

COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for Christ Lutheran Church

Christ Lutheran Church is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for our pastor, staff and the members of our congregation. To keep us all safe and healthy, we have developed the following COVID-19 Preparedness Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. All are responsible for implementing this plan. Our goal is to decrease the potential for transmission of COVID-19 in our church and community, and that requires full cooperation among our pastor, staff and the members of our congregation. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of everyone.

We encourage everyone to ask questions, raise safety and health concerns and offer suggestions related to the plan and its implementation. Our COVID-19 Preparedness Plan follows State of Minnesota Industry Guidance for our businesses, Minnesota Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Guidelines, federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards related to safety and health precautions required in response to COVID-19 and applicable executive orders. **The plan addresses the following:**

1. If staff or congregation members are sick, they should stay home.
2. Six feet of physical distance should be maintained between all individuals or family groups.
3. Hygiene and source controls (face coverings – masks or shields)
4. Church building and ventilation protocols
5. Church cleaning and disinfection protocols
6. Drop-off, pick-up, and delivery practices and protocols
7. Communications, training and supervision practices and protocols
8. What congregation members and visitors can do to minimize transmission of COVID-19

1. Policies and procedures that assist in the identification of sick pastors and staff members and ensure sick pastors and staff members stay home

All pastors and staff members have been informed of and encouraged to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. The following policies and procedures are being implemented to assess workers' health status prior to entering the workplace and for workers to report when they are sick or experiencing symptoms. Individual pastors or staff members should let the pastor or office know if they are experiencing symptoms whether at home or at work. If they start to experience symptoms while here, they should go home.

Christ Lutheran Church has implemented leave policies that promote workers staying at home when they are sick, when household members are sick, or when they are required to isolate or quarantine themselves or a member of their household. In the event of a statewide/global pandemic or other equivalent, Christ Lutheran Church will implement relevant standards for sick leave as required by the state, without loss of pay. Accommodations for workers with underlying medical conditions or who have household members with underlying health conditions have been implemented.

Christ Lutheran Church has also implemented a policy for informing workers if they have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 at their workplace and requiring them to quarantine for the required amount of time. Either a pastor or staff member will let other pastors or staff members know that they have been exposed. The privacy of workers' health status and health information will be maintained as far as is possible.

2. Physical distancing – maintaining six feet of physical distancing

Physical distancing of at least six feet will be implemented and maintained between any and all people in our building through the following engineering and administrative protocols: In the office, a distance of 6 feet from the secretary's desk has been marked on the floor, and the doors to the offices are kept locked to help keep staff protected.

Physical distancing of six feet will be implemented and maintained between staff and members of the congregation in the building and outside if there should be an outdoor service. Within the entry area and the narthex, floors will be marked with 6 feet spacing by use of blue painters' tape. There will be signs as people enter the building to remind them to keep an appropriate physical distance from other individuals or family groups. Within the sanctuary, we will use every other pew. Also, pews will be marked to indicate that the medium length pews can hold two well-separated individuals, while the longer (window-side) pews can hold three well-separated individuals. If there are family groups they may sit together, so this standard of physical spacing must be encouraged by the ushers.

For outdoor worship services, people will be encouraged to bring their own chairs and to put them at appropriate distances, which will be marked on the grass and parking lot.

3. Hygiene and source controls (face coverings – masks or shields)

Staff and members of the congregation must wear **face coverings (masks or shields)** whenever more than two or three are gathered **in the same room in the building**. Good hand sanitation needs to be practiced. If people entering the building for a worship service don't wear a **face covering**, we will have some masks to hand out. There will be hand sanitizer available at entry and exit of the sanctuary.

For outdoor services, people will need to wear **face coverings**. Again, if people don't bring a **face covering**, we will have some masks to hand out. Hand sanitizer will be available on tables near the entry. **If someone wishes to attend the Sunday outdoor service but not wear a face covering, they are welcome to sit in the grass area south of the parking lot, while social distancing.**

4. Church building and ventilation protocols

Reopening the workplace includes necessary sanitation, assessment and maintenance of building systems including water, plumbing, electrical and HVAC systems. The church building has not been shut down and continues to meet all normal operating requirements.

5. Church cleaning and disinfection protocols

Regular housekeeping practices are being implemented, including routine sanitizing of the building and frequent sanitizing of high-touch areas.

Appropriate and effective cleaning and disinfectant supplies have been purchased and are available for use in accordance with product labels, safety data sheets and manufacturer specifications, and are being used with required personal protective equipment for the product.

6. Drop-off, pick-up and delivery practices and protocols

Any items that are being dropped off at church are allowed to sit for at least 24 hours before they are handled again. If items are brought to the office, they are left in a basket outside the office door and the basket is sanitized regularly. This is under the direction of pastor, church staff and lay leaders.

7. Communications, training and supervision practices and protocols

Christ Lutheran Church has a small staff who talk frequently to each other. These protocols have been developed and communicated to the staff as all have learned more about the COVID-19 virus. It will be communicated to the congregation members and visitors by posting on the church website, by signs posted in key locations in the building, by posting the entire Plan on bulletin boards, by being given to each pastor and staff member and by being mailed to all members. This Christ Lutheran Church COVID-19 Preparedness Plan has been certified by the executive committee of the church council on June 18 (updated July 9), 2020 and it will be updated as needed.

8. What congregation members and visitors can do to minimize transmission of COVID-19

All people attending church or entering the building for any purpose are encouraged to check themselves for symptoms before they come. If they have symptoms or have been exposed to anyone with COVID-19, they should stay home.

All congregation members and visitors must wear **face coverings** except during communion. Physical distancing of six feet or more must be maintained between family groups or individuals. All people need to help with this! There should be no hand shaking or hugs exchanged between members. There will be no singing except for special music. (Any singer must be at least 12 feet from any other member of the congregation.)

If there are bulletins, people coming to a worship service will take a bulletin from an usher as they enter. They may leave Offerings in a basket on a long table near the entrance. If it is going to be a communion service, they may also pick up the prepackaged elements of communion in the same location.

People leaving the Worship Service will be ushered out, with back or outside pews going first. All in attendance are required to avoid congregating anywhere on the premises to help maintain a safe environment.

Certified by:

Kevin Menning, president of Christ Lutheran Church Council

Date: