

COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for Bethel Lutheran Church

Policies and Procedures

****UPDATED 05/07/21**

These policies and procedures apply to Bethel Lutheran Church and its members. Bethel Child Care Center maintains its own policies and procedures.

As the state and nation begin to open up and lift restrictions pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic, Bethel Lutheran Church continues to follow state and federal guidelines.

According to the Minnesota stay-safe plan, places of worship are

- Open at 100% capacity
- Require masks
- Require 6 feet of social distancing between households.

On May 28, 12:00 a.m. All distancing and group size limits are eliminated.

Bethel will also follow the state of Minnesota's guidance that masks are required until 70% of adults (16 and older) are vaccinated.

<https://mn.gov/covid19/stay-safe/stay-safe-plan/index.jsp>

Ensuring Sick Members Stay Home

Anyone who answers yes to any question on the Visitor and Employee Health Screening Checklists <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf> for himself, or a member of his household, should stay home.

Member Hygiene and Source Controls

Hand-washing and cover your cough signs are already in place in each bathroom. Hand sanitizer is available on the narthex table and at the altar.

Bathroom doors should be left open.

Communion will continue to be held by 'drive-through'. Assistants will sanitize their hands and wear gloves and masks.

Offering plates will continue to be left on chairs for members to drop offerings in instead of being passed.

Cleaning and Disinfection Protocols

Cleaning and disinfecting will be left to the hired cleaning service who has been cleaning to the standards of the Minnesota licensed child care, Bethel Child Care Center.

Recent research has indicated that surface contamination is not a main way COVID is transmitted. The CDC does not require disinfection of an area after 24 hours (see below). Therefore, no special cleaning will be done of equipment and materials in the sanctuary.

Communications and Training

This update will be read and approved by the Church Council. It will also be posted on the Church website.

Procedure if a worshipper, or household member, tests positive for COVID-19.

If a worshipper, or someone in the household of a worshipper, tests positive for COVID-19, and the person was in the church building for a cumulative 15 minutes within 3 days before showing symptoms they must inform the church office, 444-4746 as soon as possible. Sally McIntyre and Pastor Kindem will be in charge of communicating with those who may have been exposed.

Unvaccinated persons exposed will be encouraged to quarantine for 14 days.

Following CDC guidelines, fully vaccinated people (meaning it has been 2 weeks since their completed shots), do not have to quarantine if they have no symptoms.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>

Therefore **church will not be cancelled**. Let it be emphasized that even vaccinated people should be tested and quarantine if they have symptoms. Following exposure, vaccinated people should monitor for symptoms for 14 days.

As to cleaning and disinfecting the CDC recommends:

If less than 24 hours have passed since the person who is sick or diagnosed with COVID-19 has been in the space, clean and disinfect the space.

If more than 24 hours have passed since the person who is sick or diagnosed with COVID-19 has been in the space, cleaning is enough. You may choose to also disinfect depending on [certain conditions](#) or everyday practices required by your facility.

If more than 3 days have passed since the person who is sick or diagnosed with COVID-19 has been in the space, no additional cleaning (beyond regular cleaning practices) is needed.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

Adopted by Bethel Lutheran Church Council, May 11, 2021