

# COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for Peace Lutheran Church of Watertown

Peace Lutheran Church (“PLC”) is committed to providing a safe and healthy community and workplace for our congregants, staff, and visitors. To ensure we have a safe and healthy workplace, PLC has developed the following COVID-19 Preparedness Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. “PLC Church Leadership” – (“Ministry Board”, “Committee Chairpersons”, “Supervisors” and “Staff”) are all responsible for implementing this plan. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 in our workplaces and communities, and that requires full cooperation among our leadership, staff, and congregants. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of all persons in our community and workplace.

The COVID-19 Preparedness Plan is administered by the PLC Ministry Board with input from staff and the congregation. PLC Church Leadership, staff, and congregants will all be equally responsible for supporting, implementing, complying with and providing recommendations to further improve all aspects of this COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. PLC’s staff and leaders have our full support in enforcing the provisions of this plan.

We believe that the Church is the people and that caring for the health and safety of the Church and its mission means caring for the health and well-being of all people. PLC is serious about health and safety and protecting its workers. Worker involvement is essential in developing and implementing a successful COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. We have involved our staff and leaders in this process by:

Sharing Ministry Board dialogues on COVID-19 safety protocols, inviting feedback from the wider congregation, conversing further with our

committees, consulting Minnesota Department of Health guidelines and developing the present preparedness plan through PLC's Ministry Board.

PLC's COVID-19 Preparedness Plan follows the industry guidance developed by the state of Minnesota, which is based upon Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines for COVID-19, Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MNOSHA) statutes, rules and standards, and Minnesota's relevant and current executive orders. It addresses:

- ensuring sick individuals stay home and prompt identification and isolation of sick persons;
- physical distancing – all people must be at least six-feet apart; mask wearing as a requirement indoors, unless an individual is alone;
- worker hygiene and source controls;
- workplace cleaning and disinfection protocol;
- drop-off, pick-up and delivery practices and protocol; and
- communications and training practices and protocol; and
- management necessary to ensure effective implementation of the plan.

PLC has reviewed and incorporated the industry guidance applicable to our church provided by the state of Minnesota for the development of this plan, including the following industry guidance:

“Guidance for Gatherings: Faith-based Communities, Places of Worship, and Ceremonies” by the Minnesota Department of Health.

### **Ensuring Sick Workers Stay Home; Isolation of Sick Individuals**

Staff 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:

PLC staff members have the option to work from home to the degree that their duties allow in an effort to mitigate risk. This policy will be regulated regularly by the Ministry Board as local dynamics surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic shift and change.

Individuals who are sick and/or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 are required to stay home.

Individuals who develop COVID-19 symptoms while on PLC premises are required to leave the building immediately. If they cannot be sent home immediately, they are to remain isolated in a closed room until they can be sent home. Staff who have been in close contact with a household member with COVID should not be at work until a quarantine period of 14 days is completed. Note: symptoms of COVID-19 can include fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, headache, muscle pain, sore throat, or loss of taste or smell. Other less common symptoms include gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea amongst other symptoms.

Staff members will communicate to the Pastor if they are sick or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.

In addition, PLC will protect the privacy of workers' health status and health information.

### **Positive Test and Known Exposure Protocol**

In the event of a positive COVID-19 test or related symptoms for a staff member, congregant, or visitor:

- For those that tested positive for COVID-19 but have had no symptoms, they may return to in-person work 10 days after their positive test.
  
- If a volunteer or staff member thinks or knows they had COVID-19 and has had symptoms, they can return to available in-person offerings at PLC after the following conditions have been met:
  - o 3 days with no fever AND
  
  - o Respiratory symptoms have improved (e.g. cough, shortness of breath) AND
  
  - o 10 days since symptoms first appeared.

Depending on their healthcare provider's advice and availability of testing, an infected individual might get tested again to see if they still have COVID-19. If they are re-tested, they can be around others once they have no fever, respiratory symptoms have improved, and they receive two negative test results in a row, at least 24 hours apart.

If an individual finds out they are exposed to COVID-19, they should attempt to get a COVID-19 test right away. If an exposed individual is not able to get a COVID-19 test, then they will need to quarantine for 14 days from the day of exposure before returning to an available in-person gatherings at PLC. They may return at that time if they are not symptomatic, although some healthcare providers may suggest waiting a different number of days from exposure.

## **Physical Distancing, Hygiene and Face Coverings**

Per the [Governor's Executive Order 20-81](#), people in Minnesota are required to wear a face covering in all public indoor spaces and businesses – including PLC – unless the individual is alone. *(Please read the Executive Order for additional information, exemptions, and definitions)*

Regardless of the venue or gathering, all staff and participants should maintain physical distancing of at least 6 feet between households, cover coughs and sneezes, wash hands frequently. Per the requirement, congregants in the sanctuary must comply with seating arrangements and/or seats removed to comply with the order.

