

COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for St. John's United Church of Christ

St. John's United Church of Christ (SJUCC) is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our Pastor, members, guests and visitors. To ensure we have a safe and healthy church community, SJUCC has developed the following COVID-19 Preparedness Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Consistory team is responsible for implementing this plan. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 in our church, and that requires full cooperation among our Pastor and Consistory Team. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of all persons in our church.

The COVID-19 Preparedness Plan is administered by the Consistory Team, who maintains the overall authority and responsibility for the plan. However, members are equally responsible for supporting, implementing, complying with and providing recommendations to further improve all aspects of this COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. SJUCC's Consistory Team has our full support in enforcing the provisions of this plan.

Our Pastor and members are our most important assets. SJUCC is serious about safety and health and protecting its workers and members. We have been working with the MN UCC Conference for their guidance and conducting an online survey to gather feedback.

SJUCC's COVID-19 Preparedness Plan follows the industry guidance developed by the state of Minnesota, which is based upon Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines for COVID-19, Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MNOSHA) statutes, rules and standards, and Minnesota's relevant and current executive orders. It addresses:

- ensuring sick persons stay home and prompt identification and isolation of sick persons;
- social distancing – people must be at least six-feet apart;
- hygiene and source controls;
- building and ventilation protocol;
- building cleaning and disinfection protocol;
- communications and training practices and protocol.

SJUCC has reviewed and incorporated the industry guidance applicable to our church provided by the state of Minnesota for the development of this plan. Other conditions and circumstances

included in the industry guidance and addressed in the plan that are specific to our church include:

- additional protections and protocols for guests and visitors;
- additional protections and protocols for personal protective equipment (PPE);
- additional protections and protocol for access and assignment;
- additional protections and protocol for sanitation and hygiene;
- additional protections and protocols for handwashing;
- additional protections and protocol for distancing and barriers;
- additional protections and protocols for managing occupancy;
- additional protocols to limit face-to-face interaction;
- additional protections for receiving or exchanging payment; and
- additional protections and protocols for certain types of businesses within an industry.

Ensure sick people stay home and prompt identification and isolation of sick persons

The Pastor and members have been informed of and encouraged to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. The Pastor should self-assess his health status prior to entering the church and for the Pastor and members to report when they are sick or experiencing symptoms.

SJUCC has implemented leave policies that promote the Pastor staying at home when sick, when household members are sick, or when required by a health care provider to isolate or quarantine themselves or a member of their household and comply with the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Accommodations allow for the Pastor to work remotely, if there are any underlying medical conditions or who have household members with underlying health conditions.

The Consistory Team will inform the Pastor and Members if they have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 at their church, and require them to quarantine for the required amount of time.

Social Distancing and Church Protocols

Social distancing of at least six feet will be implemented and maintained between the Pastor, members, guests, and visitors in the church through engineering and administrative controls.

Indoor church capacity is calculated for Phase III as follows:

MN Phase III - Indoors and Outdoors

Capacity: 6 feet of social distance, max 50%, maximum of 250 people within a single self-contained space.

Capacity Calculations:

28 pews with 6 people = 168 people

50% capacity = 84

Members, guests, and visitors will be instructed to sit in every other pew, one family per pew. Pews have been marked off. All Bibles, hymnals, and cushions have been removed from the pews where members, guests, and visitors may sit. Only 84 people will be allowed in the church to sit in the pews.

Attendance will be taken each week, by a Consistory Team member, for contact tracing if someone does contract COVID-19.

To ingress and egress, first in-last out will be used. The main aisle will be used for ingress. If needed, the side aisle on the north side of the church can be used for egress.

Before church service and after, the main doors will be left open for touchless entry and eliminate a bottleneck at south entrance. Enter the south doors and immediately ingress, up the stairs and into the sanctuary. No gathering the coat rack area or the Narthex, either before or after the worship service, will be allowed. People must keep their jackets, outerwear, and any other personal items with them at all times. To avoid bottlenecks on the stairway, always stay to the right.

People needing to use the elevator will stage in the designated location outside and/or inside the narthex. Cleaning wipes will be provided in the elevator. Each rider must clean the buttons, door handle, and any surfaces they have come in contact with after they ride. Only members of the same household may ride together.

Worship will be shortened to 30 minutes or less. No group singing will be allowed. All members, guests, and visitors must wear a mask while inside the sanctuary.

