



COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for Living Word Lutheran Church

Effective: May 27, 2020

Updated: November 19, 2020

At Living Word Lutheran Church (LWLC), it is very important to us to keep our workers and visitors healthy, while also considering of utmost importance our calling to further the Gospel and our need for worship, fellowship, and personal interaction, for spiritual, emotional and mental wellbeing. As such, we will abide by the government guidelines when possible as we strive to balance public health concerns with the needs of our church.

While we will implement various plans and protocols to ensure your safety, it is up to each of us to execute on these protocols. By sharing the following information, we hope to clearly communicate the current plans and protocols in place at LWLC to protect your safety and establish a level of comfort for our workers and visitors.

Due to the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, creating an exact timeline for resuming “normal” activity is not feasible. LWLC leadership, workers, and the COVID-19 Response Planning Team will continue to monitor the applicable guidance and determine next steps. At this time, we have created plans for re-gathering that take into consideration national, state, and local guidance and guidelines. It is important to note that these plans are subject to change based on government guidance and the pandemic itself. Changes will be updated and communicated accordingly. Should a worker or visitor test positive for COVID-19, our plan may change to protect our church family and community. In addition, if cases of COVID-19 spike in our state or local area, we will consider whether to adjust the plan. We recognize that everyone has personal thoughts on the pace at which to re-gather. Therefore, each person/family should make their own personal decision as to when they are comfortable and feel it is safe to return to in-person gathering based on individual circumstances.

Living Word Lutheran Church is committed to providing a safe and healthy place of worship for all our workers and visitors. To ensure we have a safe and healthy place of worship, we have developed the following COVID-19 Preparedness Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Workers are responsible for implementing this plan. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 at our place of worship, and that requires full cooperation among our workers and visitors. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of all persons in our place of worship.

Workers are responsible for implementing and complying with all aspects of this COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. LWLC workers have our full support in enforcing the provisions of this policy and we encourage our workers and visitors to ask questions, raise safety and health concerns, and offer suggestions related to the plan and its implementation.

We value our workers as an important asset as part of our church. We are serious about safety and health and keeping our workers working at LWLC. Worker involvement is essential in developing and implementing a successful COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. We have involved our workers in this process by addressing work and facility use concerns, asking for suggestions and feedback and integrating all of this into developing the plan. Our COVID-19 Preparedness Plan follows State of Minnesota Industry Guidance for Faith-Based Communities, 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:

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1. policies and procedures that assist in the identification of sick workers and ensure sick workers stay home;
2. implementation of engineering and administrative controls for physical distancing (aka social distancing);
3. worker hygiene and source controls;
4. building and ventilation protocols;
5. cleaning and disinfecting protocols;
6. drop-off, pick-up, and delivery practices and protocols;
7. communication, training, and supervision practices and protocols;
8. what visitors can do to minimize transmission;
9. additional protections and protocols for receiving giving options;
10. additional protections and protocols for managing occupancy;
11. additional protections and protocols to limit face-to-face interactions; and
12. additional protections and protocols for distancing and barriers.

1. Policies and procedures that assist in the identification of sick workers and ensure sick workers stay home

Workers have been informed of and encouraged to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

- Workers are expected to take their temperatures before coming to work and stay home if their temperature is 100.4 degrees F or higher.
- Workers should ask themselves if they've had any of the following symptoms since their last day of work or being on site that they cannot attribute to another health condition: fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, headache, muscle pain, sore throat, or loss of taste or smell. If any of these symptoms are present, workers should stay home.
- If a worker or visitor has any of the screening symptoms or has a measured temperature above 100.4°F, they will be advised to go home, stay away from other people, and contact their health care provider.
- Workers with COVID-19 symptoms while at the workplace will be sent home immediately or isolated in a closed room until they can be sent home.
- Workers with confirmed COVID-19 or who have been in close contact with a household member with COVID-19 should not be at work until their quarantine period is finished. Workers are asked to follow the guidelines set forth by the Minnesota Department of Health for when to stay home versus return to the workplace.
- The Office Manager, in coordination with the Council President, of LWLC will be the point of contact for communicating protocols and steps to take when workers have been exposed to COVID-19 in the workplace and maintaining communication with and gathering information from workers who may be ill to ensure privacy.
- LWLC has implemented and communicated 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 as advised by the Minnesota Department of Health or their local healthcare provider.
- Accommodations for workers with underlying medical conditions or who have household members with underlying health conditions have been implemented. LWLC will work individually with these workers to develop a plan that both keeps the worker safe and household members safe, as well as flexibility to continue their responsibilities with LWLC.
- LWLC has implemented a policy for informing workers if they have been in close contact to a person with COVID-19 at their workplace and requiring them to quarantine for the required amount of time as set forth by the Minnesota Department of Health while also protecting the privacy of workers' health status and health information.