Additionally, outdoor gatherings of PLC will require face masks/coverings as an additional safety precaution when social distancing is not adequate.

All staff and participants are required to wash or sanitize their hands upon arrival to PLC.

Persons who may be at higher risk for severe illness relating to COVID-19 are strongly encouraged to stay home. Consult with the Minnesota Department of Health and CDC for updated information regarding COVID-19 risk factors.

Physical distancing will be further encouraged by limiting indoor and outdoor gatherings at PLC, with the following protocols implemented:

Teleworking, flexible hours, and online church programming will be offered to limit activity indoors at PLC.

In indoor settings, occupancy must not exceed 50% of total occupancy, with a maximum of 250 people in a single self-contained space.

In outdoor settings, gatherings must not exceed 250 people.

The Ministry Board of PLC will continue to monitor the COVID-19 outlook on local, state and national levels to set additional capacity limitations for indoor and outdoor gatherings.

When larger indoor gatherings are allowed, PLC will use directional signs to provide “one-way” traffic flow within the building to limit physical passing and promote safe distancing.

### **Worker hygiene and source controls**

Basic infection prevention measures are being implemented at our workplaces at all times. Staff, congregants, and visitors are instructed to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water frequently throughout the day, but especially at the beginning and end of their shift, prior to any mealtimes and after using the restroom. All people entering PLC are required to wash or sanitize their hands prior to or immediately upon entering the facility. Hand-sanitizer dispensers (that use sanitizers of greater than 60% alcohol) are at entrances and locations in the workplace so they can be used for hand hygiene in place of soap and water, as long as hands are not visibly soiled.

PLC will ensure that hand sanitizer, sanitizing wipes and backup disposable face masks are available at all times. Individuals are encouraged to bring their own personal hand sanitizer and face masks to help with potential supply constraints.

Individuals are instructed to cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing, and to avoid touching their face, particularly their mouth, nose and eyes, with their hands. All individuals are expected to dispose of tissues in provided trash receptacles and wash or sanitize their hands immediately afterward.

Safe hygiene practices will be posted on posters throughout the PLC premises.

### **Workplace building and ventilation protocol**

Operation of the building in which the workplace is located, includes necessary sanitation, assessment and maintenance of building systems, including water, plumbing, electrical, and heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) systems.

PLC's HVAC systems will continue to be monitored and maintained by local, licensed HVAC professionals.

### **Workplace cleaning and disinfection protocol**

Regular practices of cleaning and disinfecting have been implemented, including a schedule for routine cleaning and disinfecting of work surfaces and high-touch areas, such as door knobs and railings.

Appropriate and effective cleaning and disinfecting 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.

### **Drop-off, pick-up and delivery practices and protocol**

When PLC returns to larger indoor gatherings, staggered arrival and departure protocols will be developed to ensure that our commitments to safe distance and hygiene may be maintained at all times.

### **Communications and training practices and protocol**

This COVID-19 Preparedness Plan was communicated to PLC staff, leaders, volunteers and visitors via email and multiple announcements. Copies of

the COVID-19 Preparedness Plan will be consistently available on-line, in the building and by request for physical mailing.

Staff and lay leaders are expected to monitor how effective the program has been implemented and *model appropriate behavior* as dictated by the plan.

All people are to take an active role and collaborate in carrying out the various aspects of this plan, and update the protections, protocols, work-practices and training as necessary. The current version of this COVID-19 Preparedness Plan has been endorsed by the Ministry Board of PLC and made readily available to staff, congregants and participants on \_\_\_\_\_. It will be updated as necessary by the Ministry Board.

## **Appendix A — Guidance for Developing a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan**

### **General**

- [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV)
- [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus)
- [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)
- [www.dli.mn.gov](http://www.dli.mn.gov)
- [“Stay Safe Guidance for Places of Worship”](#)
- [Executive Order 20-81 - Face Masks](#)

### **Handwashing**

- [www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html](http://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html)

- [www.cdc.gov/handwashing](http://www.cdc.gov/handwashing)
- <https://youtu.be/d914EnpU4Fo>

### **Respiratory Etiquette: Cover Your Cough or Sneeze**

- [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html)
- [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html)
- [www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/etiquette/coughing\\_sneezing.html](http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/etiquette/coughing_sneezing.html)

### **Social Distancing**

- [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html)
- [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html)

### **Housekeeping**

- [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html)
- [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html)
- [www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2](http://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2)
- [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html)

## Employees Exhibiting Signs and Symptoms of COVID-19

- [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html)
- [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/basics.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/basics.html)

## Training

- [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-small-business.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-small-business.html)
- [www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf](http://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf)