

RELAUNCH

WEEK 2 RESOURCES



RELAUNCH

Ten Practical Steps to Creating Momentum for Your Relaunch

Gary Rohrmayer

*"See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland".
Isaiah 43:18*

Every church will have a unique opportunity to Relaunch their ministry this fall. Whether your church is six weeks old or 170 years young, each church will have a chance to reorient their ministries, equip their leaders and inspire their people to fulfill the mission of Jesus of making more and better disciples in their unique context.

Here are ten practical steps to help you and your team to think through your Relaunch Plan:

1. Develop a team

Too many pastors try to carry the load all by themselves, which is an unbiblical notion. Christianity is a team sport. Team building is one of the skills successful pastors need in their tool belts. Learning to pick the right players on your team is crucial. Guiding and leading the team is imperative. Trusting the team to execute the plan is empowering. Celebrating and encouraging the team is vital. I encourage pastors to use short-term task forces with a specific task, along with a starting and ending point. If you built a task force for each of your major outreach initiatives for fall, winter, and spring, your team-building skills would improve each time. Team building is a skill that is honed through the "learning by doing" process. Getting key influencers involved in the process is vital to building positive momentum throughout the church.

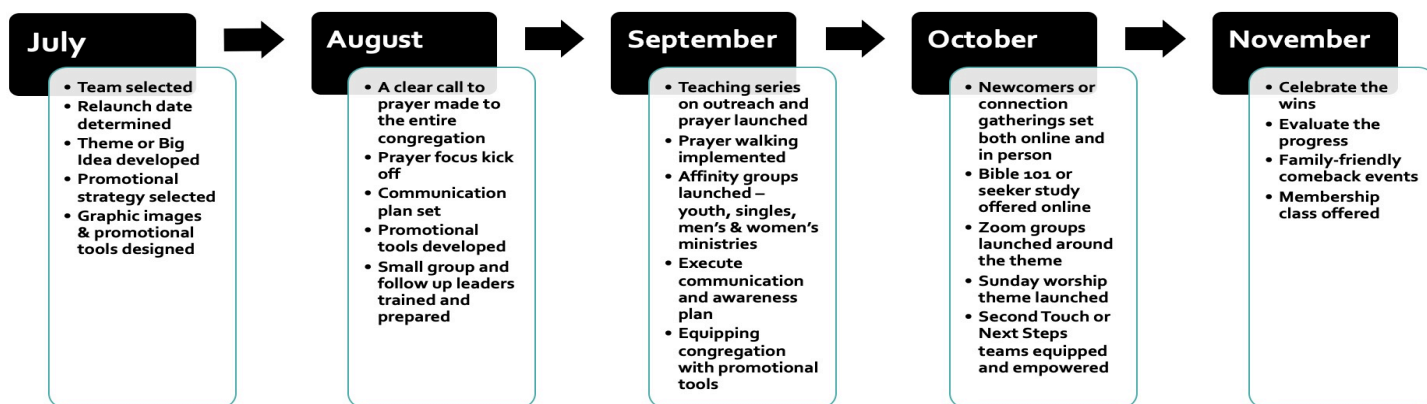
2. Determine a Date

You will first need to pick a date for this relaunch. In some communities it will be early August, others will be Sunday after Labor Day, and still, others will choose early October. Whatever date you pick is okay as long as you select a date. Momentum will be generated as you bring focus to a specific timeframe. Remember, God, in his infinite wisdom, chose to launch the church on Pentecost. This date has a rich theological significance as well as many practical implications.

3. Develop a timeline

To develop a reasonable schedule, start with the last date of the project, and work backward. If you are doing a fall growth push, here are a couple of ideas. End your fall outreach campaign on the first weekend in November with a family-friendly, social distancing appropriate comeback event and start July first with the selection of the team. We call this the "three-month rule," which is to begin the detailed planning process at least three months before the launch of the outreach campaign. Here is an overview of what would happen in those three months:

Detailed Timeline



4. Create a Theme or Big Idea

Brainstorm ideas for delivering strong biblical content that addresses the heart issues of your mission field. Many pastors struggle with the creative aspects of leadership. I recommend that pastors research and purchase some of the excellent outreach or spiritual growth campaigns available. Many of these come with timelines, job descriptions, graphics, sermon ideas, and small group materials. The key is planning. After the church has done a few of these campaigns, then they can take a shot at developing their own.

