

COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for Maple Plain Community Church

Maple Plain Community Church is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff, ministry team leaders and members, and congregation. To ensure such, and to fulfill the requirements of Executive Order 20-48 by Governor Walz, we have developed the following COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. Staff, ministry team leaders, and the congregation 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 staff, ministry team leaders and members, and congregation.

People are our most important assets and Jesus gives us the command to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:39). We believe our efforts to mitigate the spreading of this virus is a way in which we can love our neighbors. We are serious about the safety and health of our people at Maple Plain Community Church.

STAFF PROTECTIONS AND PROTOCOLS

For the sake of definition, **staff** will be considered any paid staff or unpaid volunteer who may have interaction with the premises outside of a normally scheduled worship service or planned gathering.

Ensuring sick staff stays home – We have the unique ability for each staff to complete the majority of tasks remotely. If in doubt about the condition of your health, please work remotely. Each staff member should screen their own health daily and determine if they have any of the symptoms associated with COVID-19. If any staff is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, they will not be permitted back into the building until a quarantine period is completed or have been medically cleared. If applicable, any time missed due to sickness will be considered paid sick time. If staff is in the proper mental and physical condition to work from home while sick or quarantined, they should as able.

Staff Social Distancing – We will maintain a 6-foot physical distance between staff members in the workplace. This includes all areas of workflow including meetings, special projects, and other interactions. Staff always has the option to work from home if they choose to.

Staff Hygiene and Source Controls – Wash or sanitize hands regularly, especially after coughing/sneezing, before eating or touching your face. Water fountains should be avoided. Staff should also avoid sharing food communally. If you are working on projects that may bring you in close quarters with others, please wear a face mask.

Building and Ventilation Protocols – We will ensure there are practices and protocols maintained to continuously maximize fresh-air into work and communal spaces. This would include periodically opening windows and doors to allow outside air into the building and circulating air as needed outside of normal heating or cooling cycles. These measures will be supervised by the Trustee board.

GENERAL PRACTICE AND PROTOCOLS

This section details our practices and protocol for worship services and scheduled events. The following applies to all attendees who enter the building, regardless of their participation level.

Occupancy Limits

Current restrictions allow 190 seated attendees for our worship services. The latest executive order allows for 50% of the fire code occupancy to gather in areas for worship services and planned gatherings. According to current fire code protocol, our sanctuary pews can legally hold 380 people. This means we are currently able to seat 190 attendees in the pews. If an overflow space is necessary, we may have the capability to seat another 75 participants in the fellowship hall for a live stream.

Online Alternative to Physical Attendance

If you choose to stay home, we will continue to make our worship services available online in the form of live streaming. We will also record services and make them available as soon as possible after the conclusion of the service. Our goal is to keep everyone together no matter what they choose. We ask you to consider worshipping from home if any of the following are true:

- You are at a higher risk of severe illness due to age or health concerns
- You have normal contact with someone at a higher risk of severe illness
- You feel unsafe or uncomfortable given any current circumstance

Protocol to Minimize Possible Transmission

We ask that all people who enter our building conduct a self-screening for possible symptoms of or exposure to COVID-19. We will regularly remind attendees to consider their health and circumstances before attending any church function. If any of the following are true, we ask that you please worship from home:

- You are confirmed to have COVID-19.
- You have been in contact with someone who is confirmed to have COVID-19.
- You are experiencing 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.
- You have been in close contact with anyone experiencing these symptoms.
- You have travelled outside of the country in the last 14 days.

Most transmission of COVID-19 appear to come through close quarter physical interactions and the transfers of droplets from actions like conversation, laughing, coughing, and sneezing. Because of these possible risks, we are recommending the following protocols:

- We ask that attendees keep 6 feet between non-family members. Please refrain from hugging, handshakes, or other close-quarter physical contact.
- There will be spacing of at least 6 feet between family units in the seating areas with ushers to assist you in seating.
- We encourage the use of face masks by participants when they are able. We understand there are some situations which may not allow the use of a face mask. This may include those who are leading the service at which time we will ensure an increased distance to minimize risk. This may also include small children and people with respiratory issues or other physical or health considerations.
- We strongly encourage the use of face masks when singing. Singing has been identified as a higher-risk activity as it more forcefully expels respiratory droplets than speaking. The worship team or speakers will have increased distance from the congregation and from one another if face masks are not used.
- We encourage use of multiple entryways.

- We ask that there be no congregating in areas such as the foyer or atrium. While these may be our normal areas of interaction, they are also our main avenues for travel inside the building. We ask that any attendees who wish to converse would do so from a proper distance in the parking lot.
- Bulletins will be placed in the pews before the service in a sanitary fashion.
- Distribution of pre-packaged communion elements will take place in a sanitary fashion as attendees enter the seating area.
- Weekly offerings will be taken in the foyer upon the conclusion of the service. No collection will be taken during the service.
- As an added measure to assist in cleaning, we will temporarily remove all literature from the pews as cleaning agents may damage the contents.

Gathering Space Cleaning and Disinfection Protocols

As part of our efforts to provide a clean and sanitary gathering space, the Trustees have developed a cleaning checklist to be utilized after a space has been in use. We will use a pre-mixed sanitizer solution on all surface to aid in sanitation. The purpose of a checklist approach is to ensure a uniform standard after every cleaning. The cleaning checklist below will also be printed and posted at various locations in the church:

Fellowship Hall

- Disinfect and wipe tabletops.
- Disinfect and wipe chairs.
- Disinfect and wipe light switches.
- Disinfect and wipe door knobs and handles to pantry, custodial room, mechanical room.
- Disinfect and wipe other hard surfaces that are commonly touched.

Kitchen

- Disinfect and wipe counter tops.
- Disinfect and wipe appliance and fixture handles.
- Disinfect and wipe light switches.
- Disinfect and wipe doorknobs and handles.
- Disinfect and wipe other hard surfaces that are commonly touched.

Front Entry - Narthex

- Disinfect and wipe doorknobs and handles.
- Disinfect and wipe light switches.
- Disinfect and wipe hard seats and benches.
- Disinfect and wipe doorknobs to Kid's Activity Bags.
- Disinfect and wipe stair railings.
- Carefully disinfect and wipe elevator call buttons and controls (please do not use a direct spray, it could damage the controls).
- Disinfect and wipe other hard surfaces that are commonly touched.

Sanctuary

- Carefully, disinfect and wipe hard surfaces on the pew backs (Use of bleach can discolor or damage the wood and fabric).
- Carefully, disinfect and wipe microphones and stands.
- Disinfect and wipe light switches and doorknobs.
- Disinfect and wipe other hard surfaces that are commonly touched.

Bathrooms

- Disinfect and wipe light switches and doorknobs.
- Disinfect and wipe fixtures, handles, seats, etc.
- Disinfect and wipe other hard surfaces that are commonly touched.

Atrium

- Disinfect and wipe light switches and doorknobs.
- Disinfect and wipe chairs and tabletops.
- Disinfect and wipe other hard surfaces that are commonly touched.

Classrooms

- Disinfect and wipe light switches and doorknobs.
- Disinfect and wipe chairs and tabletops.
- Disinfect and wipe other hard surfaces that are commonly touched.

Additional Protections and protocol

We will post signage at entrances outlining the most basic protocols. This will include reminders like staying home if sick or in contact with someone sick, keeping 6-feet of social distancing, and encouragement to wear a face mask if possible.

With cleanliness and hygiene as key factor in prevention, we will place hand sanitizers at various locations.

For Sunday gatherings, our team of Elders and Trustees will oversee the guidelines laid out in this document. If max capacity is reached, they will determine how to direct attendees to the overflow area. They may also suggest to those who appear physically ill to worship from home as a protective measure for those in attendance.

This plan will be reviewed on a weekly basis as we determine if existing protocol should be added, removed, or changed.

Communications and Training

We will remain in consistent communication with our congregants as to any changes that may take place.

This Preparedness Plan was communicated through email to all staff and ministry leaders on June 12, 2020 and necessary training was provided where applicable. Additional communication and training will be ongoing with regular updates.

This COVID-19 Preparedness Plan has been certified by Maple Plain Community Church leadership and was posted throughout the workplace June 12, 2020 to be updated as necessary.

Certified by:

Dwight Affeldt- Trustee Chairman
Ron Steffenhagen- Elder Chairman
Dominic Broda - Lead Pastor

Last updated on June 12, 2020