- We realize that this involves a certain amount of inconvenience, especially from such a loving and hospitable family, but we also realize this virus can be serious to many and we all need to take steps to ensure everyone is protected. We certainly encourage you to meet, greet, mingle and re-energize, but just do so in ways to protect everyone and continue to minimize the spread of this virus.
- Finally, if you become ill during the week, we ask that you promptly self-quarantine and alert the church office. We want to make sure you are okay and assist you in every way possible.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation!