



**Sanctuary Utilization**  
**Guidelines during COVID-19**  
*Ebenezer Baptist Church Beaverdam, VA*

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to the members and followers of Ebenezer Baptist Church in Beaverdam VA, on the utilization of the buildings and resources during the Commonwealth of Virginia's COVID-19 *Road to Recovery*. This document is modified to provide maximum safety, security, and spiritual comfort for our congregation. This document is grounded in the recommendations and regulations of the Phase 1-5 recovery process set forth by the Commonwealth of VA and the Federal Center for Disease Control.

### **Phase 1**

EBC shall follow the “Stay Home, Work Safe” order mandated by the Governor’s administration for the Commonwealth of VA. During this phase, individuals are recommended to limit all activity and remain at home.

Only six or fewer persons shall be allowed in any building under EBC’s management.

In accordance with state and federal guidelines, EBC shall employ the following safety regulations:

Virtual/teleconference worship services.

The Sunday sermon from the sanctuary shall include:

- Select Clergy Personnel
- Select Media Ministry Personnel
- Select Emergency Medical, Response Personnel
- Select Members of the Security Team

The following safety precautions shall be followed:

- Obtain temperatures upon entering the sanctuary
- Mandatory response to a COVID-19 questionnaire
- Adhere to physical distancing, wearing masks, and hand washing precautions.
- Virtual/teleconference Bible study
- Virtual/teleconference worship service and group gatherings/meetings (unless pre-approved via church Meeting Space Request Form)
- No in-person visitation (telephone/virtual only) except under extenuating circumstances
- Begin assessment of economic impact on members/faith community
- Educating congregation on community resources

### **Phase 2**

Only ten or fewer persons shall be allowed in any building under EBC’s management.

In accordance with state and federal guidelines, EBC shall employ the following safety regulations:

**All safety precautions mentioned in Phase 1, in addition to:**

Begin limited, in-person, contactless visitation (adhering to all safety guidelines)

Continue assessment of economic impact on members/faith community

Continue education on community resources

### **Phase 3**

All in-building activities shall be confined to the Fellowship Hall and Main Sanctuary. Only activities, meetings, or gatherings that are related to the spiritual well-being, uplifting, or enhancement of EBC will be allowed.

In-Person Assembly – Only groups of 25 or fewer in number shall gather for indoor activities unless prior approval is given. Virtual meetings are still strongly encouraged.

In accordance with state and federal guidelines, EBC shall employ the following safety regulations:

**All safety precautions mentioned in Phases 1-2, in addition to:**

Outdoor gatherings – “Church in the field”

- Adhere to physical distancing guidelines
- Parking 1 vehicle space apart
- Face masks are encouraged and hand sanitizer should be used frequently

**Utilization Procedure:**

There shall be a minimum of a full 3-day timeframe between activities with no exceptions. This will allow time for sanitizing between gatherings. Virtual meetings/gatherings should be the first option of choice.

**Sign Up Procedures:**

All activities shall be recorded on an EBC approved Meeting Space Request Form. Please see attached Appendix 1.

- The Meeting Space Request Form must be completed and presented to the Security Team designee **14** days prior to the scheduled activity.
- The ministry signing out the building shall have a contact person present throughout the activity as noted on the Meeting Request Form.
- A member of the EBC security team shall be present at each activity. The security personnel shall be responsible for opening the building, monitoring the Meeting Request Form, ensuring all guidelines are being followed. Security staff shall also be responsible for locking the building.

Each **in-person** activity shall strictly adhere to the following safety guidelines:

1. Social distancing of maintaining 6 ft apart.
2. Wearing masks.
3. Regular use of hand sanitizer/hand washing.
4. Avoid touching, hugging, and handshakes.
5. **No sharing of microphones or other audio equipment**, hymnals, fans bibles, bulletins, or any other group supplies (i.e. crafts)

**Children’s Activities:**

There will be limited children’s activities inside facilities, due to the difficulty of employing physical and social distancing (pre-approval via church Meeting Space Request Form). There shall be no children's activities until Phase 3, due to the difficulty of employing social distancing and liability concerns/issues.

There shall be 3 children to 1 adult chaperon ratio.

**Pastoral Visitation**

Pastoral visitation shall consist of In-person contactless visitation and adherence to all recommended safety guidelines to include but not limited to:

1. Social distancing of maintaining 6 ft apart.
2. Wearing face masks.
3. Regular use of hand sanitizer/handwashing.
4. Avoid touching, hugging, and handshakes.

## **Phase 4**

### **In-door Worship Service**

In-door worship services will be considered during Phase 4 of the Re-entry Process. This will not occur until after January 1, 2021. The decision shall be made after consultation with the Trustee Board, Senior Pastor, and designated members of the Phasing Committee. The Trustees shall continue the oversight and management of the Phasing process.

In accordance with state and federal guidelines, EBC shall employ the following safety regulations:

#### **All safety precautions mentioned in Phase 1-3, in addition to:**

- Church attendance shall be capped at 50% occupancy. High risk members are encouraged to remain at home; and continue virtual/teleconference services.
- Virtual/teleconference worship services will be available as well as in-person worship services with all persons attending adhering to recommended safety guidelines outlined in this document.
- Virtual/teleconference Bible studies as well as in-person Bible study. All persons attending adhering to recommended safety guidelines outlined in this document.
- Virtual/teleconference groups/meetings recommended; limited in-person meetings, adhering to safety guidelines
- We will continue with outdoor gatherings – i.e. Church in the field
- In-person contactless visitation with adherence to all recommended safety guidelines aforementioned in this document.
- Touchless temperatures, and sign-in, for contact tracing
- Removal of hymnals, fans, bibles, and envelopes from all pews and no paper bulletins will be distributed
- Use of pre-recorded music and when employing live music there shall be only 1 microphone per person.
  - Microphones cannot be shared, and all choir members must maintain 6ft. distance apart. Facial masks are recommended. The church's Minister of Music or his/her designee shall be responsible for oversight of these guidelines.
- All congregants shall maintain 6 ft. distance apart while seated.
- Inside doors will remain open for ventilation
- Staggered group gatherings (at least 3 days, recommended) to allow for sanitizing between gatherings.
- Adjusted offering collection and Communion for sanitation
- No indoor afternoon services due to mandatory CDC guidelines of a thorough cleaning, prior to/following religious services.
- Touch-free environments whenever possible (e.g., doors propped open, automatic hand sanitizer, touchless flushing, etc.)
- No food will be served inside the facilities, due to increased difficulty maintaining safety and hygiene
- Limited children's activities due to the difficulty of employing physical and social distancing (pre-approval via Meeting Space Request Form and signed parental or guardian permission form)

## **Phase 5**

Guidelines for this phase shall be determined by the Trustee board, Senior Pastor, and designated members of the Phasing Committee. This is because it is difficult to predict what the new normal may include.

### **Furniture Utilization**

No furniture or equipment shall be signed out from the church during the duration of the Covid-19 pandemic. If there are extenuating circumstances where the trustee board and or pastor determine that furniture or equipment may be signed out from the church, the following procedure shall be executed:

1. The trustee board will designate a person to oversee the furniture or equipment sign out process.
2. The EBC member requesting to borrow furniture or equipment will complete the required sign out form. *See Attachment 3.*
3. The sign out form is submitted to the trustee designee
4. The trustee or a designee will be present to open and close the church and oversee the removal and return of the furniture or equipment.
5. The custodial staff shall establish a protocol for sanitizing equipment once it is returned to the church
6. There shall be a designated amount of furniture/equipment to be set aside for sign out. Only the designated equipment shall be signed out. There shall be a seven-day waiting period between furniture and equipment sign outs. The designated furniture/equipment shall be stored separately from the rest of the furniture/equipment being utilized by the church. The trustee designee shall make the storage determination.

### **Sanitizing and Cleaning**

The Custodial staff shall purchase, maintain an inventory, and ensure availability of sanitizing and cleaning supplies throughout the church. The purchasing and availability of supplies will support the safety and wellbeing of church members, ministries and outside vendors who are utilizing the church facilities. The supplies shall include but are not limited to:

- Hand Sanitizer, Family size of larger
- Disinfectant Wipes, Family size of larger
- Gloves, Medium and large, Latex and nonlatex
- One time use face Masks
- Disinfectant cleaner (Non-Bleach)
- Touchless Thermometers

Sanitizing supplies shall be displayed in the following areas:

- Main Sanctuary (pulpit area, back table)
- All Bathrooms throughout the church
- Vestibule and connected rooms
- Trustee Room
- Sunday School Rooms
- Throughout the Fellowship Hall
- Old Sanctuary

**Only the EBC Trustee Board in consultation with the Senior Pastor and Phasing Committee designee have the authority to amend or terminate any sections of this document.**