

**COVID-19 PREPAREDNESS PLAN**  
**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Plainview, MN**  
**DATE: June 11, 2020**

**STAFF/VOLUNTEER PROTECTIONS AND PROTOCOLS**

1. All staff and volunteers are encouraged to stay home if they are sick or at risk.
2. Staff or volunteers exposed to COVID-19 are to stay out of the church building for 14 days of self-quarantine or longer if symptoms are present or if they have tested positive for COVID-19.
3. Staff or volunteers should inform the church office and pastor if sick or needing to quarantine. If the pastor is not available, the Executive Committee should be informed.
4. If sick or needing to self-quarantine, staff and volunteers can return to church after following MDH Guidance.
5. All staff and Executive Committee members will be informed if anyone on staff is infected or needing to self-quarantine.
6. At risk staff and volunteers are encouraged to stay home whenever possible and participate remotely.
7. Staff and volunteers are asked to work 6 feet apart when they must work together at the church.
8. Staff and volunteers are to interact with members and the public from at least a 6 foot distance.
9. Staff and volunteers should wear facemasks when working in the same space.
10. Hand sanitizing and hand washing stations are available for staff and volunteers. Hand sanitizing stations will be maintained in the main office, Gathering Space, and Sanctuary.
11. Staff will not unnecessarily share office supplies, etc.
12. Masks should be worn by all volunteers and staff when there is worship or a large group gathering.
13. Masks will be provided for all volunteers and staff.
14. Tissues will be available in the main office, Gathering Space, and Sanctuary.
15. The doors to the multi-stall restroom will be propped open.
16. There will be a trash can place outside the individual restrooms.
17. The drinking fountain will not be available, but the water filling station will be available.
18. All staff will develop a staff position emergency plan of how do the essentials of their job if they are out sick. These emergency plans will be kept in the Administrative Office in a binder entitled "COVID Plan."

**BUILDING AND VENTILATION PROTOCOLS**

1. HVAC for the building will be designated as "in use" to ensure air flow from the outside when there are services of worship or other large gatherings.

2. HVAC air filters will be changed on a regular basis.
3. One outside door to the building will be propped open 20 minutes before worship and right after worship. Both sanctuary doors will be propped open and remain open while people are in the building for worship or other large gatherings.

## CLEANING AND DISINFECTION PROTOCOLS

1. The church will be cleaned and disinfected every Saturday. This includes but is not limited to: light-switches, door handles, counter tops, handles, chairs.
2. Hymnals and attendance pads are removed since they cannot be effectively cleaned.
3. Microphones will not be shared in the same service of worship.
4. If someone becomes ill or was in the building ill with COVID-19, CDC Cleaning and Disinfecting protocols will be followed.

## COMMUNICATIONS AND TRAINING PRACTICES AND PROTOCOL

1. All leadership, staff and volunteers must receive a copy of the COVID-19 Preparedness plan and be trained accordingly.
2. The COVID-19 Preparedness Plan will be posted on the first bulletin board and available in a binder in the Administrative Offices.
3. Staff and volunteers must agree to comply with the rules and practices outlined in the COVID-19 preparedness plan prior to taking on a leadership role for worship.
4. The COVID-19 preparedness plan, expectations for attending worship and what happens if it becomes known that someone has attended worship with COVID-19 will be communicated with the congregation via email, website and being posted in the Gathering Space.
5. Communication to educate participants on protective measures will occur before and at the start of worship or other large gatherings.

## MINIMIZING TRANSMISSION

1. Staff, volunteers and members should conduct a self-check and stay home if they (or someone in their household) have symptoms of COVID-19, have been exposed to COVID-19, tested positive or have results pending (in accordance with the CDC and MN Department of Health guidelines).
  - a. Symptoms can include: fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, headache, muscle pain, sore throat, or loss of taste and smell. Other less common symptoms include gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.
2. Staff, volunteers, and members who are at high risk or have someone in their household who is at high risk are encouraged to stay home as much as possible. Online options will continue to be available for those who stay home.