5. Promote Prayer

Raise the spiritual temperature of the church. It is a must to incorporate a church-wide prayer project for before and during the campaign. One example: Call the church to “pray for five neighbors, for five minutes a day, for five weeks” before the outreach campaign. Another idea would be to mobilize the church to prayer walk your whole community before the campaign. You could also call the church to a season of prayer and fasting. Still another idea is to do a [21 Day Prayer Campaign](#) to get your churches to focus on praying missionally for your community.

6. Create Buzz Outside the Church

Brainstorm ideas for creating buzz throughout your church, your community, and all the social media platforms. Work with your team to think of ways to get the word out. I like to use the biblical language of sowing when it comes to getting the word out to our community and through our social media networks. Here more is information on the [Sowing and Reaping Principle](#).

7. Create Excitement inside the Church

Create urgency through effective vision casting. Create energy by promoting opportunities. Creating a sense of synergy throughout the church is essential. Drive the theme throughout the church. Getting every section of the church moving in the same direction is a momentum building experience that creates positive energy and good morale. So, take your theme and drive it throughout the church from seniors to youth, from singles to toddlers!

8. Develop next step opportunities

Creating opportunities for new guests to connect relationally, as well as spiritually, is crucial to having a successful outreach campaign. Planning some family-friendly event is a great way to get people involved in serving for the first time and connecting relationally with others in the church. Offering entry-level Bible studies like Bible 101 or Christianity 101 within weeks of your outreach campaign is vital in providing those next steps for those that are spiritually interested. Finally, you want to offer people an opportunity to connect with the church and its leadership by providing some newcomer's gathering or party at the pastor's event where they hear the story and vision of the church as well as connect relationally with key leaders.

Offer a Clear Call to Action

- "Go into our online prayer room after the service"
- "Come to our 'after party' immediately after the service to meet other people and discuss the sermon"
- "Download this resource for use during the week"
- "Call a friend and [fill-in response relevant to the sermon], and then in your online small groups, tell each other how it went"
- "Please let us get to know you better by filling out a digital welcome/connection card"
- "Take this online survey to find the way that you can best serve right now"
- "If you prayed to receive Christ, begin telling others by putting something in the chat"
- "Ask God what He wants you to give financially, and then do whatever He shows you"
- "Sign up for a 'meet the pastor webinar' which temporarily replaces our 'pizza with the pastor' get-acquainted event"

Source: Warren Bird, ECFA

9. Recruit volunteers to fill needed ministry roles

Doing a relaunch is an excellent opportunity to recruit and train new volunteers for setting up, cleaning, event planning, children's ministry, ushers, greeters, follow up, administration, new hosts for small groups, and small group apprentices and leaders, etc.

10. Drive your vision and values deeper into the culture of your church

Remember, anytime you do an outreach campaign, it is an opportunity to drive your missional vision and values deeper into the lives of your people. The values of evangelism, community, spiritual dependence and community transformation come alive during the campaign and provide opportunities for personal growth and corporate maturity.

Conclusion:

Pastors, church leaders, and all followers of Jesus, this worldwide pandemic, is providing for us a defining moment. A moment to not only relaunch our churches, but it is also an opportunity to recalibrate our ministry priorities and for you as a pastor to retool pastoral and leadership skills. Pastors, I know, you are psychologically exhausted. I don't think any of us would have imagined that we would be doing ministry in the fashion we are doing it today. And yet it is in moments like these that God shows up and does the unprecedented. May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ give a fresh experience of his strength (Ephesians 3:16), a fresh encounter with his love (Ephesians 3:17-19), and a fresh vision for the future (Ephesians 3:20-21).

Companion Article: [Ten Biblical Principles for Relaunch or Launching Your Church](#)

Outlining Your Relaunch Plan & Delegating Responsibilities

Steps	Who?	What?	Where?	When?
1. Team				
2. Date				
3. Timeline				
4. Theme				
5. Prayer				
6. External Buzz				
7. Internal Buzz				
8. Next Steps				
9. Recruit				
10. Vision/Values				

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Week 2 – Weekly Leader Reflection Worksheet

THESE ARE MY 3 " MUST WINS" OF THE WEEK:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

WHAT 'HABIT OF THE HEART' AM I USING THIS WEEK TO CONNECT WITH GOD?

WHAT 'HABIT OF THE MIND' AM I USING TO KEEP MY MIND HEALTHY AND ALERT?

WHO ARE A FEW PEOPLE IN MY PROFESSIONAL LIFE I NEED TO CHECK IN ON THIS WEEK?

WHAT IS MY SENSE OF WHAT GOD IS SAYING TO ME RIGHT NOW? WHAT SCRIPTURES IS HE GIVING ME?

"But I will sing of Your power;
Yes, I will sing aloud of Your mercy in the morning;
For You have been my defense
And refuge in the day of my trouble.
To You, O my Strength, I will sing praises;
For God is my defense, My God of mercy."

Psalm 59:16-17

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Week 2 – Extra Resource

[April 18, 2020](#) [Ken Braddy Jr](#)

24 Questions Your Church Should Answer Before People Return

**This post initially had 20 questions – but several comments from readers revealed the need to add to this list.*

This week we all received good news from our president: the country is going to slowly reopen, and that includes houses of worship.



I can guarantee that we will not go back to “business as usual” as a country, and that includes our churches. If you think we’ll all rush back to church and pick up where we left off, don’t kid yourself – it’s not going to happen. Or at least it *shouldn’t* happen. We need to think and plan carefully so we do not endanger people simply because we let our guard down and believed that the Coronavirus crisis had passed. Now, as believers let’s agree to live by faith and not operate in fear, but let’s also agree to be proactive and to act in wisdom towards our members and guests, especially those among us who are most susceptible to becoming infected with COVID-19.

We have a short time to prepare for the return of the church to the church campus. As I have thought about my church, and listened to friends and ministry experts over the past several weeks, I’ve compiled a list of things that most of our churches are not thinking about. Don’t let the excitement of finally coming back together cloud your judgement or cause you to ignore the “new normal.”

Let’s think through 20+ things that we must think about before the church returns to the building:

1. *What if your worship gathering is initially limited to no more than 100 people?*
Never happen, you say? Remember that we've been limited to gatherings of no more than 10 people in the recent past. Take my church, for example. Pre-COVID 19 we averaged 350 in worship (two services). Should we be planning on adding a third service, reducing the time to 45 minutes with a 15 minute "passing period" so that worshipers can either go to Bible study or go home? One friend in ministry has said, "My church runs 2000 people in worship — we can't have 20 worship services all weekend long! What will we do?" If we are limited to a smaller number of people by our government leaders, what's the plan at your church to provide a place and time for them to worship?
2. *What adjustments will you make to the Lord's Supper, baptisms, and your choir ministry?*
Do you believe you can conduct communion like you have in the past? Your church's tradition may involve passing a plate of elements, or it may include drinking from a common cup in some denominations. Will you use the self-contained juice and cracker cups? What about baptism — it's going to be impossible to practice physical distancing in a baptism pool. And as one reader said, "What do I do about my church's choir program?" He realizes that people standing side-by-side won't be practical.
3. *Are you canceling camps and VBS, or delaying them until later this summer?*
This is a big question on people's minds. One church leader asked me, "May I return \$6000 of VBS materials we've purchased?" There are alternatives, and I know many churches that are delaying VBS until August, using it as a big back-to-school event. Other churches are using their VBS materials in backyard Bible clubs (so that groups are smaller). Other churches are going to do VBS over 5 weeks, one day a week (such as Sunday night), or they plan to use VBS resources during Fall Break. [Click here to read an article by LifeWay about VBS in the wake of COVID-19.](#)
4. *Is a physical "pass the plate" offering a thing of the past?*
How would you feel if you were the 100th person in a worship service to touch the offering plate that 99 other people just touched? Would you be worried about COVID-19 transmission? Sure you would. So how will you take up your weekly offering? Will you install boxes at the doors of the worship center, and perhaps place some of those in the lobby, so that worshipers can slide their envelopes, cash, or checks into those secured boxes?
5. *What are you doing now to sanitize and sterilize your church building?*
Now is the time to wipe down all classrooms (especially those where children meet because of the toys and other items they touch during the course of a Sunday or Wednesday class experience). Have you sprayed pews and chairs with disinfectant? Who is wiping door knobs and handles? Have you had carpet cleaned and disinfected? Now is the time for all this to take place, not the week of the "you can go back to church" announcement by government officials.
6. *Are you going to continue offering children's church?*
Can you guarantee moms and dads that their children will be absolutely safe in a room in which dozens or hundreds gather for a kids' worship time? This is going to be a top concern for parents of younger children. They may view kids' worship as a Petri dish into which they are throwing their children. As an alternative, is it time to encourage family worship as *the* primary option in these COVID-19 days? Should parents take their kids to worship, practice physical distancing, and keep a close eye on their little ones?
7. *Are you going to continue hosting special events? Will your church continue to host weddings? How about funerals? Revivals? Dramas? Bible Drill events? Children's programs/choir?*
You get the idea — there are a number of special events that our churches might host. Which ones will continue, and which ones will be put on hold? And how will you explain which ones continue and which ones don't?

