



## COVID-19 MINISTRY HANDBOOK

Due to continued concern over the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, it has become necessary for Bella Vista to implement temporary modifications to our worship services and ministry operations. The following guidelines are intended to provide detailed instructions for all members and ministries to observe.

### I. WORSHIP SERVICES

#### A. CORPORATE SUNDAY WORSHIP

*Congregational worship on the Lord's Day is essential. The Church in Scripture is literally "the assembly". As such, we are called and commanded to assemble together (Heb. 10:25) for worship, fellowship, and discipleship. Knowing this, it is our goal to facilitate safe opportunity to obey God's Word.*

- i. **There will be two (2) Sunday Worship opportunities at 8AM and 10:00AM in an effort to accommodate the membership and observe social distancing.** Each service will only be one hour and fifteen minutes in duration.
- ii. Any member who is ill or exhibiting one or more symptoms of COVID-19 should avoid attending service. These symptoms include:
  1. Cough (dry or wet)
  2. Fever
  3. Shortness of breath
- iii. All congregants must wear facemasks (or an appropriate face covering) during the service. The masks should cover the nose and mouth and should not be removed during the service, with the following exceptions:
  1. Those reading, singing, praying, speaking, or preaching into a microphone may remove their facemask until finished.
  2. The facemask may be temporarily removed to eat/drink Communion (Lord's Supper).
  3. The facemask may be temporarily removed by those who are being baptized. Those baptizing, however, must wear a mask.
- iv. To avoid cross-contamination, congregants should refrain from wearing gloves (even if they are disposable). Those requiring gloves for ministry tasks will be provided with them during service.
- v. Congregants are asked to enter the building through the front entrance only unless otherwise instructed. The front entrance doors will be propped open for entry and exit of the service.
- vi. Until further notice, all public water fountains are out of service. Congregants are encouraged to bring a personal water bottle if they require water during service.



- vii. Congregants are expected to wash their hands for at least twenty (20) seconds after using the restroom.
- viii. Congregants are expected to remove and dispose of all personal trash by the end of service. This includes, but is not limited to: tissues, napkins, paper, pens, candy wrappers, etc.
- ix. Congregants should refrain from hugging, kissing, or shaking hands, even if wearing gloves. Appropriate greetings are waves and elbow bumps.
- x. Congregants should refrain from passing out or sharing candy, gum, mints, cough drops, etc.
- xi. Congregants are encouraged to sit on the same row as members of their own households, if possible.
- xii. Congregants are encouraged to continue utilizing online or text giving, if possible. If giving in person, offering receptacles will be handled by an usher or a deacon at the front of sanctuary to be given upon entering or leaving worship. Trays will NOT be passed. Also, if giving in person, please avoid licking offering envelopes to seal them.
- xiii. Congregants are encouraged, but not required, to bring a personal bottle of hand sanitizer to be used after touching any surface. There will be sanitizer dispensers prominently positioned for use whenever needed.
- xiv. After the benediction is given, not to congregate in the church foyer or parking lots to avoid congestion and to allow for the disinfecting of the sanctuary and clearing of the parking lots for the next service.
- xv. If spending a brief moment in conversation or fellowship after worship, congregants should continue to wear a mask (or an appropriate face covering) and avoid touching, shaking hands, hugging, or kissing.

## **B. BIBLE STUDY**

*Bible Study is an important aspect of Christian discipleship. Our Savior instructed disciples to be made by "...teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:20). Unlike the corporate worship, however, Bible Study can be done without in-person gatherings. To that end, to limit the potential for exposure to COVID-19, in-person Bible Study will continue to be suspended. We will continue to have virtual Bible Study via the church website ([www.bellavistambc.org](http://www.bellavistambc.org)), Facebook Live, and YouTube on Wednesday's at 7PM.*

## **C. C.A.R.E. ACADEMY (SUNDAY SCHOOL)**

*C.A.R.E. (Christian Advancement through Redemptive Education) ACADEMY provides our members with an additional opportunity for Christian Education through the continued study of God's Word. Nonetheless, to limit the potential for exposure to COVID-19, C.A.R.E. Academy has been moved to a virtual weekly format. The following lists the schedule for all courses.*



i. 30-minute course lessons will be posted to the Bella Vista website ([www.bellavistambc.org](http://www.bellavistambc.org)), Facebook and YouTube. The lessons will be available for viewing anytime during the day beginning at 8:00 A.M. Check out your assigned class or as many as you like!

