

Redeemer Lutheran Church COVID-19 Preparedness Plan

Revised as of August 20, 2020

INTRODUCTION

We, the COVID-19 Preparedness Team of Redeemer Lutheran Church, affirm the mission statement of the congregation:

Being chosen by God and strengthened by the Holy Spirit, Redeemer Lutheran Church gathers together to worship, serve and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all people, to provide meaning and purpose for daily living.

We hear these words of Holy Scripture:

⁴⁰And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' (Matthew 25:40)

⁴⁴All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. (Acts 2:44-45)

And we remember what we promise to all those who are baptized in our midst:

We welcome you into the body of Christ and into the mission we share:
join us in giving thanks and praise to God
and bearing God's creative and redeeming word to all the world.
(*Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (ELW), page 231)

The task of building a preparedness plan to resume public activities at Redeemer Lutheran Church in a time of pandemic can seem rather daunting. However, when we read the words above, and we keep in mind that our focus is not on the myriad of modifications to our practices, but on the question "How can we be like Jesus to all whom we meet", the development of a preparedness plan is simple...not "easy," but simple. We see each other as the presence of Jesus; it is Jesus we care for; it is Jesus we protect; it is Jesus we welcome (see Matthew 25:40). This document details how we will keep each other safe in these pandemic times yet remain faithful to the Gospel and continue to uphold each other in Christ.

GENERAL PROTOCOLS FOR ALL ATTENDING EVENTS AT REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH

Please consider exposure risks outside of your normal family and day-to-day exposure before attending worship or any group activity or meeting at Redeemer to ensure the health and safety of others. For instance, if you attended a large group gathering within the community or region, please quarantine for 14 days before participating in worship or small group meetings. Participants should conduct a self-check before they leave home and stay home if they or anyone in the household have symptoms of COVID-19. Symptoms could include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Chills
- Headache
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste or smell
- Gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea

For all those entering the building:

- Hand sanitizer will be available at building entrances.
- Review the list of symptoms posted at the building entrances.
- Use the provided thermometer to take your temperature.
- Record the temperature by your name in the log.
- A greeter may welcome you to an event and assist you with signing in.
- Wear a mask inside the building.
- Go immediately to your event/room.
- Maintain social distancing between family units.
- The nursery will be closed to people attending functions at the church.

Redeemer Lutheran church will not be liable in any way for all persons that become infected with COVID-19. Any person that enters the church facility assumes all risks that are involved in this setting.

GENERAL WORSHIP PROTOCOLS

- Those wishing to attend worship will need to register by calling the church office no later than 8:30 a.m. on Friday for Sunday worship, or by 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday for Wednesday worship.
- Every third pew will be used in the sanctuary (two pews will be left empty between occupied pews).
- Ushers will help direct people to seats; if there are issues regarding seating location (disability seating, other health needs), let the church know.

- Bulletins will be available in the narthex for individuals to take themselves.
- Offering plates will be available in the narthex for individuals to place their offering. The plates will not be passed during worship.
- Musicians and worship leaders will be spaced as far apart as practically possible.
- Singing is allowed with masks on.

PROTOCOLS FOR HOLY COMMUNION

- Communion servers will be masked and will wear gloves (after sanitizing their hands).
- The server will drop the bread in the communicant's hand.
- The server will place a pre-filled cup of wine/grape juice on the serving table for the communicant to take themselves.
- In most circumstances, two stations will be used for communion distribution.
- Cups will be pre-filled prior to the service.
- Servers/musicians will be individually communed as they have been during the time public worship has been suspended
- Efforts will be made to minimize the number of servers needed for communion.

PROTOCOLS FOR HOLY BAPTISM

- Hand sanitizer will be available at the font.
- A handheld shell will be used for placement of the water on the child's head.
- The parent will hold the child through the pouring of the water.
- A parent, adult chosen by the parent, or the Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministry may walk the child down the aisle as the child is introduced.
- The anointing/sign of the cross need not be with a physical touch of the forehead.
- Protocols for adult baptisms will be individually determined as the need arises.

