

**FIRST ASSEMBLY OF GOD
TOMS RIVER, NEW JERSEY. 08753**

**RE-ENGAGE PLAN & CHURCH GUIDELINES
(Recovering from Covid19)**

**Est. May 18 2020
Paul Gifford, Lead Pastor**

On Wednesday May 13th, Governor Phil Murphy gave the go ahead for NJ churches to host drive-in services. However well before the announcement, your church leaders had been already working behind the scenes preparing for re-entry. The announcement by our state governor was just one way the Holy Spirit confirmed that He had been leading us forward and preparing us for this day.

We have had an eight week run at virtual church and I want to take this opportunity to thank the media, sound and worship teams for ministering to us throughout this difficult time. The tech team has worked many hours trying to provide an engaging, encouraging online experience. They have had to make many tweaks on the fly and in preparation for a service. The enemy tried to shut us down a number of times, but in the end he did not prevail and we stood firm through the test.

We have learned a lot through this unprecedented time. My prayer is that we would never again take the gathering together for granted. For so many of us we have had an opportunity to re-think, re-strategize, re-work, re-calibrate priorities and schedules. And it all comes back to our theme for 20/20 #Focus! "Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith" Hebrews 12:2

Now, we move into phase 1 of the re-launch process. This phase is going to require a lot of patience, flexibility and a willingness to sacrifice for others. Documentation beyond what is said from this video will be made available on our website (www.tomsriverag.org) and church Facebook page. In the days ahead, we will also send correspondence to our church family by email, phone call and text about upcoming services.

I am excited to announce today that First Assembly of God will be re-engaging with in-person services beginning on Pentecost Sunday – May 31st. The times of those services will be 10:30am, 12:30pm and 6:30pm. Instructions for future service times will be in the re-entry plan as well as other details surrounding in-door gatherings and other ministry guidelines.

We are looking forward to this new chapter and how God is going to move upon our community, state and world. Remember our mission; "We fulfill our kingdom mission to be an EPICENTER from which the activity of God can FLOW into our community, county and countries of the world....

I love you all and thank each one of you for making a sizable impact during this crisis.

For His Kingdom,
Pastor Paul

Three Phase Re-Entry Plan

All Three Phases

People who feel sick or those who are not ready to be in gatherings should stay at home, particularly:

- a. If you have had a fever in the last 24 hours
- b. If you have symptoms of cold, flu or Covid-19
- c. If you have had contact with anyone who has had Covid-19 in the last 14 days.
- d. If you are not comfortable being out, watch online services which will remain available on Facebook and YouTube.

Volunteer Procedures (in building services)

- a. Practice social distancing and good hygiene. Washing of hands is best, but utilization of hand sanitizers throughout the facility is expected and available
- b. Be ready to provide and wear protective equipment such as; masks and gloves.
- c. Open and close all entry doors to reduce as much touching as possible from church goers.
- d. Sanitize the facilities and wipe down counter-tops, door handles in between services

Phase 1 (May 31st thru June)

- a. Drive in worship services only
- b. Livestream services will still be made available for high risk and ill congregants who choose to maintain minimum public exposure

Phase 2 (July thru August)

- a. Services will resume indoors with few restrictions. Some ministries and gatherings will resume under state guidelines for crowd sizes

Phase 3 (September/October)

- a. Most all programs, departments, classes and functions of the church resume with some restrictions.

TRAG Phase 3 – Re-Entry

a. Communicate procedures and protocols in every way possible

- a. Signage around grounds and facility
- b. Social media
- c. Email
- d. Video updates from Pastor Paul with updated guidelines and phases

b. The following ministries will **NOT re-enter until further notice**

- a. Bible Education on Sunday AM

c. The following ministries will meet in person

- a. Monthly prayer and worship – 1st Sunday of month at 6pm (start date is September 13th)
- b. Bible, Bagels and Blessings - 9:30am (start date is July 7th)
- c. Men’s Ministry – 6:30pm (start date is 6/26)
- d. Women’s Ministry – 6:30pm Friday’s
- e. Kingdom Kidz – 7pm Wednesday (start date is August 12th – outdoor tent meeting, unless raining)
- f. Youth Ministry – 7pm Wednesday (start date is August 19 – outdoors, unless raining)
 - i. All ministries that meet in person should practice social distancing.
 - ii. Face coverings should be worn unless social distancing is possible both indoors and outdoors.