3. Signage and messages will communicate that if members, visitors, or members of their household do not feel well or have symptoms of COVID-19 they should return home.
4. Hand sanitizing and hand washing stations are available. Hand sanitizing stations at the doors to the building and sanctuary. Hand washing stations at the entrance to the kitchen, at the kitchenette, and in the bathrooms.
5. Every effort will be made to limit equipment and items touched by those in the building. As a result, hymnals, attendance pads, and children's busy bags will not be used. No bulletins will be used. The offering plate will not be passed down the rows.
6. All attending worship or other large gatherings are **strongly encouraged** to wear a face mask. Extra masks will be available near the outside doors for people who arrive without one. Note: face masks are NOT a substitute for maintaining a physical distance of 6 feet from other people (per CDC guidelines).
7. Those attending are to refrain from singing.
8. One cantor or one family may provide singing. The cantor should be at least 12 feet from anyone else during the service, while wearing a mask.
9. The Pastor while leading worship from the chancel may not wear a face mask. When the Pastor leaves the chancel area, the pastor is strongly encouraged to wear a mask while people are in the building for worship.
10. People should enter and exit remaining 6 feet apart from other households.
11. Offering plates will not be passed and will be available by the sanctuary doors and entrance/exit doors.
12. Communion practices will include 6 feet of distancing, minimal touch and those distributing wearing face masks. Those distributing the elements will use hand sanitizer just prior.
13. For those receiving communion, hand sanitizer should be used before touching a mask to take it down for communion and after touching a mask to put it back on. Hand sanitizer must be applied thoroughly and allowed to dry to be effective.
14. Six feet of distance should be maintained at all times between people from different households. Chairs are set in rows 6 feet apart. When occupancy is reached in the sanctuary or it is no longer possible to be 6 feet apart, people are asked to sit in the Gathering Space with 6 feet of distance between families.

## OTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

1. Online services of worship will continue with both live streaming and the availability of watching online at a later time. Online worship can be found on Facebook and YouTube as well as the broadcast on Channel 20 on Mid-Continent.
2. Those at higher risk for COVID-19 are strongly urged to participate in online worship and gatherings or gatherings with their immediate household.

3. Those who are not comfortable or able to attend worship in the church building, are encouraged to participate in online worship and gatherings.
4. Worship online is as valid as worship in the church building. Worship has never been dependent on our location.
5. COVID-19 can easily spread in large group gatherings even with precautionary measures. Attending worship is a high risk activity because of the length of time together and talking with one another in one space. Those attending worship in the church building assume a degree of risk by attending.

#### OCCUPANCY LIMITS

1. Following the state of Minnesota guidelines during this time, worship attendance is limited to 50% of total occupancy which would be approximately 95 people in the sanctuary and 95 people in the Gathering Space.
2. All attending should allow for 6 feet of social distancing when entering and exiting the building..
3. Once maximum occupancy is reached or it is no longer possible to social distance with 6 feet between family units in the sanctuary, others will be directed to sit in the Gathering Space following social distancing guidelines.

#### ADDITIONAL PROTECTIONS AND PROTOCOL FOR MANAGING OCCUPANCY

1. The COVID-19 Preparation Plan and any protocols and procedures will be emailed to the congregation, posted on the web page, and posted on the first bulletin board.
2. Updates or changes to the COVID-19 Preparation Plan will be communicated via email and announcements.
3. Only members of the same household are to sit together.
4. Participants from different households should never be closer than 6 feet to one another.
5. In case contact tracing is necessary the AV room and Guide will work together to ensure that attendance (knowing the names of those who attended) is recorded via video or written down.
6. If someone attends worship and tests positive for COVID-19 within 14 days, the building will be closed and worship suspended until all cleaning protocols per the CDC are followed and the council decides to resume worship.

THIS DOCUMENT WILL BE REVIEWED BY THE COUNCIL AT COUNCIL MEETINGS.