Course	Day & Time	Instructor
Men's Man Cave	Monday – 8:00 A.M. post	Nedwin Winters
Women's Discipleship	Monday – 8:00 A.M. post	Carolyn Sanders / Joslyn Williams
Spiritual Formation	Tuesday – 8:00 A.M. post	Rev. Eric Bingham
Financial Stewardship	Tuesday – 8:00 A.M. post	Dr. Queen Martin / Michael Allen
Young Adults	Thursday – 8:00 A.M. post	Rev. Bobby Thomas
Christian Leadership	Thursday – 8:00 A.M. post	Velicia Moore
Vanguard/Traditional Youth/ACT2	Friday – 8:00 A.M. post	Teacher Rotation Rev. Bobby Thomas

#### **D. BAPTISM**

*Baptism is the first of two ordinances in the Baptist denomination. Jesus commanded that disciples be made through baptism (Matt. 28:19). In baptism, we are identified with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection (Rom. 6:3-4). Because baptism is necessarily physical and involves person-to-person contact, the following temporary guidelines should be observed to minimize potential exposure to COVID-19:*

- i. Deacons/Deaconesses assisting with baptism must be masked at all times.
- ii. Deacons/Deaconesses assisting with baptism must wear a new pair of disposable gloves at all times.
- iii. Only one (1) Deacon and/or Deaconess may assist each baptismal candidate.
- iv. All Preacher's participating in the baptism must be masked and wear a new pair of disposable gloves.



- v. If there is more than one (1) candidate for baptism, the baptizing preacher and deacon should discard and replace their gloves before baptizing the next candidate.
- vi. Baptismal candidates should not wear a mask during the baptism, but must wear a new pair of disposable gloves.

#### **E. COMMUNION (THE LORD'S SUPPER)**

*Communion is the second of the two ordinances in the Baptist denomination (Luke 22:19). Because Communion is something that must be done together in one another's presence (1 Cor. 11:33), the following temporary precautions will be enacted:*

- i. Only pre-packaged Communion should be used.
- ii. When preparing Communion trays, Deacons must wear disposable gloves.
- iii. When serving Communion, Deacons must wear disposable gloves. Those gloves should be discarded after the Communion service.
- iv. To minimize contact, Communion trays will not be passed. On Communion Sunday's, assigned Deacons will be positioned in the sanctuary foyer holding a tray. Congregants will pick up communion elements upon entering the sanctuary for worship. The music ministry will have a designated Deacon and tray as well to be served prior to worship. The Pastor will have a designated tray to serve only the ministers and diaconate during the observance of the ordinance.
- v. Congregants with physical limitations can remain seated and a masked, gloved Deacon will bring a Communion tray to them.
- vi. Masks may be removed only when eating and drinking, and should be replaced immediately after.
- vii. Empty cups must not be left in the pews, but should be disposed of by the congregant in a trashcan when exiting.

#### **F. FUNERALS**

*Death is never easy, but can become difficult when there has been no planning. While it is our hope and prayer that all of our members remain healthy and alive, we nonetheless understand that death is a reality in the world. Thus, we will enact the following temporary guidelines for all funerals held at Bella Vista.*

- i. Bella Vista must comply with whatever rules and regulations that have been put in place by each respective funeral home. Their stipulations override any that we may establish at present.
- ii. In the instance of more relaxed regulations, each funeral will be limited to a fifty (50) person gathering.



