Hi, North Shore Bible Church Family!

These past weeks have certainly been unexpected & strange, including the absence of physical gatherings as a church. We know, however that God has made us for relational connection as human beings and as members of God’s family. For that reason, **we are excited that our Governor has included Churches in the 1st phase of reopening.**, We look forward to gather, especially for worship services, in responsible ways that will allow for the safest return, and are in keeping with the governor’s announcement & safety standards released on Monday 5/18. Please read this entire document to understand our process.

**We’re seeking to balance several biblical priorities as we work through this, some of which exist in tension:**

* We follow God’s command to not develop a habit of forsaking the gathering ([Hebrews 10:25](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Heb%2010.25)).
* We submit to our governing authorities unless doing so would mean disobeying God. ([Romans 13:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%2013.1), [5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Romans%2013.5); Acts 4:18-20; 5:25-29).
* We love our fellow believers whose health is compromised ([John 13:34](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2013.34),[35](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2013.35)).
* We seek to discern what is pleasing to the Lord in everything (Ephesians 5:10, 15; Romans 12:2; 1 Corinthians 10:31)
* We seek to conduct ourselves with wisdom toward our community, and let our speech always be with grace so that we know how to respond to each person. (Colossians 4:5-6)
* We aim to only speak fitting words with one another that give grace according to the need of the moment. (Ephesians 4:29)

**We are pleased to inform you that we plan to physically regather for worship on Sunday, May 24.** There will be multiple in-person worship services that will take place as well as a live video feed online, to allow for everyone to stay engaged during this time of transition. We encourage everyone to be patient, thoughtful and gracious with one another as we begin to gather again. **Your choice to stay at home, for whatever reason, is respected and affirmed by the rest of us. We look forward to seeing you in person in due time, when you are ready.**

We are busy this week organizing the safest and best experience. We want you to have confidence when you gather with others, allowing it to be a joyous occasion for celebration!

**Below you will find a list of details that will shape our gatherings , both on May 24 and in the weeks to follow.** We believe these plans honor state guidelines and are consistent with our authorities’ deference to churches as we practice our Christian faith. Undoubtedly, we will make adjustments to these plans along the way — whether in light of societal changes or our own congregational needs — and we will communicate those to as it becomes necessary. We believe, however that these measures will go a long way toward ensuring your safety and elevating your anticipation of being together. We know that regathering will be different. It will therefore feel different, but we can do this!

In all of this, we want to exercise thoughtfulness, care, and grace. Therefore, if you are immunocompromised, not feeling well, or have a temperature, we encourage you to enjoy these worship services from home by watching the livestream of the Worship Service at 11am. If you are especially vulnerable, please consider how to best proceed. If your family situation makes your presence complicated, we understand. **We look forward to seeing you in gathered worship *when you are ready*.** Whatever you decide and whatever your timetable, please know that our church assumes the best of your motives and discernment, and we ask that you would do the same with others.

Now on to the details…

**WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN WE REGATHER:**

**Worship Service Plans**

* We plan to gather for two worship services at **9 & 11 a.m**. each Sunday beginning **May 24th**, allowing for optimal sanitary and spacing options & to align with the 40% capacity rule. (**“Save your seat”** instructions listed below)
* A livestream of the 11am Worship Service will be broadcast on our YouTube channel, at Northshorebiblechurch.com/Sunday-Worship and on [our Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/GracePolarisChurch/) for those who cannot, or should not physically gather for worship services. On Demand viewing will also be available at the same locations shortly after the worship service concludes.
* At our **11am** Worship Service, we will also offer a Family Area. For a variety of reasons, some families may find this a better option for the worship service. This area is located upstairs in the multipurpose room, and will accommodate 3 families with distancing protocol that can watch a live-feed of the service from there.

**Safety Precautions**

* Immunocompromised individuals and those who are not feeling well, who have a temperature (please check at home), or who have Covid-19 should view the worship service from home.
* We will gather in ways that practice safe physical distancing and protect the well-being of others. Seating options will ensure adequate space between family units.
* Social interaction should take place at an appropriate distance, both inside and outside our facilities. Please avoid physical greetings or touch.
* Face coverings or masks should be worn in accordance with COVID-19 Order No. 31 and the Department of Public Health’s Guidance while inside and while entering, exiting, or otherwise participating in in-person services, except where a person is unable to wear a face covering or mask because of a medical or disabling condition.
* For children between age 2 and 5, the wearing of a face covering or mask is at the discretion of the child’s parent or guardian. Children under the age of 2 should not wear a face covering or mask.
* Hand sanitizer will be made available in our facilities.
* There will be no food or drinks provided (Including coffee & water). If you will need water, or any other kind of drink, please bring your own from home, and make sure they return home with you.
* A changing table will be available in the Nursery for both hours, with a wipe-down protocol after each use. Toys will not be made available. If your child wants something to color with, play with… please bring supplies from home, and make sure they return home with you.
* The number of people in our facilities will be limited to 40 per service to ensure safe physical distancing. We will be utilizing a ‘save your seat’ model through EventBrite to ensure that we don’t exceed this number of people, and that we don’t turn anyone away. Please reserve your spot at EventBrite, or northshorebiblechurch.com/Sunday-Worship. You can also call or email Pastor Phil to make the reservation if you find making a reservation that way difficult.
* To ensure the safety and out of respect for others, please follow the instructions of our greeters and hosts.
* We will carefully clean & disinfect our facilities between each gathering.
* Attendees who are not part of the same immediate household should be seated at least 6 feet apart. Seating will be set up accordingly.
* Signage & Markings will be utilized to help achieve proper spacing.
* Financial giving will continue to be available online, and there will be a collection box set out to forego passing around the offering plates.
* As possible, measures will be taken to promote ventilation within the meeting area.
* In Lieu of physical bulletins, a new digital version will be emailed out each Sunday Morning.

**Other Gatherings & Ministries**

* We will not host any programming for children during the initial weeks of regathering.
* Families with children should ensure that their children can practice physical distancing.
* Life Groups will make decisions on a group by group basis to exercise discernment regarding best practices for each group. Feel free to contact any Life Group Leader if you have any questions about how they’re caring for one another & staying connected during this time.
* A full list of weekly plans & activities will be emailed out each week in an emailed digital bulletin, and be made available at northshorebiblechurch.com/connect.

And Finally…

We are so grateful for your continued prayers and support as we move forward. It is our sincere desire that God is pleased with these plans, that each of you feels supported and loved, and that others see our love for one another in a way that reflects well on our Lord Jesus Christ. Please consider the balance of biblical priorities listed on page 1 of this document, and that the way we talk about this has potential to glorify God through a difficult process if we do so thoughtfully, gratefully, and with preference for one another in love.

With love in Christ,

The NSBC Elders