

# COVID-19 Congregational Safety Plan for Christ the King Lutheran Church

**Christ the King Lutheran Church** is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for the practice of faith for our entire community, as well as a safe workplace for all our staff. To ensure that, we have developed the following Congregational Safety Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time, we all must bear one another's burdens and commit to being responsible for implementing this plan. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 in our building and among our community, and that requires full cooperation from all of us. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain our mutual safety and health.

People are the most important part of our ministry. We are serious about safety and health and keeping people safe while continuing the work of ministry at Christ the King. Our Congregational Safety Plan follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines and federal OSHA standards related to COVID-19 and addresses:

- hygiene and respiratory etiquette;
- physical distancing;
- mask wearing;
- housekeeping – cleaning, disinfecting and decontamination;
- prompt identification and isolation of sick persons; and
- communications necessary to ensure effective implementation of the plan.

## Screening and policies for people exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19

Staff members have been informed of and are encouraged to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. We encourage all community members to also self-assess their own health before visiting the church building or attending any in-person gatherings. The following policies and procedures are being implemented to assess everyone's health status prior to entering the church building and to report when they are sick or experiencing symptoms.

**Everyone should assess themselves for any symptoms consistent with COVID-19 before coming to the building or attending an in-person gathering. No one experiencing these symptoms should come to the church building or to any in-person gathering.**

**Symptoms consistent with COVID-19 include:**

- **New onset or worsening cough**  
OR
- **Shortness of breath**  
OR at least two of the following symptoms
- **Fever (100.4oF or higher)**
- **Chills**
- **Muscle pain**
- **Headache**
- **Sore throat**
- **New loss of taste or smell.**

**If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19:**

Stay home until you have had no fever for at least 3 days AND improvement of other symptoms AND at least 10 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.

**If members of your household are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19:**

Stay home for 14 days.

**What to do if you have received a laboratory test for COVID-19**

If POSITIVE: MDH will provide instructions to the person and their household contacts.

If NEGATIVE: Stay home until fever has resolved, other symptoms have improved, AND either two negative tests are received in a row at least 24 hours apart OR 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

**If you are experiencing symptoms or have tested positive for COVID-19, and have visited the church building or attended an in-person gathering, we ask you to please communicate such with the Lead Pastor by email and/or phone. If you begin experiencing symptoms while in the church building or at an in-person gathering, leave, go home or seek medical attention, and inform the Lead Pastor by email and/or phone.**

Christ the King Lutheran Church has also implemented a policy for informing staff and building visitors if they have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 while in the building or at a congregational gathering. **If a person reports symptoms or a positive test for COVID-19, they will be asked to report to the Lead Pastor all staff and community members (contacts) with whom they have had contact for the past 14 days.**

- All exposed contacts will be warned of their potential exposure to the virus as rapidly and sensitively as possible.
- To protect privacy, contacts are only informed that they may have been exposed to someone with the infection. They are not told the identity of the person who may have exposed them.
- Contacts will be directed towards educational, informational, and supportive resources to understand their risk, what they should do to separate themselves from others who are not exposed, monitor themselves for illness, and the possibility that they could spread the infection to others even if they themselves do not feel ill.
- Contacts are encouraged to stay home and maintain social distance from others (at least 6 feet) until 14 days after their last exposure, in case they also become ill. They should monitor themselves by checking their temperature twice daily and watching for cough or shortness of breath. Contacts who develop symptoms should promptly isolate themselves and be evaluated for infection and for the need for medical care.

## Entering the Building and Gathering In-Person

As we experience the incremental lifting of restrictions for group gatherings, Christ the King has implemented a policy for in-person gatherings and building visitors. Up to 10 non-staff members are now allowed to enter the building at a time, and all in-person gatherings have a 10-person maximum gathering size. Those wishing to hold a gathering at CTK should contact the church office to schedule.

