



Reopening Plan for Sunday Services at 92nd and Amsterdam Avenue

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Values

The church is the continuing revelation to the world that God has overcome sin and death through Christ. God created for himself a people that would be called from every tribe and tongue of the world. While the church remains spiritually secure by the blood of Christ, she is always to be a *present, visible entity* in the world. As such, the greatness of God is revealed in the church *as it gathers*, testifying by not just word but *presence*, that *all* are welcome to the throne of grace. This experienced image is part of the enduring testimony of the church.

In this current climate following COVID-19, we have a tension between presenting this vision of the church to the world against the health and safety of the members of the church. It is our greatest desire to be together but renewing our weekly gatherings for service must be done with wisdom as we consider others before ourselves.

Below is our plan to resume our fellowship opportunities once we see that New York City has been successful in its phases¹ for re-opening, we have the necessary supplies in-place, and staff and volunteers have been trained.

Social Distancing

Social distancing will be referred to numerous times in this paper. When seen, the following definitions and practices should be connected to those words.

- Maintain space of six feet between people not of the same household. A household is constituted by whomever shares a living space.
- No more than two household groups in a row.
- No more than four people in a row.

Preparation

Bulletins/Announcements

- Announcements are available on our CBC app.
- There will be a small number of printed announcements available on a table in front of the center doors to the sanctuary for congregants to pick-up, should they so desire.

Hand-Sanitizer Stations

- Stand-alone hand-sanitizing stations will be available in the following locations:
 - Two in lobby exterior to the side doors.
 - One in Ms. Ann's room, next to the bathroom.
 - One exterior to the men's room on the gallery level.
 - One exterior to the women's bathroom on the parlor level.

¹ CBC is considered a Phase 4 institution.

Pre-Attendance Sign-Up

Once we re-open and are close to 50 people attending on a given Sunday, reservations will be made through Planning Center each week. Those not comfortable with online forms may call the church office to make their reservation. A certain number of seats will be held aside for first-time guests.

How Sunday Mornings Will Work

Entry to 92nd & Amsterdam

Doorways to the Sanctuary

- The doors to Amsterdam Avenue will be opened at 10:30 AM.
- The outer doors that open to Amsterdam Avenue will always remain propped open during Sunday service.
- The door on 92nd Street will not be propped open. No one should be entering through 92nd Street unless there is a special access need.
- The inner side-doors that access the sanctuary will always remain open.
- The inner center-door that accesses the sanctuary will always remain closed to reduce noise from Amsterdam Avenue.
- Doors to the balcony level will always remain open, both at the Amsterdam level and at the gallery level (stairwell and men's room).
- Doors to Amsterdam Avenue will be closed 30 minutes after service has ended.

Seating Availability for Sunday Service

- On the ground floor, beginning with the third row, every other row will be unavailable for seating.
- In the balcony, the middle row will be made unavailable for seating.
- Seating will begin in the two center sections. When the center sections are filled, the two outer sections will be filled.

Seating Procedures for Sunday Service

- As congregants enter the foyer, they will be temperature checked. Anyone with a temperature over 100 degrees will not be allowed entry.
- Social distancing will be maintained during service, as outlined above.
- Everyone in the sanctuary will always wear a mask, except for speakers or singers using a microphone, if they so choose.
- Congregants will be guided by an usher to the front most seats available on the first floor. (We recognize that our congregants have seating preferences, but to prevent unnecessary breaking of social distancing, we request following these protocols.)
- Only after the first floor has been filled to its capacity will the balcony be filled.

- At the end of service, ushers will dismiss beginning with the back rows in the center section. (This will be similar to the format followed for a “Final Glimpse” at a funeral.) Congregants should exit promptly onto Amsterdam Avenue.

Greeting time

- We ask that until distancing guidelines have been lifted all contact-greeting be suspended. During our greeting time, you may wave, air-hug, blow kisses, high-five from a distance, etc. from wherever you are seated or standing.

Communion

- Communion cups will be available at a table in front of the center doors in the lobby at 10:30 AM.
- Attendees will take cups to their seats and place them in the holders located in each pew.

Collection of Offering

- There will be no passing of the collection plate during the service.
- An blue deposit box is available at the back of the sanctuary for offering envelopes.
- Offerings may be given either as congregants enter or leave the sanctuary.
- Online giving is the most efficient and safe mode of collection, so we encourage you to use that as you are able. If you have questions about how online giving works, please call the church office or contact Pastor Robert at rcasteline@centralbaptistnyc.org.

Altar/Prayer Calls

- Until distancing guidelines have been lifted, there will be no opportunity for prayer to close the Sunday service. Maintaining social distancing while trying to connect through prayer is simply too difficult. Those with prayer needs are encouraged to reach out to a deacon, elder or pastor, or submit their prayer request through our website or app.
- Outside of Sunday morning, our regular prayer times on our conference line or Zoom will continue.