2. Physical distancing – maintaining six feet of physical distancing

Physical distancing of six feet will be implemented and maintained between workers and visitors in the workplace through the following engineering and administrative protocols:

- Maximize remote-working: workers who are able to work from home must work from home, unless necessary and physical distancing can be maintained at the workplace.
- Limit staff meetings to 10 people or less.
- Ensure physical distancing in workplaces, including at workstations, break rooms, etc.
- Maintain at least a 6-foot distance for any worker interaction.
- Increase physical space between workers and the public to at least 6 feet whenever interacting.

3. Worker hygiene and source controls

The following worker hygiene and source controls are being implemented at our workplaces at all times:

- Workers are required to regularly wash their hands. Handwashing and/or hand-sanitizer facilities are readily available and stocked.
- As of July 25, 2020, people in Minnesota are required to wear a face covering in all public indoor spaces and businesses, unless alone or exempt from the face covering requirement, per Executive Order 20-81. This includes the church, sanctuary, and offices. Workers are required to wear a face covering when working outdoors when physical distancing cannot be maintained. Face coverings can be removed when working in an individual office, and temporarily removed in situations such as eating, drinking, or communing, providing physical distancing can be maintained. The server should wear a face covering in these instances.
- Protective supplies appropriate to the task of a worker are provided including face coverings, gloves, disinfectant, shields, etc.
- Handwashing and respiratory etiquette signs have been posted.
- Doors to multi-stall restrooms shall remain propped open to avoid the need to touch.
- Workers are encouraged to avoid community drinking stations and water fountains, except for touchless water-filling stations.
- Tissues are provided for proper cough/sneeze etiquette along with no-touch disposal receptacles.

4. Workplace building and ventilation protocols

The building has been assessed to assure building and ventilation systems are in safe operational status prior to re-gathering. The following practices and protocols will be ensured for day-to-day operation:

- Fresh air will be maximized into the work and communal spaces and air recirculation eliminated.
- Air flow blowing across people will be minimized.
- The air conditioning system will continue to run to enhance the ability to filter contaminants out of the air.
- Relative humidity levels between 40-60% will be maintained.
- HVAC systems will run at least 2 hours before and after occupancy.

5. Work and gathering place cleaning and disinfection protocols

Regular housekeeping practices are being implemented, including routine sanitizing of the work and gathering places, and frequent sanitizing of high-touch areas. Workers and volunteers have been instructed that personal equipment and tools should not be shared and, if shared, should be disinfected between users.

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- Indoor common areas, restrooms, offices, shared electronic equipment, tools, and controls will be routinely cleaned and disinfected.
- High touch items will be cleaned frequently including door handles, countertops, railings, etc.
- Appropriate and effective cleaning and disinfectant supplies approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for use against SARS-CoV-2 have been purchased and are available for use in accordance with product labels, safety data sheets, and manufacturer specifications. Required personal protective equipment for use with the products have also been secured.
- A sanitation schedule and checklist, along with EPA guidelines, have been established and documented, identifying surfaces/equipment to be sanitized, the agent to be used, and the frequency of sanitation.
- Workers and volunteers have been instructed that personal equipment, tools, phones, microphones, etc. should not be shared or, if shared, should be disinfected after each use.

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

- Drop-off, pick-up, and delivery activity will be completed via a contactless method whenever possible.
- When possible, electronic means will be used to eliminate the need for close contact between worker and delivery personnel.
- Workers must minimize the unnecessary exchanging or sharing of scanners, pens, or other tools with delivery personnel.
- Drop-off and pick-up locations should allow for six feet of physical distance between customers and minimize contact with surfaces.

7. Communications, training, and supervision practices and protocols

This COVID-19 Preparedness Plan has been certified by LWLC leadership as well as the LWLC COVID-19 Response Planning Team and posted throughout the workplace.

- Leadership and workers have been informed of the plan and trained regarding COVID-19 exposure, as well as applicable policies, procedures, practices, and protocols.
- LWLC rules and practices have been communicated to visitors and users of the facility with the expectation that provisions will be followed.
- Workers will be responsible for ensuring that established rules and practices are complied with.
- LWLC members have been informed via email and video about the protective measures being taken for their protection to both educate and inform them of their role in protecting themselves and others to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Reference Living Word Lutheran Church Re-Gathering Plan – Effective May 27, 2020 and updated June 22, 2020, July 25, 2020, September 6, 2020, and November 19, 2020. This Plan will also be posted at the church and available to be viewed on the church’s website.

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

- Visitors should conduct a self-check and stay home if they have symptoms of COVID-19. Symptoms 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.
- Visitors who have confirmed COVID-19, have been in close contact with a household member with COVID-19, experiencing symptoms compatible with COVID-19, or have had a significant exposure to COVID-19 should not

be in public until their quarantine period is finished. Visitors are asked to follow the guidelines set forth by the Minnesota Department of Health for when to stay home versus return to public.

