



Hickory Bible TABERNACLE

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May 10th

Dear Hickory Bible Tabernacle,

God bless you all. First, I want to thank you all for your understanding and for working together as a body during this unusual time. Under the guidelines that are currently in place, we can hold outdoor gatherings if we maintain the proper social distancing amongst ourselves.

I would like to hold a service outdoors, Lord willing and weather permitting, under our shelter and the adjacent areas this coming Sunday, May 17th, and May 24th. These outdoor gatherings are completely optional, and we of course advise you to remain home if you are in any way uncomfortable participating. (We may only be able to provide an audio recording of outdoor services.) We (and the state of NC) ask you to remain home if you have a fever or any other symptoms related to the virus. Lord willing, we may be able to hold service inside the sanctuary on May 31st and if that happens, we will have a new set of guidelines to adhere to. Wednesday night services will continue to be held via live stream ONLY until further notice.

The attached document is a result of discussions with Deacons, Trustees, and maintenance and technical teams. When we gather on the 17th and 24th, we will need your complete cooperation in following the guidelines set forth below and ask that you obey any direction the deacons may give while you are on the premises. For the safety of all, we need to work together to observe strict social distancing when attending service. HBT leadership is doing all we feel we can and should do to limit exposure. I am asking everyone to please be patient and understanding. If you have any questions or need clarification on the measures described below, please feel free to reach out to me or our Deacons.

Sincerely,

Bro. Barry

"We don't want to interrupt anyone's ability to worship, to pray, but we want to keep folks safe, that's why we're trying to find this middle ground."

DHHS Secretary Mandy Cohen

HBT Outdoor Service

Resumption of Church Attendance:

- Beginning on Sunday, May 17th and Sunday, May 24th, we will be holding services at the normal time under the HBT shelter with the limitations noted below.
- **The Church**, (Sanctuary, lobby, restrooms, classroom, nursery, and library) **will be strictly off limits**. We are doing some renovations in the Church at present. No one will be allowed in the church for any reason except for the technical crew or deacons.
- Restrooms in the Fellowship Hall will be limited to two persons at a time. Young children must be accompanied by parents.
- Use of water fountains will be off-limits.
- We strongly encourage everyone, especially those who fall into the vulnerable or high-risk category, to make their own prayerful decision about attending services. We also ask that any households who have a family member showing possible symptoms of any illness, including but not limited to COVID-19 (coughing, elevated temperature, etc.), **to please stay at home**.
- Should you or anyone you know in the church test positive for COVID-19 or show symptoms, please let myself or a deacon know immediately so we can pray for you and we can reassess our plan.

Social Distancing at the Shelter:

To comply with North Carolina's Recommendations to Promote Social Distancing and Reduce Transmission, please note the following instructions and guidelines we will be following at church:

- Under the shelter, chairs will be loosely pre-arranged to make social distancing possible. Families will be seated together to maximize the limited seating. Please let the Deacons seat you under the shelter as they have the responsibility of ensuring maximizing space while observing social distancing.
- Families are welcome to bring along their own chairs and sit on the grassy areas adjacent to the shelter. The deacons will make sure that the seating arrangements are appropriate.
- You may dress more casually than a normal service, at your discretion, since this will be an outdoor event. (Please remember sunscreen and water!)
- Upon dismissal, we ask that you keep 6 feet from any person who is not a member of your household.
- **Our playground area will be off limits to everyone**. Although we are going to great lengths to keep you safe, there is no guarantee that your children will not be touched by other children. Please consider the risk.

Sanitization and Additional Measures:

- At this point we all are accustomed to using sanitizer regularly, so we recommend you carry hand sanitizer and use it frequently.
- The State of North Carolina and the CDC advise wearing a face covering (mask) when leaving home, inside all public settings, and outdoors if you cannot maintain at least six (6) feet of distancing from a non-family or non-household member. We are not requiring a face covering be worn, and we suggest you make your own choice regarding face coverings while attending church.
- We strongly urge you to regularly clean your personal high-touch surfaces such as steering wheels, wallets, and phones.
- Again, stay at home if you or a member of your household is sick.