No items will be passed in the sanctuary. A drop spot will be provided near the sanctuary entrance to deposit offerings. Any bulletins will be placed in the pews prior to opening church.

Communion will not be passed in the sanctuary. Plans and details for celebrating the Lord's Supper will be communicated to the members, guests, and visitors when protocols have been finalized.

Restrooms will be cleaned before and after worship. While we will not restrict access, people will be discouraged from using the restrooms.

Hygiene

Basic infection prevention measures are being implemented at our workplaces at all times. Signage has been posted in restrooms, which instruct people to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water frequently throughout the day after using the restroom. Hand-sanitizer dispensers (that use sanitizers of greater than 60% alcohol) are at entrance and in locations in the church workplace so they can be used for hand hygiene in place of soap and water

Church building and ventilation protocol

Operation of the church includes necessary sanitation, assessment and maintenance of building systems, including water, plumbing, electrical, and heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems. Air filters are changed regularly.

Church cleaning and disinfection protocol

Regular practices of cleaning and disinfecting have been implemented, including a schedule for routine cleaning and disinfecting of restrooms. Frequent cleaning and disinfecting is being conducted of high-touch areas, including controls, door handles, elevator panels, railings, etc.

Appropriate and effective cleaning and disinfecting supplies have been purchased and are available for use in accordance with product labels, safety data sheets and manufacturer specifications, and are being used with required personal protective equipment for the product.

Drop-off, pick-up and delivery practices and protocol

This section does not apply.

Communications and training practices and protocol

This COVID-19 Preparedness Plan was communicated to the Pastor and Consistory Team on October 1st, 2020, and necessary training was provided. Additional communication and training will be ongoing, as needed for new Consistory Team members and/or new Pastor.

Instructions will be communicated to all members about protections and protocols, including: 1) social distancing protocols and practices; 2) practices for hygiene 3) recommendations or requirements regarding the use of masks, face-coverings and/or face-shields by workers. The Pastor and members will also be advised not to enter the church if they are experiencing symptoms or have contracted COVID-19.

The Consistory Team is expected to monitor how effective the program has been implemented at their monthly meetings. Successes, challenges, and deficiencies will be discussed at the meetings. The Consistory Team and the Pastor are to take an active role and collaborate in carrying out the various aspects of this plan, and update the protections, protocols, work-practices and training as necessary. This COVID-19 Preparedness Plan has been certified by the Consistory Team and the plan was posted in church, online, and made readily available to members on October 1st. It will be updated as necessary by the Consistory Team.

Additional protections and protocols

No additional protections or protocols apply.

Certified by:

Michelle L. Bachmann

October 1, 2020

Interim Consistory President

First Amendment on April 13, 2021:

The following changes been made in conjunction with the State of MN protocol guidelines:

Cushions have been reinstalled in the pews. The main entrance doors are no longer propped open. Elevator riders do not need to clean the elevator buttons. Group singing is allowed with masks being worn.

Appendix A – Guidance for developing a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan

General

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Coronavirus (COVID-19) – www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV

Minnesota Department of Health (MDH): Coronavirus – www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus

State of Minnesota: COVID-19 response – <https://mn.gov/covid19>

Businesses

CDC: Resources for businesses and employers – www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html

CDC: General business frequently asked questions – www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/general-business-faq.html

CDC: Building/business ventilation – www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html

MDH: Businesses and employers: COVID-19 – www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html

MDH: Health screening checklist – www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf

MDH: Materials for businesses and employers – www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/materials

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED): COVID-19 information and resources – <https://mn.gov/deed/newscenter/covid/>

Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (DLI): Updates related to COVID-19 – www.dli.mn.gov/updates

Federal OSHA – www.osha.gov

Handwashing

MDH: Handwashing video translated into multiple languages – www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdQuPGVcceg

Respiratory etiquette: Cover your cough or sneeze

CDC: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html

CDC: www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/etiquette/coughing_sneezing.html

MDH: www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html

Social distancing

CDC: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html

MDH: www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html

Housekeeping

CDC: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html

CDC: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html

CDC:

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):

www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2

Employees exhibiting signs and symptoms of COVID-19

CDC: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html

MDH: www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/basics.html

MDH: www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf

MDH: www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/returntowork.pdf

State of Minnesota: <https://mn.gov/covid19/for-minnesotans/if-sick/get-tested/index.jsp>

Training

CDC: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-small-business.html

Federal OSHA: www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf

MDH: www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/about.pdf