- iii. Viewing periods will remain open, but all funeral attendees remaining for the service must wear a mask (or an appropriate face covering) for the entirety of the service.
- iv. Music during the service will be limited to soloists or praise teams. No full choirs will be permitted to sing during funerals. Members of the music ministry will not be counted in the number of fifty.
- v. Pastor Davis and one (1) other assigned minister will conduct the funeral in its entirety.
- vi. No more than two (2) ushers will serve during the funeral.
- vii. There will be no repast at the church.
- viii. No service is to exceed to one (1) hour. This does not include the viewing period.

## **II. MINISTRIES**

### **A. CULINARY MINISTRY**

*Eating a meal together is a fundamental aspect of fellowship. The Culinary Ministry, therefore, is a vital component of the fellowship of the Church. Nonetheless, due to the constraints of fellowship space and concerns for sanitation, there will be no food prepared or served at Bella Vista until further notice.*

### **B. NEW MEMBERS MINISTRY**

*In the life of the Church, new members are added. It is important that these new members are welcomed with joy. Our New Members Ministry provides that at Bella Vista. The following temporary guidelines will enable them the New Members Ministry to serve in the safest way possible:*

- i. All New Members Ministry workers must wear a mask (or an appropriate face covering) at all times.
- ii. When receiving new members or baptism candidates, New Member Ministry workers must be sure to avoid hugging, shaking hands, or kissing them. Elbow bumps are an acceptable alternative.
- iii. All New Members Orientation classes will be moved to a designated classroom upstairs in the G.H. Nickerson MPB. Social distancing is to be in place and ALL must wear a mask. This class can be offered at 9AM.
- iv. New members that are being welcomed into the fold will be publicly acknowledged, but will not receive the right hand of fellowship. While the act of receiving the right hand of fellowship is congratulatory and done in a spirit of welcome (Galatians 2:9), it is not doctrinally insistent and, therefore, not a necessary mandate for acceptance into membership.

### **C. CUSTODIAL STAFF**



*The Custodial staff ensures that our facilities are neat, clean, and orderly prior to each service. This is especially important during this COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to the weekly cleaning schedule currently in place, the following temporary guidelines are to be followed:*

- i. When cleaning the facilities, disposable gloves must be worn at all times.
- ii. All public surfaces must be disinfected after each service.
- iii. All pump hand soap should be removed from the restrooms so that only touch-free soap dispensers are used.
- iv. In addition to typical cleaning routine, the Custodial Ministry will lead in the disinfecting efforts after each Sunday service. Groups will be formed and assigned to a service.

#### **D. DEACONS/DEACONESS MINISTRY**

*Deacons/Deaconesses are one of two offices in the Church. They are responsible for serving the Pastor by caring for the physical needs of the congregation (Acts 6:3-4). The following temporary guidelines will enable our Deacons/Deaconesses Ministry to serve in the safest way possible:*

- i. For instructions on Baptism and Communion (the Lord's Supper) see above.
- ii. To limit microphone use, the offering prayer will come from the pulpit.

#### **E. GREETERS' MINISTRY**

*Greeters are often the first ministry workers congregants encounter. They set the tone of Christian love and fellowship to be experienced during the service. The following temporary guidelines will enable our Greeters to serve in the safest way possible:*

- i. Each greeter must wear a mask (or an appropriate face covering) at all times.
- ii. Greeters should avoid hugging, kissing, or shaking hands while greeting.
- iii. Greeters will direct all non-gloved worshippers to sanitizing stations before entering the sanctuary, if members or visitors do not have a personal sanitizer. PLEASE ASK.
- iv. Until further notice, no visitor cards should be distributed or filled

#### **F. USHERS MINISTRY**

*Ushers provide a valuable ministry in the sanctuary. Not only do they assist congregants with seating, they ensure that the service remains orderly by minimizing distractions during sacred moments. The following temporary guidelines will enable our Ushers to serve in the safest way possible:*

- i. Each usher must wear a mask (or an appropriate face covering) at all times.



- ii. All ushers must wear disposable gloves while ushering. Gloves should be discarded at the end of service.
- iii. Ushers should avoid hugging, kissing, or shaking hands while ushering.
- iv. Ushers will ensure and that all members are properly seated in accordance with the social distancing measures that the Pastor and Deacons will coordinate.

#### **G. HEALTH MINISTRY**

Medical episodes and emergencies are often unpredictable. When they occur, it is necessary that trained and qualified individuals be present to assist. Our Health Ministry members provide this invaluable service for our congregation. The following temporary guidelines will enable our Health Ministry to serve in the safest way possible:

- i. Only members of the Medical Ministry are authorized to assist during a medical episode or emergency. All others, including family members, must maintain a six feet distance from the area where the medical episode or emergency is being treated.
- ii. Members of the Medical Ministry must wear a mask (or an appropriate face covering) while assisting congregants.
- iii. Members of the Medical Ministry must wear a new pair of disposable gloves while assisting congregants. Those gloves must be discarded.
- iv. Digital thermometers have been purchased and will be placed in an accessible area near the Ushers, if needed. If medically possible, any ill person should be moved to the foyer of the sanctuary or back office area immediately.
- v. ALL incidents should be documented in the event that members who attended that particular service need to be informed of any COVID-19 related issues.

#### **H. WORSHIP ARTS MINISTRY**

*Music is a gift from God. We use music to express emotions, communicate ideas, entertain, etc. In the Bible, music is also used in praise and worship (Psa. 150). One major aspect of this is singing. Because COVID-19 is a temporary virus, it is especially important that we adjust activities that require one to expel breath in large amounts. As such, our Worship Arts Ministry will implement the temporary changes:*

- i. All choirs are temporarily suspended. In their place, the Praise Team will sing for **at least** the first month.
- ii. Singers should be spaced 4 to 6 feet apart from one another at all times.
- iii. Singers should not have their face covered while singing, but are encouraged to wear a new pair of disposable gloves when handling microphones.
- iv. Each soloist will be given their own personal microphone cover. When singing, the singer must use their microphone cover and remove it when finished.



- v. Only authorized persons should touch or play the musical instruments. Musicians are encouraged to wear disposable gloves while playing, if possible. They are also encouraged to wipe down instruments.

#### **G. TRUSTEE/FINANCE MINISTRY**

*Our Trustees are responsible for accurately counting and preparing cash and checks given as offerings for banking deposit. The following temporary guidelines will enable our Trustees to serve in the safest way possible:*

- i. Trustees must wear masks while conducting business in the finance office.
- ii. Trustees must wear disposable gloves while opening offering envelopes and counting money. These gloves should be discarded after counting is completed.

#### **F. CHILDREN/ YOUTH/NURSERY MINISTRY**

*The Church is an institution that transcends barriers. It comprised of all ages and stages of life. It is important that we engage our Youth to learn about and live for Jesus. Youth Ministry is a vital component of that effort. The following temporary guidelines will enable our Youth Ministry to serve in the safest way possible:*

- i. All Youth services, outings, and trips are postponed until further notice.
- ii. ACT 2 classes are temporarily suspended until further notice.
- iii. Youth Choir, Praise Dancers, and Ushers are temporarily suspended.
- iv. All Youth Ushers classes and activities will be offered in a virtual format.
- v. The Nursery will be temporarily suspended until further notice.

All ministry outings and events are still cancelled at this point. Please remain prayerful and continue to partner with us as we do our best offer a safe, yet suitable, worship environment. Let's exhibit patience with one another, as this will be an adjustment period for all parties involved. Most of all, let us always remember worship is, both, our purpose and our privilege! We look forward to seeing you soon!