At this time, **any in-person gatherings shall be conducted outside the building** and shall continue to require proper hygiene practices, mask wearing, and maintaining physical distancing. People should also refrain from engaging in higher-risk activities like singing and sharing food.

**High-risk individuals (people over 65 and those with underlying health conditions) are strongly encouraged to not participate in any group gatherings** until there is significant evidence of declining rates of infection, mortality, and community spread.

## Handwashing

Basic infection prevention measures are being implemented at Christ the King at all times. People are instructed to frequently wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, especially when entering and leaving, prior to any mealtimes, and after using the toilet. All visitors to the church will be required to wash their hands prior to or immediately upon entering the building. Hand-sanitizer dispensers (that use sanitizers of greater than 60% alcohol) will be available by the front door that can be used for hand hygiene in place of soap and water, as long as hands are not visibly soiled.

## Respiratory etiquette: Cover your cough or sneeze

Staff, congregation members, and visitors are being instructed to cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing and to avoid touching their face, in particular their mouth, nose and eyes, with their hands. They should dispose of tissues in the trash and wash or sanitize their hands immediately afterward. Respiratory etiquette will be demonstrated on posters and supported by making tissues and trash receptacles available to all staff and visitors.

## Physical distancing

Physical distancing is being implemented in the church building and at all in-person gatherings:

- **All individuals not from the same household are expected to maintain physical distance of six feet between themselves and others;**
- **Limit entering the offices or workspaces of others, avoiding doing so entirely if possible**
- **Up to 10 non-staff members are allowed to enter the building at a time and must abide by all established public health policies, including mask wearing, maintaining physical distance, hand washing, etc.;**
- **Signage and instructions will be posted throughout the building;**
- **All individuals are prohibited from gathering in groups larger than 10 and in groups of any size inside the church building;**
- **All individuals are prohibited and from using another person's personal protective equipment, phones, computer equipment, desks, workstations, offices or other personal work tools and equipment.**

## Mask Wearing

To help protect our staff and community members, all visitors to the church building and all those attending an in-person gathering must wear a face covering that covers the mouth and nose, at all times while at Christ the King. This requirement does not apply to children under the age of 2 or to individuals who are unable to wear a face covering due to a medical condition.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control recommends the use of face coverings in public settings where physical distancing measures are difficult to maintain. CDC advises that face coverings can help slow the spread of the virus, including among those who are not aware they carry it. However, the use of a face covering is not a substitute for physical distancing. Please continue to observe rules regarding appropriate distancing while at Christ the King.

## Housekeeping

Regular housekeeping practices are being implemented, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces, equipment, tools and machinery, and key areas in the church building, including restrooms, kitchens, and meeting rooms. Frequent cleaning and disinfecting will be conducted in high-touch areas, such as door handles, elevator panels, light switches, railings, etc.

The staff will disinfect hard-surfaces and high-touch areas with a bleach solution or other disinfectant each morning during regular office hours.

Hard surfaces and high-touch areas will be cleaned and disinfected after all gatherings.

A deep and thorough cleaning of all spaces will take place in the event of an individual who has entered the building being diagnosed with COVID-19.

## Communications

Additional communication will be ongoing and provided as needed. Any part of this safety plan is subject to updates and change. Everyone is invited to monitor how effectively the plan has been implemented and work together in love as a community to address shortfalls.

The faith community of Christ the King values the safeguarding of the lives of our members and our larger community. We see this shared responsibility for each other's health and safety as part of Jesus' command to "Love thy neighbor". Let us be an example in our community of how we can care for one another. We will get through this crisis together.

Prepared by:

**Rev. Rory Philstrom**

**Lead Pastor**

Approved by

**CTK Council**

**May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

# Appendix A – Guidance for implementing the COVID-19 Congregational Safety Plan

## General

<https://www.elca.org/publichealth>

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/guidefaithserv.pdf>

[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)

## 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)

## Physical 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)

## **Persons 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)