

## **Notes from First Baptist Church of Springfield about Regathering:**

We are 2 weeks into allowing people to gather again. It has gone pretty smoothly and has not been nearly as intimidating or difficult as I feared it would be. Though returning to worship is a new thing for them, 6 feet of distance, wearing masks, and minimizing personal contact have all become "normal" during the last 3 months.

I would offer the following suggestions/reflections:

1. Make your expectations clear. Here is what we have published: <https://fbcspringfield.org/covid19updates/>
2. Keep it simple. You don't have to tell people everything you can think of about any possible situation that might ever possibly occur. Inform people, but don't overwhelm them.
3. Take the pressure off people to return now, but make it possible for those that want to return to do so. My wife and kids will likely stay home through the first 4 weeks of us opening as an example of me showing that it's okay to keep watching at home for a while.
4. Don't treat those that don't return immediately like weaker and/or less important brothers and sisters. Keep talking to the camera and to those "watching at home," just like you did when nobody else was in the room.
5. People catch on quickly, but don't forget this might be someone's first week back. In Week 2 we forgot to tell everyone at the door about the seating pattern and had to ask one person to move. It was their first week back.

Anecdotally, we went up about 20% from Week 1, putting us at almost 40% of previous attendance.

Hopefully these help. Anyone is welcome to reach out via phone or email with questions.

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