Church Safety Guidelines

We have had numerous questions from churches. So I want to provide this information for churches:

• This coronavirus does not care if businesses and churches are opening.
• It is up to the public to make responsible choices, including in the choice of means of worship.
• Here is the link to the "Stay Safe Ohio" order of Dr. Acton: https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/publicorders/Directors-Stay-Safe-Ohio-Order.pdf.
  o Paragraph 4 specifically excludes "religious facilities, entities and groups and religious gatherings."
• FORTUNATELY, our community has had responsible church leaders that have taken the right path to protecting their congregations by abiding by the intent of this ruling.

What follows are the Unified Command's recommended guidelines for local churches that are considering resuming some services:

• Drive-in services are a reasonable choice at this time. All participants would be encouraged to stay in their vehicles.
• If contemplating in-person services, it is recommended to follow the phasing in of social gatherings as per the Governor's office:
  o Phase 1 - No more than 10 gathering
  o Phase 2 - No more than 50 gathering
  o Phase 3 - No limitations on gatherings
• Worship Guidelines:
  o All worshipers should be asymptomatic
  o Masks/facial coverings are to be strongly encouraged/required. Masks should be available to those without them.
  o Safe distancing should always be observed in all aspects of the service
  o Greet each other in ways other than physically touching, (including the pastor not physically touching worshippers)
  o No coffee hour before nor after services
  o Celebrate sacraments safely (consider individually packaged sacraments)
  o Offerings can be dropped in a plate in a specific location rather than passing a plate.
  o Singing and responsive reading should not be used at this time.
  o Consider removing hymnals and pew Bibles in settings where multiple services will be held on the same day.
  o Use of a projector should be considered.
  o Bulletins should not be handed out.
  o Consider shorter services to limit exposure of worshipers.
  o Ask Worshippers to leave promptly at the conclusion of the service.
  o Do not offer child care until Phase 3.
  o Rethink how to deploy greeters to ensure safe distancing
Keep accurate attendance records, in the event that contact tracing becomes necessary.

Clean and disinfect all surfaces used by people after every use, especially frequently touched surfaces such as door knobs, light switches, pews/seats, tables, counters.

--Hand sanitizer should be found in multiple locations throughout the facility.

--Continue to offer and expand online services.

How you arrange "traffic patterns" in the church will be different for all facilities, based on their own designs.