

June 1, 2020



# PROVIDENCE

BAPTIST CHURCH

*Start Here*



“Little children, let us love,  
not in word or speech,  
but in truth and action.”

1 John 3:18 (NRSV)

## A Thoughtful Path Forward



Lee Canipe

On the next page, you will find the plan for re-opening the Providence campus and resuming church-related activities. This plan was developed by our Covid-19 Task Force, which has been meeting regularly since late March to help make the decisions necessary to keep our ministries strong while we've been doing church remotely. I am grateful for the commitment, wisdom, and enthusiasm of this group.

Providence is extraordinarily blessed with good leaders who take seriously the trust that you have invested in them.

A few comments, then, about the plan that this task force has developed.

The first thing you'll notice is that it takes a conservative approach to re-opening our campus. That is intentional. We're all eager to get out and about again—and that includes getting back to church. At the same time, we do not want to put one another in harm's way. Philippians 2:4 tells us to look first not to our own interests, but rather to the interests of others. In these circumstances, looking out for the interests of our fellow church members means opening up slowly, safely, and in a way that is sustainable.

The second thing you'll notice is that there is no set date for resuming congregational worship in the Sanctuary. Again, that's intentional. The very idea of pinning a specific date down for anything these days seems a bit absurd. Instead, we will pay attention to recommendations from our public health officials concerning mass gatherings in indoor spaces. Once it's safe for crowds of 150 or more to gather indoors, we can resume worshiping together in the Sanctuary.

That said, when we come back, we're going to have to do things differently at the outset. There will be directions to follow about entering and exiting the

Sanctuary, where we can sit while we're in there, and what we can do while we're in there. We will still be social distancing then, which means that the capacity of our worship space will be reduced. Our ultimate goal, of course, is to resume worshiping together as one congregation in one service—but before we get to that point, we will likely have to worship together for a time as several smaller congregations in more than one service each Sunday. In order to help us prepare for this interim period more effectively, you will soon be receiving a survey via email. Please participate. The more input we get from you, the better we can plan.

The third thing you'll notice is that online worship is here to stay. Even after we can worship together again in the Sanctuary, we will continue to livestream our services each Sunday. This is a tremendous step forward for us, as it allows us to continue including people in our virtual congregation who, for whatever reason, cannot join us in person. Since mid-March, Providence members who are homebound, in assisted care facilities, and living in other parts of the country (and world!) have been letting us know what a gift online worship has been to them. I'm glad we can keep it going. I'm also hopeful that online worship will provide yet another way for us to introduce people to Jesus and welcome guests into our family of faith.

So, here we go. This pandemic has tested us. Some of us have suffered great losses; everyone has suffered some loss. Still, God has been faithful in the midst of it all. As we move ahead, slowly but surely, into what everyone seems to be calling the "new normal," may we take with us the good things we've learned, gained, and experienced over the last few months that can make us better citizens, better church members, and better followers of the risen Christ. After all, asks the apostle Paul in Romans 8:31, "What then shall we say to things? If God is for us, who can be against us?"

May the peace of Christ be with you!

## A Responsible Re-opening

For over two months now, the Providence campus has been closed in an effort to promote the health and safety of our community during the Covid-19 pandemic. We believe that this difficult, but necessary, step was consistent with the command that Jesus gives us to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. Now that the spread of the virus has slowed to the point where our hospitals and clinics are no longer in imminent danger of being overwhelmed, the time has come to begin re-opening our church campus.

Providence's Covid-19 Task Force has met online almost every Sunday afternoon since mid-March to guide decisions

and shape our ministry together during this time of doing church remotely. This task force consists of our staff ministers, interim church administrator, weekday director, deacon chair and chair-elect, moderator and moderator-elect, and the chairs of our finance and personnel committees. In recent weeks, the task force has turned its attention to developing a plan for re-opening the Providence campus in a way that is smart, safe, and sustainable.

For the sake of consistency, the phases of the Providence plan developed by the task force, and reviewed by the three Providence physicians who advised our initial coronavirus

*Continued on page 3 ...*



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preparations back in February—Matt Blackwell, Hilary Canipe, and Ashley Honeycutt—mirror the phases of the re-opening plan outlined by the North Carolina governor’s office. The difference between the two plans is primarily a matter of pacing. Providence will not move faster than public health officials advise. We may, however, move slower than they allow.

The task force understands that this deliberate pace will likely generate some frustration, especially if other churches in Charlotte open faster than Providence does. Because the apostle Paul tells us in Romans 13:10 that “love does no harm to a neighbor,” our commitment to care for one another—especially the most vulnerable in our family of faith—calls us to be careful in how we re-engage with one another. The

Providence plan takes that commitment seriously.

At all times throughout the implementation of this re-opening plan, individuals and families should take necessary, reasonable precautions for their own safety. Additional steps by our custodial staff to clean and sanitize church facilities on a regular basis will be in effect for the foreseeable future, but any decision to attend activities at Providence will come with a degree of risk until an effective vaccine for this coronavirus is widely available. All people will be strongly encouraged to wear masks while on campus. Finally, the Providence plan is designed to be adjusted as public health conditions warrant. These adjustments will be communicated to the Providence community as clearly and quickly as possible. Here’s how we are going to do it:

## Now that North Carolina is in Phase 2 ...

Restrictions on the size of public gatherings have been somewhat relaxed. Members of vulnerable populations are still encouraged to stay home. **For Providence, this means that:**



The church campus remains closed. Ministers and staff are encouraged to continue working remotely, but may resume working on-campus under social distancing conditions.



Worship continues online only.



The Weekday Education Ministry re-opened on June 1.



Sunday school classes, Bible studies, and committee meetings continue online only. Outdoor gatherings on church grounds are permitted, provided that the interim church administrator has been informed and social distancing practices are observed.



Weddings and funerals are allowed on campus, provided that 50 or fewer people are in attendance and social distancing practices are observed.

## When North Carolina enters Phase 3 ...

Restrictions on the size of public gatherings will be further relaxed. Members of vulnerable populations will be encouraged to continue social distancing when away from home. **For Providence, this means that:**



The church campus may open on a limited basis during the week. Ministers and staff may continue working remotely if they choose. Those working on-campus will continue to social distance.



Worship may begin in the Sanctuary once public gatherings of 150 or more are allowed in North Carolina. Multiple, identical services per Sunday will likely be necessary in order to accommodate appropriate social distancing practices. Online RSVP communication may be utilized to help predict and manage congregation size. Members of vulnerable populations will be encouraged to stay home during the initial weeks of in-person worship and exercise an abundance of caution thereafter in deciding whether or not to attend services. Worship will continue to be available online.



Sunday school classes, Bible studies, and committee meetings will continue online only, though outdoor meetings on-campus will be allowed. These restrictions will be in effect through the end of summer, and may extend beyond Labor Day if circumstances warrant. Once Sunday School classes resume meeting on campus, extended childcare during worship will be available. Once Wednesday night activities resume on campus, food service—including meals and coffee service—can begin again.



Weddings and funerals will be allowed on campus, provided that 150 or fewer people are in attendance and social distancing practices are in effect.



The Activity Center may re-open on a limited basis utilizing advanced cleaning and sanitation measures.

## Summer Camps

We have opened registration for our summer day camps for children in grades K-5 completed.

CAMP CALENDAR	
July:	
6-10	Flag Football
13-17	Camp Everything
20-24	Basketball
27-31	Choir
August:	
3-7	Soccer
10-14	Baseball

Each camp is from 9:00am until 1:00pm, with drop-off at 8:45am. (Extended care is available from 7:30-8:45am for an additional \$20/week or \$5/day.)

Camp cost is \$125/camp. Fees are refundable until one week prior to camp, minus a \$25 administrative fee. Fees are nonrefundable one week prior to camp.

Register your child at [www.providencebc2.org/summer-camps-2020](http://www.providencebc2.org/summer-camps-2020). (One form can be used for multiple camps.)

Campers will need to bring a nut-free lunch and drink each day. A snack will be provided.



Contact Kristen Hendrix with questions at [khendrix@providencebc.org](mailto:khendrix@providencebc.org).

## Student Happenings



**PASSPORT** - Beginning June 7th and going through July 31st, ALL students are invited to take part in daily devotions, games and activities, missions projects, and worship—all from home. More information on this summer's unique camp experience is on the student webpage.



### Zoom Live Hangouts

It's our mid-week Zoom every Wednesday.

Middle School at 6:00pm

High School at 7:00pm

Links are posted each week on the student page!



SAVE Bring in your change for Families Forward Charlotte!

**Save Your Change!**

We'll be collecting change through the summer for Families Forward Charlotte.

High School Mission Trip  
July 19-25, 2020



### High School Mission Trip July 19 - 25

Plans are still underway for High School Mission Trip. Dane will communicate more details in the coming weeks.

For more information about the Student Ministry, visit the student website at [www.providencebc.org/students](http://www.providencebc.org/students).

## College Ministry



Caitie Jackson

It's time for another summer together with the Providence College Summer Program. Check out what's happening!

### Weekly Events:

Sundays - Spend some time in reflection with a Sunday morning devotional each week (starting June 7) at [www.providencebc.org/college](http://www.providencebc.org/college).

Wednesdays (starting June 13) - Join our Small Group Study and Discussion on Zoom (info on the college page).

### Special Events:

**"Ask a College Student"** - Wednesday, June 3 at 7:30pm (High school seniors only) You know what's best about having

an older sibling? Someone has gone through "it" before you! Take advantage of the know-how and advice for what comes next. Join us for a virtual time of fellowship and open discussion with your very own Providence "siblings." High school seniors can ask questions about school, transitioning, faith, and hear practical tips for what to expect in the coming year.

**"Graduation Celebration"** - Sunday, June 7 at 7:00pm

Let us gather virtually to celebrate our seniors graduating from college! We will spend time hearing stories from our graduates and sharing affirmations as we bless them in the journey ahead.

**"What's Next"** (High school seniors only) - Sundays at 4:30pm on June 7, June 21, July 5, July 19, and August 2 While the transition from high school to college is an exciting time, it can also be daunting. This virtual time together is designed for high school graduates to have a time of fellowship and open discussion with special guests, and to discuss topics to help equip them for "What's Next."

### ServeCLT

We will have service opportunities in the months of June and July to serve Providence and to serve Charlotte. Look on the website for info.

**End of Summer Celebration** - August 9, details TBD

*Continue to visit the website for more events and information.*

*\* Dates and events subject to change according to changes in church gathering guidelines.*

### Virtual Game Nights

**Jackbox Games**

Monday, June 15

**Trivia**

Monday, June 29

**Jackbox Games**

Sunday, July 12

**Jeopardy**

Sunday, July 26



For more information about the College Summer Ministry, visit the website at [www.providencebc.org/college](http://www.providencebc.org/college).

## Adult Bible Study



Blake Kendrick

Minister for Adult Discipleship Blake Kendrick will be offering a summer video series covering the topic, "The Great Cloud of Witnesses." The six-session series will be offered the 2nd and 4th Thursdays in June, July and August. During this series we will be exploring the saints and pioneers of our Christian heritage. We will profile influential Christian leaders and thinkers. Some names you'll recognize (like Martin Luther and John Calvin), while others you won't (like Augustine of Hippo, Saint Athanasius). The study is sure to be engaging and informational. Join us! Check out the "Adult Studies" tab on our website at [providencebc.org/adult-studies](http://providencebc.org/adult-studies).

*Please note: Thanks to the great work of our Sunday School teachers, many of whom are now meeting each week online with their classes, Sunday, May 31, will be the last Sunday that Blake Kendrick and Lee Canipe will provide lessons via video as part of the Sunday Bundle.*

## Moments of Music



Timothy Hill

Throughout this time of separation, music has been a comfort to me. I've cherished the moments at my piano or with my guitar—even more so when the family joins in for some harmony. But, oh how I have missed the choir. There is something so special about singing together, and during this time apart, I have grieved the loss of intricate polyphony and robust harmonic expression. You can imagine my heart's joy when we were able to bring a few singers together (at a safe distance) on Anniversary Sunday ... it was truly a gift from God!

In the coming weeks, we will slowly and safely begin to introduce choral singing again. While the process may be tedious and slow, it will be worth it. Let us be reminded that even during the darkest times, the music will live on ... and the God of and for whom we sing will never forsake us.

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, amen.*

## Diaspora and Bundle

We email the **Diaspora** every M/W/F at 5:00pm, which details important information, pastoral care announcements, and service opportunities. Then, we send the **Sunday Bundle**, which gives links to the day's worship materials. Missing out? We can help!

Email Summer Sneed.  
ssneed@providencecbc.org

## Facebook LIVE

With God, all things are possible!

In March, we launched "The Providence Daily Show" as a way of staying connected during this season of separation. Each week, we have shared special moments together through the things we love. As we enter the summer months, we say "Thank You" to our ministers and staff for making these shows possible, and wish them well as they take a well-deserved break.

