

Grace Gathering 90 Day Church-Wide COVID-19 Strategic Plan (April-June)

While we don't know how long this crisis will last, we believe we need to prepare for the next 2-3 months.

Physical Health and Spiritual Opportunity

We have two primary areas of focus during this crisis. Along with praying this crisis will end, we want to abide by the governmental mandate of doing everything we can to prevent the spread of the virus. At the same time, we believe this is one of the greatest spiritual opportunities in a generation.

One of the most influential strongholds in our culture is over-commitment and over-busyness. However, in the coming weeks and maybe months, we may never ever again have all of our busyness and over-activity eliminated and pruned back the way we are now. Besides health workers or others in fields that will require more work during these days, the vast majority of the population will have more margin, space, and down-time than any other time in a generation.

Activity and social mobility are at historic lows. And at the same time, the isolation of this season is causing people's desire for connection and community to be at historic highs. The church cannot miss this opportunity and the combination of these two realities.

Meeting Needs Inside and Outside the Church Body

We believe the needs within our church and within our community are going to grow and multiply in the coming weeks, and we have people right now working behind the scenes creating systems and communication structures where we can determine how many people have needs and secondly where we can determine how many people are available to step up and help meet needs. For example, we will have a team of people who will be willing to call and contact every single family at Grace Gathering every week with three questions: 1) what are your needs, 2) are you available to help anyone else in need, 3) how can we pray right now with you? If people are dealing with physical health issue, mental health issues, depression, financial struggles, food needs, we want to link people in need with people who can help meet needs both inside and outside of our church.

Community Organization Partnerships

We will have leaders in place to be in regular contact with the community organizations in our city so that we can mobilize people from the church to help serve with those organizations and also so we can connect people in need inside/outside the church with those organizations that are prepared to meet those needs.

Developing Online Community

During this time of isolation and margin, Grace will help every single person within the church be a part of an online community group that will meet at least once a week and at times more. The current staff is right now building an infrastructure and plan to accommodate this goal. Every group, missional community, Bible study, leadership team, discipleship group, etc. will be asked to create their own zoom online video account that can be used at any time. The \$15 cost per month will be paid by anyone in the group who is able to pay that over the course of three months. If no one in the group can afford that amount, the church will purchase this account for the next three months for any group in the church. There will be church-wide training for how to utilize this online platform for every group. The goal is that dozens and dozens of newly formed online groups are formed so that every person at Grace is in one.

Church-Wide 10 Week Alpha Series

The Sunday after Easter on April 19, we will begin a 10-week church-wide focus called Alpha (www.alphausa.org). Alpha is a discussion-based series that raises questions about life and about the Christian faith. There will be ten themes over the ten weeks. Each Sunday our sermon will be about that theme, there will be a small group video that all of our groups can go through that week with video-based discussions, there will be opportunity for everyone to invite friends, neighbors, and others open to God to the online weekly group, and our youth ministry and children ministry will all go through these same themes every week online as well. This is going to be a great unifier as we are all going to feel

together as one as everyone participates in this 10-week series at the same time. Alpha is world-wide, and they have currently adopted everything to go online.

Daily Devotionals

The morning staff devotionals will be live streamed for the entire congregation Monday through Friday from 8:30 to 9:00 a.m. with worship, Scripture, and prayer.

Sunday Live Streaming

We will continue our live streaming every Sunday morning.

Online Prayer Rooms and Pastoral Care

We will be developing regular and topic specific online prayer rooms throughout the week where people can pray and where people can be prayed over as needed. We will also utilize shepherding teams for areas of physical and spiritual pastoral needs.

Children and Youth Ministry

Children and youth ministries are developing ways to engage families, children, and teens in creative ways.

Building Guidelines

The Grace Gathering building will be closed to church members, but will be open to church staff who can access the building for live streaming, running finance/business, and leading on-line meetings from the offices. The specifics of access could change during this time as direction from the governor and health officials evolve, and we will do our best to keep you updated as needed.

The Family Room is set up as a video room for live streaming and will only be used for larger scale applications. However, we are requiring that no more than ten people be in that room at one time and that leaders maintain the six-foot social distancing mandate. For any of the rooms utilized by the staff during this time, all areas and equipment will be regularly cleaned and sanitized to maintain the safest and cleanest environment possible.

Finance

Today 72% of all giving comes in online. We are hoping most of the other 28% will be able to start doing this but mail by check is also an option. Grace is debt free, has a long history of spending less than income, and has an emergency fund if needed. The church is sound financially. During this season all church ministry spending that is non-essential and not connected to COVID-19 responses will be suspended until further notice.

Staffing

All staff will maintain their same hours and pay, but each staff member will be asked to utilize their allotted hours in ways that pertain to the new and developing needs of this season. Some of these hours may be in or outside their normal area of oversight.

While staff members will primarily be working from home, voicemails and emails will be checked regularly. General inquiries can also be sent to info@gracegathering.com and a lot of information along with the ability to submit various items can be found through the COVID-19 link on our app and webpage.

Our prayer, in addition to the desire of physical health, healing, and the prevention of the virus spread, is that none of us, nor our church, will be on the other side of this crisis without having been changed in heart and mind by God. While God is not the cause of this virus, he is willing to graciously prune us back leading to transformation so that going forward we will be even more fruitful as a people and as a church (John 15).