Tithes, Offerings, and Other Contributions

- There will be no typical collection of contributions by passing plates. We will continue to receive tithes, offerings, and other contributions by the mail and online methods of making contributions on our website. (www.hickorybibletabernacle.org)

Fellowship Hall and Playground:

- During these two Sunday services, the fellowship hall will be considered an extension of the sanctuary, so we will treat it accordingly.
- The kitchen facility is off limits until further notice.
- The playground facilities are off limits and will not be used until it is deemed safe to do so.

Word and Worship:

- Whether streaming service or attending in-person, we expect to experience the Person of Jesus Christ!



ROY COOPER GOVERNOR

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

EO 138 Phase One-Guidance for Religious Services and Mass Gathering Restrictions

On May 5, 2020, Governor Cooper signed Executive Order 138 ("Phase One Order"). The Phase One Order addresses the current status of the Statewide Stay at Home Order, including limits on certain travel and business operations as well as current mass gathering restrictions. The mass gathering restrictions in the Phase One Order provide more flexibility for many activities, including religious worship. The mass gathering requirements in the Phase One Order are currently set to remain in effect for two weeks beginning on Friday, 8 May 2020. This guidance document describes certain special accommodations for religious worship that are set forth in the Phase One Order. This document is intended to provide helpful guidance. It does not change or override the terms of any Executive Orders. In carrying out the Phase One Order to protect members of the public, local authorities are encouraged to initially address violations with education and warnings.

Section 6 of the Phase One Order generally prohibits mass gatherings. A mass gathering is defined as an "event or convening that brings together more than ten (10) persons at the same time in a single space such as an auditorium, stadium, arena, conference room, meeting hall, or any other confined indoor or outdoor space." However, some occurrences, including religious services, are excepted from the Order's definition of mass gathering. As discussed below, events such as worship services and weddings may take place indoors with ten or fewer people in attendance. These events may also take place outdoors without the ten-person attendance limit, if attendees follow as much as possible the Recommendations to Promote Social Distancing and Reduce Transmissions outlined in the Phase One Order. Public health experts have concluded that conducting these activities outdoors is necessary to protect public health because there is evidence that stationary activities that occur indoors have a higher likelihood of causing transmission of COVID-19.

Outdoor Worship Services

There is no limit on the number of people that can attend outdoor worship or wedding services. Attendees should follow, as much as possible, the Recommendations to Promote Social Distancing and Reduce Transmission highlighted in the Phase One Order. Therefore, an outdoor worship service, similar to a demonstration, may be held where families (from the same household) in attendance maintain at least six feet of social distancing from other families or individuals. The event must be held in an unenclosed space (i.e. not an outdoor facility with walls). Outdoor worship services are also allowed without these restrictions where participants remain in their cars.

Indoor Worship Services

Indoor worship services and weddings are allowed for gatherings of ten people or fewer in the same confined space. However, nothing prevents an indoor worship service from being shifted to multiple services over a period of time, or held in different rooms, to meet the requirements of the Phase One Order.

In situations where it is not possible to conduct worship services outdoors or through other accommodations - such as through, for example, a series of indoor services of ten or fewer attendees, or through online services - the ten-person attendance limit on indoor worship services does not apply. For example, there may be situations in which particular religious beliefs dictate that some or all of a religious service must be held indoors and that more than ten persons must be in attendance. While indoors, participants should continue to adhere to the Recommendations to Promote Social Distancing and Reduce Transmission.

Funeral services

To promote human dignity and limit suffering, up to fifty people may attend a funeral held indoors. People meeting at a funeral should observe the Recommendations to Promote Social Distancing and Reduce Transmission set forth in the Phase One Order.