*Remember, you can see past shows on our Facebook page!*



## Families Forward Thanks



Thank you to all who brought food and monetary donations for Families Forward at our last drive-through blessing event. We donated nearly 1500 pounds of food for our Charlotte friends! The food will be distributed over the next several weeks to families in the Families Forward Charlotte program.

**LOOKING AHEAD:** Our next project for Families Forward is to recruit family liaisons for the 2020-2021 school year. These mentors are trained to help guide families through a year-long process of goal-setting. They are encouragers who do not need to know all the answers. They just have to be willing to help find out! Currently Families Forward is offering online information and training about being a liaison. Available meetings are linked to the "Serve" page on our website. For more

information contact Sarah Blackwell (sbblackwell@msn.com) or Mike Arim, Chair of the Missions Committee (mike.arim0712@gmail.com).

Be sure to check out ways you can continue to help our ministry partners by visiting [www.providencecbc.org/serve](http://www.providencecbc.org/serve).





## Stephen Ministry

Recently, I had the opportunity to talk with one of our Stephen Ministry Care Receivers (a church member). In the beginning, this individual was very open with me about how she didn't feel as though she needed a Stephen Minister. But I encouraged her to consider it, and suggested that she re-think her decision. I provided her with additional details about the ministry, and I prayed that she would reconsider.

During our recent conversation she said, "WOW, I had no idea what Stephen Ministry was all about."

The match between her and her Stephen Minister was ideal. She said she doesn't know how she would have gotten along without her Stephen Minister, whom she now loves. She affirmed that Stephen Ministry is a wonderful program and highly recommends it!

This is just one of the conversations about Stephen Ministry that I have had with people in our congregation. I want to encourage

you to consider sharing the load with a Stephen Minister. Call me so that we can talk about it!

We will be conducting another Stephen Ministry Training Class this fall. I would also encourage you to pray about becoming a Stephen Minister. It involves a one hour commitment per week plus two monthly supervisory group meetings, and that is doable!

And the training involves ten weeks of one night per week sessions and two weekend retreats. I would love to talk to you about becoming a Stephen Minister.



*Martha Haigler*

Contacts:

Martha H. Haigler at 704.608.7947  
Pastoral Care Director / Stephen Ministry Leader

Bill Griffin at 704.651.2569  
Stephen Ministry Leader



## Sympathies

We send our heartfelt condolences to:

James Hoagland in the death of his wife, Mary Hoagland on May 7.

Martha Iley in the death of her sister, Helen Purdy on May 8.

The family of Margaret Smith in her death on May 11.

Alethia Ross in the death of her husband, Alan Ross on May 13.

Mildred Bishop in the death of her husband, Frank Bishop on May 15.



## A Note of Thanks

Debbie and I want to say "THANKS" for everything—all of the cards, concerns, calls and food, but most especially, the prayers during my time in the hospital and as I have been at home recovering. We are firmly convinced that God heard the prayers and answered! We have always loved the compassion and fellowship of the Providence Baptist Church members, but this crisis has really made us more appreciative of how kind and caring you are. When things would get tough, all I had to do was pull out the cards and they gave me the strength to keep pushing on. Much love and thanks!

Mike & Debbie Arim



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## Minister on Call

Although we are not allowed to visit members in the hospital, and our personal contact must remain at a minimum, we are still ministering, praying and supporting our church family. Please call if you need anything.

**Minister on call: 704.366.4030x147**

May 26 - June 2: Julia Wright

June 2 - 8 : Lee Canipe

June 9 - 15: Blake Kendrick

June 16 - 22: Dane Jackson

June 23 - 29: Julia Wright



## Faithful Giving

Please continue to give faithfully . . . our ministries are still very active. Consider scheduling your giving directly through your bank, saving us processing fees.

See all your giving options below:  
[providencebc.org/why-give](http://providencebc.org/why-give)

Or mail your gift to:  
Providence Baptist Church  
Remote Finance Office  
5118 Shadow Pond Lane  
Charlotte, NC 28226-3217

## Next Connections is July 1, 2020.

Deadline for submitting articles, photos, or announcements is **Noon, Monday, June 15th.** Articles should be 350 words or less. Email your submissions to: [ssneed@providencebc.org](mailto:ssneed@providencebc.org).

*Thank you!*



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