We believe that the church is essential to our community and to one another. Meeting together to encourage, support, pray for, and fellowship with one another, along with worship and the study of God’s Word is an important part of a church’s life and the life of its members. We realize that not everyone will be able to join us, but for those who can, it is a step towards restoring a sense of normalcy to our lives.

The Staff and Elders at East Hills Community Church have read “Covid-19 Industry Guidance: Places of Worship...” (May 25th 2020) which was issued to give guidelines to churches who wish to reopen. This document was issued by the California Department of Public Health and outlines areas we must adhere to, along with suggestions and considerations that we should take under advisement before having church again in our Worship Center. Please understand that this situation we are living in is fluid and changes are constant and expected. These guidelines are said to cover 21 days, which actually ends on June 15. At that time, we don’t know what to expect.

With that document as a foundation, this is our plan to come back together on June 21st, 2020 for our first worship service since the Stay in Place order was issued in March.

Our document is written in the form of questions that one might commonly ask regarding what we are doing in order to stay safe and still allow us to gather and worship.

This document includes guidelines/plans that will allow us to practice social distancing, have a clean environment, and celebrate our faith through the worship experience in the context of the pandemic we are currently experiencing.

**Questions and where you can find them...**

Page 2  Can everyone come? Do we need a reservation?

Page 2  What will happen if we have over 100 people?

Page 2  What will East Hills be doing in terms of providing a clean environment?

Page 3  What about fellowship before and after the service?

Page 3  Do I have to wear a face mask?

Page 3  How will we maintain social distance?

Page 3  How will you communicate all these things to make sure everyone is in agreement and on the same page in how we fellowship with one another?
Wouldn’t an outside service be better? We would love to come to church but are concerned about being inside in the Worship Center?

What about those who are still in the high-risk group?

Will our services still be online?

Is there enough airflow in the Worship Center to safely meet?

Will the service be the same since families are together?

What if someone seems to have symptoms of an illness while at the church?

What about communion?

How can we participate in giving as an act of worship during the service?

Will our services still be online?

What about the Cry Room and Family Room? Will they be open?

What about Children’s Ministry? And Youth Ministry?

What about coffee and Danishes?

Can everyone come? Do we need a reservation?

We are not taking reservations. Currently, we are limited in our attendance to 25% of building capacity or a maximum of 100 attendees, whichever is lower. Based on that, our maximum number is 100.

What will happen if we have over 100 people?

We will be establishing an outside overflow area in the courtyard for those who still wish to worship together but cannot do so in the Worship Center due to the restrictions. (Don’t be late)

What will East Hills be doing in terms of providing a clean environment?

East Hills already had some measures in place to provide a clean environment Sunday morning. The building is clean and disinfected regularly on Saturdays. Available hand sanitizers are in strategic locations throughout the building. Bathroom sinks have soap to wash your hands, along with disposable paper towels to dry them off.

We will also provide extra cleaning on Sunday morning to make sure everything is disinfected and clean, especially those areas that are frequently touched (light switches, door knobs, etc.). We have gloves that will be used by those who clean, plus those gloves will be available to volunteers on Sunday morning.

Doors will also be open to the Worship Center and remain open so that no one has to touch a doorknob or push a door to get in or out.

Drinking fountains will be shut off and unavailable and all classrooms will be locked so no one can go inside.

Our offices and kitchen will also be locked so that no one is in either place who does not need to be.
What about fellowship before and after the service?

Once you enter the building, we are asking that you go straight into the Worship Center and to your seats. We are asking that the lobby stay clear of people before and after the service. When the worship service is over, we will be asking people to leave the building. This means that any conversations people may choose to have will take place outside where you can spread out and there is better airflow.

Do I have to wear a face mask?

You are not required to wear a face mask to be in attendance at East Hills, although we strongly encourage that you do, if not for yourself, then for the safety of others. Wearing a mask shows respect and love to one another. Staff, Elders, and any volunteers will be required to wear a mask Sunday morning unless that person is on the stage where the mask would hinder their communication to the congregation. At that time, they will temporarily take it off until they leave the stage.

East Hills will also provide masks for those who need them.

How will we maintain social distance?

We will continue to insist that there be no physical contact between people outside of your family. This means no shaking of hands, hugs, etc. While we want you to fellowship with one another, we will ask that you maintain a distance of 6 feet between yourself and whomever you are talking to. The Worship Center chairs will be set up so there is distance between you and the person in front and behind you. On each side of you/your family, we will ask that you maintain a 6-foot distance between you and those sitting next to you this is the equivalent of 3 chairs.

On your way into the Worship Center we will mark our floors, similar to what you see in stores, so that you can visually see the distance you should maintain with one another.

Ushers will also be helping inside the Worship Center to make sure people are sitting and maintaining social distance in their seat selection.

Our service will not include a greeting time where one is expected to leave their sitting area. A wave and a hello will be all that is expected before sitting down and continuing our worship service.

When dismissed, there will be three different ways to exit the room so as not to create a log jam. Currently we will be asking people to self-monitor themselves in the restroom. If there are too many inside using the facilities or waiting to use them, then we are asking that you wait outside the restroom instead. A sign will be up to explain those procedures.

How will you communicate all these things to make sure everyone is in agreement and on the same page in how we fellowship with one another?

Communication will be made through social media, our website, emails, the Worship Folder, and from the stage on Sunday morning.
Wouldn’t an outside service be better? We would love to come to church but are concerned about being inside in the Worship Center?

There are two alternative ways you can be a part of the Worship Service at East Hills. One is that an outside area will be set up in the courtyard for those who are more comfortable being outside rather than inside. Secondly, we will continue to be live online (as we have been) for those who wish to participate at home.

What about those who are still in the high-risk group?

We will continue to maintain our service live online so that those who are in the high-risk category watch from the safety of their home. We want to stress that those who are older or who have health concerns should stay home, and are encouraged to do so. Our pastors, staff and Elders will continue to follow up with those who are not in attendance on Sunday morning, but are still a part of East Hills Community Church.

Will our services still be online?

Yes. Not just for those who are high-risk; but also for those who have joined us since we went online and who are now a part of our church congregation.

Is there enough airflow in the Worship Center to safely meet?

We do believe there is good airflow due to our air conditioning inside the room; but we will also keep all doors open to the Worship Center. This includes the three doors leading to outside the building and six doors leading out of the room.

Will the service be the same since families are together?

Services will be tightened up to maintain the shorter time we have had since we’ve been online. We will also provide for the children in the Worship Service so that they too can have a worship experience.

What if someone seems to have symptoms of an illness while at the church?

There will be a small team of people who will address those that show any signs/symptoms of illness. They will approach the person or persons and do an evaluation with them before deciding whether they should stay or go home.

What about communion?

We have found a safe way to take communion. We have ordered prepackaged, individual communion cup and wafer to take together. We will use those in June and assess after that Sunday what to do in July and moving forward.

How can we participate in giving as an act of worship during the service?

A special station will be set up for those who wish to bring their giving with them as part of their act of worship. Though we will acknowledge giving during the service, most people will probably give before or after the service, out of safety and/or convenience. The way it will be set up, someone can give at any time. We will continue our other ways to give as well (including online giving).
Will we still get a worship folder and sermon notes when we come in?
Yes. Worship folders and sermon notes will be provided by our ushers to those who want them. Also, our website will continue to provide the Worship Folder as a download each week so you can print one and bring it with you or access it at home to read and stay up to date. Finally, our new church app will provide a way for you to check in (attendance at worship service or online), fill out a connection card (for info and prayer requests), and more so one might choose to go digital instead of having a worship folder in hand.

What about the Cry Room and Family Room? Will they be open?
Yes. The Cry Room will be open for mothers with infants. The Family Room will be available as well. Both have limited space and people in the rooms must still maintain social distancing.

What about Children’s Ministries? And Student Ministries?
Families will sit together in the worship service. The guidelines we were given from the state maintain that “the children should remain in the care of those in their household unit and not interact with children of other parties at any time while visiting the facilities.” This means that there will be no children's classes. Initially, that will also mean no classes for our youth either.

What about coffee and Danishes?
As of now and until further notice, East Hills will not be serving any food or drink on Sunday morning.