d. Areas modified for main services

- i. Seats inside the sanctuary have been arranged 6’ apart so family groups can still sit together.
- ii. Chairs are primarily arranged in 2,3,4,5 and can be adjusted to accommodate a larger family or smaller family if necessary.
- iii. Congregants are asked to sit with their own households unless otherwise approved.
- iv. Usher/Greeter team will open interior and exterior doors as needed to apply a “touch-free” system.
- v. We will not hug or shake hands during a “meet and greet” time. What you choose to do on your own will be to your discretion.
- vi. The prayer team/altar workers will wear masks when praying, ministering or leading individuals to Christ.
- vii. If seating is limited the worship team will remain on the platform for the duration of service.
- viii. Your tithe/offering can be dropped off in the marked boxes or given online through pushpay at; <https://pushpay.com/g/tomsriverag?src=hpp>
- ix. Gift/guest bags will be available for pick-up when exiting or entering church for the first time.
- x. Prepackaged communion cups will be distributed upon arrival at services on Sunday’s.

e. Concerns

- a. Leaders will be responsible to handle any concerns. We are confident in our ability to provide a safe environment while still demonstrating love to people.
- b. We are not the rule police
- c. Any concerns should be directed to leaders who will be easily identified by shirts or lanyards.

i. Church Services

1. Sunday Services return to 8:30am and 11:00am on August 9th
 - a. Please only attend one service
 - b. Cleaning & sanitizing will be done in between services. Please exit the building following the first service and limit the conversations.
 - c. Mask are encouraged to be worn unless in designated seating areas.
 - i. Some congregants cannot wear face coverings due to medical reasons and have been given clearance to not wear their mask.
2. Wednesday Services will return to 7pm on September 2nd.
3. 100-person limit for sanctuary seating as of 6/22, will adjust seating as state allows.
4. Every room in the church will have a 25% capacity limit. Overflow areas such as the foyer and conference room are set-up at 25% of the room's capacity.

f. Off Limits

- i. We will not provide nursery care until further notice
- ii. We will not provide printed newsletters. They will continue to be made available online. You are encouraged to bring your own journals and pens
- iii. Coffee areas will remain closed until further notice
- iv. Drinking fountains will not be used, bottled water will be available.

g. Cleaning of Facility

- i. Our facility will have been professionally cleaned and sanitized by ServePro just prior to your return inside the building
- ii. There will be no tithe envelopes, pens or other paper products in the seat backs
- iii. One touch paper towels are ready to use in the bathrooms for drying of hands. Please lift from the corner that is folded and discard after use.
- iv. We will continue to disinfect, clean the facility weekly
 1. Sanctuary
 2. Lobby
 3. Bathrooms
 4. Doors – Interior and Exterior
- v. Sanitizing essentials will be made available in the foyer and sanctuary.

Important Notes:

- This document was produced as an internal use staff document at First Assembly of God. We have compiled and utilized resources from the NJ district of the Assemblies of God as well as local, state and federal recommendations.
- Although legal, risk management and healthcare professionals have been consulted to form this document, it is not intended to be nor is it compliant with guidelines outside of the state of New Jersey.
- First Assembly of God is associated with the Assemblies of God. However, this document should not be interpreted as a statement or guidelines from the New Jersey District of the AG or the national Assemblies of God. First Assembly is a sovereign local church.
- First Assembly freely shares these guidelines without expectation of or demand for remuneration or compensation.
- Lastly, this document will build over the next few months as state and federal mandates change regarding social distancing and public gatherings. This is only the first phase of the Re-launch. Further guidelines have been communicated to our church body in various forms, not limited to but including; video, written communication, oral communication and signage.

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