- Persons who may be at higher risk for severe illness are strongly encouraged to stay home.
- Signage has been posted asking visitors to complete the self-check and stay home if they answer “yes” to any of the self-check questions.
- If visitors begin to feel unwell while in the facility, they should leave immediately, contact their health care provider, and isolate themselves at home.
- Visitors are encouraged to regularly wash and/or sanitize their hands while in the facility.
- Equipment, products, or items touched by visitors while in the building has been limited.
- As of July 25, 2020, people in Minnesota are required to wear a face covering in all public indoor spaces and businesses, unless alone or exempt from the face covering requirement, per Executive Order 20-81. This includes the church, sanctuary, offices, and classrooms. Workers and visitors are also required to wear a face covering when working outdoors when physical distancing cannot be maintained. Face coverings can be temporarily removed in situations such as eating, drinking, communing, or performing providing physical distancing can be maintained. Visitors should provide their own face covering or ask the office for one. Face coverings are not a substitute for maintaining a physical distance of 6-feet from people not from the same household.
- A praise team will be set up a minimum of 12' from worship attendees. Attendees are allowed to sing but required to wear a face covering and maintain physical distancing from other attendees not from the same household.
- Visitors should adapt their practices during services and ceremonies to avoid physical contact or passing objects between individuals (e.g. greetings, offering baskets, sharing of ceremonial objects).
- Holy Communion will be celebrated at least monthly, as current restrictions allow. Visitors will be ushered for communion row by row, keeping physical distancing between households with the ability to temporarily remove masks for communing. Communion servers will wear gloves and masks to serve the bread and individually filled cups of wine/juice.
- Visitors are encouraged to bring their own notepads, pens, and activities for children as these items have been removed from the Sanctuary for the safety of our visitors.
- Coffee fellowship will be suspended for the time being. We will follow the mandates as to when we can reintroduce the serving of coffee and/or food once more.

9. Additional protections and protocols for receiving giving options

Ushers will be holding offering baskets for visitors to drop their giving (offering) into on Sunday mornings at the conclusion of the Worship Services. Visitors are highly encouraged to consider using online and mobile giving options or sign up for automated Simply Giving.

10. Additional protections and protocols for managing occupancy

- Worship services will be held indoors beginning September 6, 2020. Facility occupancy is currently reduced to accommodate for the required physical distancing of at least six feet between people who do not live in the same household. Indoor occupancy will not exceed 50% of total occupancy, with a maximum of 250 people in a single self-contained space.
- The church facility will be accessible to visitors, groups, and studies to meet on-site with some additional restrictions and expectations in place. These restrictions and expectations will be communicated and posted. Some of these include, but not limited to, staggered arrival and departure times, cleaning protocols,

mandatory scheduling of space with the Office Manager, clear communication, follow self-check guidelines, food and drink limitations.

- We will hold in-person Children and Youth Ministry when both state mandates and school district learning plans allow. We will do our best to comply with the same safety restrictions and protocols stated above to the best of our ability, however, it is important to recognize this will not be perfect with youngsters. We encourage families to follow the same guidelines and exceptions followed by the local public-school regarding the wearing of masks. Again, each person/family will need to make their own personal decision as to when they are comfortable and feel it is safe to return to in-person gathering based on individual circumstances.
- The above occupancy protocols include leadership, workers and visitors for all weddings, funerals, baptisms and planned services such as worship, rituals, prayer meeting, classes and Bible studies.
- These limits may change as the data indicates declining number of cases and deaths, or surges in those numbers over time and updated via email, website, or Facebook.

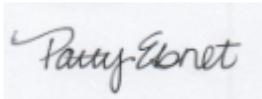
11. Additional protections and protocols to limit face-to-face interactions

- LWLC has evaluated and either discontinued or modified points in the service that previously involved face-to-face or interaction closer than six feet including offering, communion, greeting time, etc.

12. Additional protection and protocols for distancing and barriers

- Processionals and recessionals of Worship Services will be conducted in a manner that maintains at least 6 feet of distance between people from different households.
- Visitors are encouraged to maintain a physical distance of at least 6 feet at all times from people not from the same household. This includes establishing this distance with people next to, in front of and behind them. Ushers will be available to help direct visitors to a seat should they need assistance.

Certified by:



Patty Ebnet, Congregation President

COVID-19 Emergency Response Plan for Living Word Lutheran Church

Effective: May 27, 2020

Updated September 6, 2020

Living Word Lutheran Church has implemented plans and protocols to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 in our place of worship. Please reference COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for Living Word Lutheran Church.

If a worker is confirmed positive with COVID-19, the worker and all other workers that has had close contact will quarantine for a number of days agreed upon with the Personnel Committee in compliance with guidance from the Minnesota Department of Health.

LWLC workers have been trained on how to assist a visitor that appears to be sick or symptomatic and assist them in leaving. Proper Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) is available for use.

The Minnesota Department of Health will contact those individuals reported to them as a “close contact” by a person confirmed positive with COVID-19. LWLC will do our best to assist visitors with their personal responsibility to identify those from our worshipping community that they may have had close contact with.