8. *Are you continuing to provide coffee stations on campus?*

Many churches have invested serious dollars in creating a coffee shop experience. My church has a coffee station in the center of our foyer (a self-serve station). Is that a good idea anymore? Tables and chairs may need to be placed in storage so that people don't congregate within a couple of feet of one another.

9. *Will you continue offering virtual online worship?*

Some churches may think of their recent foray into Facebook Live as a means to provide a worship experience for their people a thing of the past — a stop-gap measure during some really strange days. Happy they can meet together again, Facebook Live services may give way to worship experiences on campus. But is that the right strategy? I have heard of church after church whose leaders tell me their worship attendance and group attendance are up —significantly — because people are finding them online. It was reported that one Hispanic church in Las Vegas, Nevada, had 1300 people watch their service online a few weeks ago. Why is that a big deal? They normally average 100 on campus.

10. *What is your plan when volunteers step down?*

I'm already hearing that older volunteers are telling their church leaders they aren't coming back to teach their preschool and kids' classes until a vaccine is readily available — it's just too risky for them because they are most at risk from COVID-19. Will you be able to fully staff your classes like you did back in February? If you can't find enough volunteers (younger families may be hesitant to return because of the fear of exposing their children to COVID-19, which means their parents won't be leading younger children's groups), what will you do?

11. *What's your strategy to clean and sanitize your church in real time?*

It's one thing to prepare in advance of people's return to the church building, but how will you keep the place clean and disinfected on a Sunday or Wednesday? Does this give rise to a new team of people on campus whose ministry it is to walk around wiping door knobs and other surfaces? Who is going to clean restrooms throughout the morning or evening? Remember you'll have hundreds (some of your churches may have thousands) of people touching things while they are on campus.

12. *Do door greeters do their jobs differently, or at all? Not have door greeters?*

Seriously?! We've always had door greeters. But in a COVID-19 world, do you really want a door greeter holding the door open while a parishioner walks by within a foot or two of them? That's not in line with good physical distancing practices, is it? The new normal may be for greeters to stand back six feet, inside the church building, and welcome people verbally without opening the door for them. You experience that at big box stores now. A greeter is there to say hello, but they don't make you pass within a foot of them! Welcome to the new world COVID-19 has created.

13. *Is this the time to end your church's "meet and greet" time?*

Because of physical distancing rules, it is. This practice has been on the decline in recent days, and many churches have already abandoned it because of its ineffectiveness with guests, not because of COVID-19 concerns. Thankfully my church eliminated this about 18 months ago, so we're ready. How about your church?

14. *Because people may return very slowly to church, how will you count attendance and effectiveness?*

The question has already been raised about should we or should we not take attendance during online worship and online group Bible studies. It's almost a sure thing that worship attendance on campus will not be what it was pre-COVID-19. You need to decide now if you're going to count on-campus only attendance, or merge and add online attendance, too. And how will group leaders take a count in their online groups and go about reporting that?

15. *Should you add and/or shorten worship services to allow for social distancing?*

I touched on this in #1 above, but let's drill down a bit. If physical gatherings are limited in size, you have a few options: (1) offer more services (2) encourage people to continue worshipping online (3) remove chairs from your worship center to help people avoid close contact (4) block off pews so that people no longer sit right behind someone, reducing the chances of them sneezing or coughing directly into the back of the person in front of them. If your church reopens with the "worship only" option, you'll have to decide these things now.

16. *What are you going to do about larger Sunday School groups?*

Let's get real for a moment — no one is going to want to sit in a crowded room for Bible study, yet so many of our classes have been allowed to grow to have very large attendance. Do you feel good about letting 25 or more senior adults meet in a room that holds, well, 25 or 30 senior adults? Not me. If you have space to start new groups, now is the time — help people spread out. But if your church is out of space, like mine is, what's the next step?? One option is to start another hour of Sunday School. For my church, we'd go from two hours to three. Yours might go from one hour to two. Or another option is to place some groups online while others remain on campus. There's not going to be a quick and easy solution to this.

17. *What's your plan for Sunday School curriculum?*

Most churches have provided print products — we call them Personal Study Guides (for group members); some adults still refer to them as "quarterlies" because they are distributed at church at the beginning of a new quarter. But because of social distancing and the new emphasis on virtual groups, should you keep print products but add digital ones for those groups meeting off campus? Thankfully, my company, LifeWay, creates digital versions of all its ongoing Bible study products, so we can meet whatever demand the church has. I have been providing print products at my church, but I'm about to add digital so my groups can be flexible in meeting on or off campus.

18. *Will you reopen the doors of your church with a "worship only" strategy?*

I am hearing of more and more churches that are choosing this option whenever we are allowed to meet again on campus. They are adding services, removing chairs, practicing social distancing, and focusing on regaining momentum in worship. Bible study groups will remain online for safety in the short-term, and will be added back to the on-campus experience in time.

19. *Do you have a plan for reducing expenses if your church's offerings don't rebound?*

This is the time for a "budget scrub" — while offerings are still decent and expenses have been lower because of reduced activities. Churches need to be thinking, "What if . . ." — what if our offerings don't hold steady because of rising unemployment of members? Before the church returns to the building, every church needs a "plan B" strategy just in case giving drops in late summer or early fall. I have friends in ministry that I deeply respect who believe we (the church) have not felt the financial impact of COVID-19 like we will in the days and months ahead. I think they may be right.

20. *How will you deal with the rise of COVID-19 related addictions?*

One mental health expert said in a webinar meeting last week, "I'm hearing that porn sites are giving away free memberships during COVID-19...just what people don't need." In that same webinar last week on mental health, the presenter assured the audience that substance abuse is on the rise, too. Alcohol sales are soaring. He cautioned us to be ready to do lots of counseling and referring of people to professionals in our post-COVID 19 reality.

21. *Are you going to decrease the fellowship time between on-campus worship services?*

Some churches that have multiple services and Sunday School hours schedule up to 30 minutes of time between those events because they value the opportunity to gather, have coffee, and fellowship. In a COVID-19 world, it is a good idea *not* to let that happen. Shorter times between worship services, and the elimination of coffee bar areas (yes, I know...it's sacrilege to think about not having coffee stations around the building!) will help keep people moving to their next destination, a worship service or a Bible study group, and it will help reduce the "let's hang out and give each other COVID-19."

22. *Are you going to cancel mid-week Wednesday night services, meals, and Bible studies?*

This won't be a forever thing, but in the near future following the return of the church to its buildings, will you continue a virtual, online prayer meeting and Bible study time? Can you find volunteer workers to support a Wednesday night strategy on campus? Do you want to put many people around tables for the traditional mid-week meal on Wednesday nights?

23. *Should you be investing in new digital equipment right now?*

Yes, we've all hopped online and used Facebook Live to broadcast our worship services. Some of us are doing that with iPads and other devices, but is this the time to admit that online worship is probably here to stay? If yes, then it makes sense to invest dollars now so that cameras and other equipment can be purchased that will help the church be more professional in the new online world of worship.

24. *Will a new staff or volunteer position emerge from COVID-19?*

Because the church has permanently moved online now, could it lead to the adoption of a new position of leadership? Will churches turn their attention to a Virtual Pastor whose job it is to oversee the technical aspects of the new digital frontier? Will they become responsible to develop groups and strategies to reach people online? It's highly likely that this is going to take place; the role may first be added to a staff person who is currently serving the church, but when it is possible to split that role and afford a new person, churches may hire online pastors.

This list of questions is not exhaustive. It's representative of many things we should be thinking about right now, before we get the OK from government leaders to gather again.

What would you add to this list? What have I left out? Let's pool our experience and wisdom to help Jesus' bride be prepared for the new world we find ourselves in. I'd love for you to respond to this post, share your thoughts, and then share it in social media. We've got to get the church thinking and talking about these things.