Nursery & Child Care

- There will be no nursery support while COVID-19 regulations remain in effect.
- The nursery will not be open while COVID-19 regulations remain in effect.
- Children will remain with their parents during service.
- A “child’s pack” will be given to children ages 2-8
 - Crayons
 - Drawing paper
 - Word search (etc)

Two-Service Option

Our sanctuary can hold about 150-200 people while practicing social distancing. However, our online services have introduced us to new people and for this we thank God! **IF** a single service will not safely accommodate those who attend, we will move to two services, the first at 8:30-10:00 AM and the second at 11:00 AM-12:30 PM. The two services will contain the same music and message.

In between the two services, the sanctuary will be sprayed with an alcohol-based disinfectant. This will take about **20** minutes to complete and require about **20** minutes for the sanctuary to dry before the doors open for the next service. **It is important that congregants at the first service leave the sanctuary promptly to allow the cleaning to begin in a timely manner.**

Should two services not be enough to accommodate our worshippers on a Sunday morning (a great problem to have!), CBC will investigate how we may use the chapel as an overflow room by simulcasting the service there.

Phases of Implementation

It would be unwise to open the church out-right. We will have a phased opening strategy. As you see one phase occur, you will know where we are and what the next phase is. We will not skip phases. It may be that we need to move back a phase because of developing situations in the city and the nation. NOTE: the following phases are **NOT** the same as the NYS phases. These are keyed for CBC specifically, but work in association with the NYS phases.

Phase 1

Implementation of the first phase will add live praise music to our Sunday services. This will allow us to understand how to work in multiple camera angles and how our Sunday services will continue when we open more fully. It is our desire to maintain the excellence we have achieved through our online services while enjoying the renewed fellowship and worship in the sanctuary.

Phase 2 (As of June 23, churches may open to 33% capacity.²)

Once the city allows for larger group gatherings and the media team is comfortable with the new streaming production process, the sanctuary will be opened to accommodate 50 people. The sign-up for being present in the building will be done through Planning Center (as necessary) and via phone call, for those who are not comfortable with online registration. This will allow us to make adjustments to our broadcast set-up with people in the sanctuary, apply the training provided to our ushers and greeters, and learn best practices for moving forward.

² <https://www.ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/news/2020/06/21/what-exactly-does-phase-two-reopening-mean-for-new-york-city->. Accessed June 22, 2020.

Phase 2 will remain as long as the NYC and NYS are implementing gradual openings. We will adjust the number of people allowed by percentage thresholds determined by the appropriate agencies.

Phase 3

This is the final phase and will be a return to “normal” operations at CBC.

Discipleship Groups

As of June 10, 2020, NYS and NYC have determined that it is safe for groups of 10 or less to gather, as long as social distancing guidelines are followed. Our discipleship groups have had great success using digital tools like Zoom and our church conference line. We know this is a viable medium for discipleship.

Should groups decide to meet in person, please follow general social distancing guidelines. If a group has mixed feelings regarding in-person gatherings, create a multi-medium option: some people gathering in-person while others are on Zoom, the conference line or other telecommuting options.

Children’s Sunday School

Until NYC public schools are opened, all CBC Youth Sunday school for students in second grade and under will take place on Zoom. Because of the increased maturity of youth in third grade and up, CBC will have in-person Sunday school while maintaining social distance recommendations, at the discretion of the Associate Pastor.

Exhibit A: NYS Guidelines for Religious Organizations

Religious Organization: Open with Restrictions

NAICS: 813110

Industry: Religious Organizations

Your business is located in **New York (Manhattan)** county, which is in region **New York City**.

Your business is currently **permitted to operate with restrictions statewide**. Restrictions that are applicable to your industry are as follows:

Pursuant to Executive Orders 202.32 and 202.33, gatherings of ten or fewer individuals are permitted, provided that social distancing protocols and cleaning and disinfection protocols required by the Department of Health are adhered to. Any drive-in or remote religious service may continue in excess of the ten person limit so long as there is no in-person contact between participants. Faith leaders should continue to consider and use alternative forms of worship, replacing in-person gatherings with virtual services, such as phone or conference calls, videoconference calls, or online streaming, wherever possible, and congregations of groups for religious service or ceremony in excess of ten in-person participants remain prohibited.

In order to operate, you must comply with all safety guidelines for your industry, as well as any additional health and safety guidance issued by the state

If the link above contains guidance specific to your industry, you must affirm that you have read and understand your obligation to operate in accordance with the guidance at the bottom of the document.

Please note that in order to be fully compliant, you must develop a business safety plan.³

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[https://www.businessexpress.ny.gov/app/crw?link_goal_state=ScreenOrder~Main~qs\\$CRW_OUTCOMES\\$global\\$global](https://www.businessexpress.ny.gov/app/crw?link_goal_state=ScreenOrder~Main~qs$CRW_OUTCOMES$global$global). Accessed June 8, 2020.