PROTOCOLS FOR WEDDINGS

- All protocols applicable to weekly worship apply to weddings.
- Members of the bridal party will be spaced as far apart as practically possible. The bridal party should be kept to as small a group as possible to maintain proper distancing.
- Masks will be worn.
- Musicians will be spread as far apart as practically possible.
- Those in attendance beyond the capacity of the sanctuary may be seated in the narthex or fellowship hall.

- The bridal party dressing rooms will be moved down the education hallway, and the nursery restroom will be available for the bridal party. The main restrooms will be available for public use.

PROTOCOLS FOR FUNERALS

- All protocols applicable to weekly worship apply to funerals.

PROTOCOLS FOR OTHER RITES DURING SERVICES

- Multiple groups of people may need to be brought forward to the communion rail as necessary to maintain social distancing.
- Alternatively, a rite may be performed over multiple services to minimize the number of additional people at services.
- Changes to actions during those rites will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

PROTOCOLS FOR SMALL GROUP GATHERINGS

Those leading small groups (such as staff meetings, committee meetings, quilters, WELCA circles, music ensembles, etc.) should:

- Consider participant risk factors
- Understand room capacity and adjust accordingly to most recent CDC guidelines
- Space chairs and tables at distances to accommodate the 6-foot distancing guideline
- Have hand sanitizer available for group members to use
- Limit equipment, products, or items touched by participants
- Avoid sharing food or beverages

PROTOCOLS FOR DAY-TO-DAY CHURCH ACTIVITIES

Visitors:

- During office hours, all visitors need to check in with the main office or with the staff member present.
- Outside of office hours, all visitors need to complete the log at the main entrance.

Staff:

- Upon entering employees will get their temperature check, answer COVID questionnaire, and sanitize hands.

If a staff member indicates COVID-19 symptoms:

- **While at home:** the employee must stay at home and inform the pastor. The pastor will follow protocol in advising necessary people.

- **While at work:** the employee must go home immediately and inform Pastor. Pastor will follow protocol in advising necessary people.
- The employee may return to work after required quarantine and/or approval of a physician.

GENERAL CLEANING PROTOCOLS

- The **sanctuary** will be cleaned every Monday and Thursday and after events/services.
- The **narthex** will be cleaned every Monday and Thursday and after events.
- **Offices** will be cleaned every Monday and Thursday. Staff will oversee sanitizing their work areas and other surfaces that visitors have touched every day.
- The **Fellowship Hall** will be cleaned once a week and after events.
- **Classrooms and meeting rooms** will be cleaned once a week and after events.
- **Restrooms** will be cleaned every weekday.
- **Musical instruments** will be cleaned by the musicians responsible for their usage or by the Organist/Liturgist.

Cleaning may occur more frequently as needed to accommodate building usage.

Products used for cleaning will be products that been approved by the Environmental Protection Agency, Food and Drug Administration, and/or Minnesota Department of Health for effective removal of coronaviruses.

CONCLUSION

We offer this plan to God and to the members and friends of Redeemer Lutheran Church as a way that we can continue to “build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live” (*All Are Welcome*, ELW #641, st. 1). We give thanks to God for being able, with the help of these practices, to resume public in-person proclamation of the Gospel. In the words of Marty Haugen in the hymn, “Soli Deo Gloria” (ELW #878),

All praise for Jesus, best gift divine
 through word and witness, in bread and wine;
 incarnate love song of boundless grace,
 priest, teacher, prophet in time and space,
 your steadfast kindness with human face:
 Soli Deo Gloria!

The Redeemer Lutheran Church COVID-19 Preparedness Team

Rev. Darrel Cory, Pastor

Jan Anderson, President, Redeemer Church Council

Madison Crane, Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministry

Vanessa Van Dam, Church Administrative Assistant

Reid Froiland, Organist/Liturgist

Mike Lundgren, Custodian

Jane Aandal, RN, MN Public Health and member at large

Marit Knutson, Financial Secretary

Christine Burnham, Redeemer Altar Guild and Council member

Al Johnson, Redeemer Property Committee

Certified by the Redeemer Lutheran Church Council:



Council President

8-20-2020
Date

Designated Plan Administrator:



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