

New Life Presbyterian Church

COVID-19 Preparedness Plan

New Life Presbyterian church is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace and worship space for all our employees, congregation members, friends, and visitors. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 in our workplaces and communities. In order to reach our goal, we rely on each other and keep each other accountable. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of all persons in our building.

This COVID-19 Preparedness plan is administered by Sara Drake MPH, who along with the New Life Presbyterian Church ruling elders, maintains the overall authority and responsibility for the plan. However, church elders, members, employees, and volunteers are equally responsible for supporting, implementing, complying with and providing recommendations to further improve all aspects of this COVID-19 Preparedness Plan.

New Life's COVID-19 Preparedness Plan establishes and explains our policies, practices, and conditions that we will implement to meet the guidance that is based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines.

New Life acknowledges that many members and friends are people at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 and are strongly urged to stay in their place of residence and follow the provisions of Executive Order 20-55.

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Sunday Worship-Live Stream and Zoom Fellowship

The safest place to worship is at home via live stream. New Life provides multiple live stream options at 10am on Sunday mornings. Members, friends, and the public can watch the service live via Facebook, YouTube, or Twitch. In addition, members can choose to access the service by using Zoom. New Life intends to make live stream worship available even after the pandemic has resolved.

Worship via Internet

The service can be watched live at 10am Sunday mornings or can be viewed at a later time. To watch the service live, members and friends can follow New Life Presbyterian on Facebook, Twitch or YouTube. Past Worship Services are accessible through Facebook and accessed from the New Life home page. Members also have the option to log into the Zoom link, which is sent out each Sunday morning. A Zoom host will facilitate and share the Twitch live-stream with anyone who joins the Zoom meeting.

Worship via Telephone

All members and friends have the option to use a telephone to access the Zoom worship on Sunday morning at 10am.

Sunday Morning Fellowship

Immediately following the worship service, the Zoom worship link will remain open for fellowship. Anyone can join the fellowship, turn on the Zoom tab start video and spend time with church family and friends in a video chat format.

Self-Health Check-up and Preparations

For the safety of all, any members and building users must follow all CDC and MDH guidelines when entering the church building.

Staff and building users must stay home if exhibiting any of the following symptoms:

- Fever greater than 100 degrees
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Persistent cough
- Persistent pain or pressure in your chest
- New loss of taste or smell
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat
- Persistent headache
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

In addition, staff and building users must stay home if there is reasonable suspicion that they:

- Have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.
- Have been in contact with someone suspected of having COVID-19.

For the safety of all, staff and building users are required to take the following precautions while at church:

- Wear a mask at all times while in any public spaces inside the building or in proximity of others.
- Use the available hand sanitizer station upon entering the building.
- Sign in to the visitor log.
- Maintain at least 6 feet of physical distance to other individuals in the building.

Contractor, visitor, and staff sign-in sheets instruct individuals to contact the church office if they develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19 within 2 weeks of entering the building.

Building Use Prior to Resuming Unrestricted in-person worship:

Until unrestricted in-person worship resumes, building use will be limited to:

- New Life Presbyterian Staff, including office staff, and janitorial staff. All are required to follow the MDH protocols for staff hygiene, source controls, and disinfection protocols.
- Contractors hired by Staff for work on the building are required to:
 - Sign-in at church entry.
 - Maintain physical distancing of at least 6 feet between all attendees in every direction.
 - No consumption of food or beverage in the church facility.
 - Wear masks at all times.
 - Hand sanitizer must be used upon entry.
 - Use only the family restroom.
- Sobriety groups that agree to all necessary safety protocols including:
 - Sign-in at church entry (sobriety groups are provided the option to maintain their own attendee logs and will make logs available for contact tracing as needed in the event of an outbreak).
 - Maintain physical distancing of at least 6 feet between all attendees in every direction.
 - No consumption of food or beverage in the church facility.
 - Wear masks at all times.
 - Use hand sanitizer upon building entry.
 - Use only the family restroom.
 - The nursery will be available for use, but will not be stocked with any toys. Building users are asked to bring their own toys for use in the nursery.
 - Number of attendees may not exceed 50% of the room's capacity or the number of attendees that will allow for 6 feet of physical distancing in every direction, whichever is smaller.

- A virtual or call-in option is available for individuals not wishing to attend in person or individuals at higher risk of adverse consequences from COVID-19.
- Attendees are required to notify the sobriety group in the event of a confirmed or suspected COVID diagnosis occurring within 14 days of attending the meeting. Sobriety group leaders are responsible to notify New Life of any COVID positive results.
- Individuals and small groups of volunteers, church committees, or support groups must also agree to all necessary safety protocols including:
 - Sign-in at church entry. Logs will be maintained for 6 weeks.
 - Masks must be worn at all times.
 - Hand sanitizer must be used upon entry.
 - Use only the family restroom.
 - The number of attendees may not exceed 10 or the number of attendees that will allow for 6 feet of physical distancing in every direction, whichever is smaller.
- Small worship opportunities such as funerals with 45 or fewer attendees:
 - Sign-in at church entry. Logs will be maintained for 6 weeks.
 - Masks must be worn throughout the service.
 - Hand sanitizer must be used upon entry.
 - No food or beverage to be consumed in the building.
 - No fellowship following worship.
 - The service is touchless. Hymnals and other printed material have been removed from the sanctuary. One-time use bulletins may be provided and attendees are asked to take the bulletins when they exit.
 - Members of different households must sit at least 6 feet from members of other households. The sanctuary will be marked off for safe seating areas.
 - No communal singing will be allowed.
 - New Life strongly encourages the service to be streamed online so that others can participate virtually. The administrative assistant in the church office and/or the sound booth operators will assist with setting up a streaming or virtual meeting option.
- Preschool Staff will follow their own approved Plans under MDH Guidelines for schools.

Sunday Worship – In Person Phase 1

When the Ramsey County 14-day case rate falls below 30 cases per 10,000 people, the ruling elders of New Life may consider opening to hybrid in-person worship. Virtual worship will continue to be available as an option. During the initial reopening of worship, the following precautions will be taken:

- No communal singing will be allowed. Music will be pre-recorded or performed by a limited number of musicians at a safe distance from attendees. Choirs will not rehearse nor perform.
- No food or beverage will be supplied or consumed.
- No fellowship will be offered after worship.
- Attendees must wear masks at all times. Speakers may remove their masks during speaking portions of the service.
- Sign-in at church entry. Logs will be maintained for 6 weeks.
- Capacity will be limited to 45 attendees, the number that can be safely seated to allow 6 feet distance in every direction for individuals from different household units.
- If demand for in-person worship exceeds the number of seats available, a reservation system will be employed. Alternatively, overflow space in alternate public spaces in the church may be made available so that the worship can be streamed to the public space.
- The service will be touchless – members are encouraged to bring their own Bible or other materials if desired. Bulletins will be made available electronically and a screen will be used during the service. There will be no passing of the peace, passing of the offering plate, or physical touch with members of different households.
- Water fountains will remain unavailable for use.
- The nursery will not be available.

During Hybrid In-Person Phase 1, building users must continue to follow all safety protocols with the exception of:

- Main restrooms will be open for use.
- The number of attendees for a group meeting must not exceed 25 people. Physical distancing of at least 6 feet must continue to be maintained.

Sunday Worship – Hybrid In-Person Phase 2

When the Ramsey County 14-day case rate falls below 10 cases per 10,000 people, the ruling elders of New Life may consider a broader re-opening of in-person worship. Virtual worship will continue to be available as an option. During Hybrid In-person worship phase 2, the same precautions as phase 1 apply with the exception of:

- Up to 150 people would be allowed to attend in-person, 50% capacity of the sanctuary.
- Nursery service may be available.
- Faith formation classes may be available for children.

Sunday Worship – Fully Open In-Person Phase 3

Once a vaccine has been widely distributed, some safety precautions may be discontinued based on guidelines from the Minnesota Department of Health or other Public Health Authorities.

- Masks may no longer be required, but attendees may choose to continue to wear masks to protect themselves or others.
- Capacity for worship services and other meetings will be limited only by the building capacity and fire codes.
- Food and beverage service will resume.
- Choirs and other music groups may resume rehearsing and singing during worship.

COVID-19 Reporting and Notification

- Visitor, contractor, and staff sign-in sheets are retained for at least 6 weeks from the sign in date.
- Reporting of infections for contact tracing will follow all requirements of the CDC and the Minnesota Department of Health.

Safety Measures

Safety measures are in effect until a vaccine is widely available and Executive order 20-103 has been rescinded. New Life Presbyterian Church commits to following the requirements of Executive Order 20-103 and the Safe Faith guidance from the Minnesota Department of Health including:

- Staff and worker protection and protocols:
 - Staff members are encouraged to work from home whenever possible.
 - Staff members are required to stay home if experiencing symptoms or have a suspected or potential community exposure to COVID-19.
 - When staff members are working in the building, physical distancing is maintained so that there is no close contact between staff members at any time.
 - Social Distancing:
 - Whenever possible, church staff and volunteers are encouraged to hold meetings virtually, online, or via telephone rather than in person. The administrative assistant in the church office will assist with setting up virtual meetings using Zoom or a similar format.
 - The workspace of all church staff allows for 6 feet of physical distancing in all work areas. Individual rooms for office staff are used whenever possible to limit the number of people in a single room at any given time to one in most cases.
 - Social distancing is maintained while workers are engaged in “roving” activities (e.g. janitorial, security, inspections). Where activities must be performed while others or visitors are present, workers are expected to ensure social distancing is maintained (e.g. working in less congested areas, low-peak periods, using stanchions, placement of carts).
 - Staff hygiene and source controls
 - Staff is encouraged to regularly wash hands

- Hand sanitizer is available at the church entrance and in office areas
 - Staff is required to wear masks in the church building in public areas and when others are in close proximity
 - Water fountains are not operational
- Building and Ventilation protocols:
 - An outside HVAC contractor was engaged to review ventilation of the building. They reported that the building meets fresh air requirements in some of the building but not all areas. The air handling units are functioning properly and meet refresh requirements, and the radiant (radiator) heated areas will need to be refreshed using windows.
 - Three types of heating utilized in the building. New Life has direct radiator heat in some rooms, air handler heating in some of the older rooms, and the new addition has forced air heating and cooling.
 - The air handler and forced air systems both meet the requirements of 10% fresh air intake when running.
 - The sanctuary cooling units must not be turned on for either heating or cooling as they do not have fresh air intakes installed.
 - The window air conditioning units in the KCOC space may only be used if the fans are on with the outside air intake function on so that fresh air is coming in to the space.
 - After a room has been in use, either of two steps must be taken:
 - If the room is not to be used for 24 hours it can be secured as the virus should not survive the time period before the room is used again.
 - If the room is to be used in the same 24-hour period then fresh air in the amount of 3 times the room volume must be utilized to reduce the potential virus contamination.
 - Air Filters on the air-handlers and roof top units are MERV 11 or 12 or better.
- Cleaning and Disinfection Protocols
 - Areas of the church that are in regular use are routinely cleaned and disinfected on a regular basis. The frequency of cleaning and disinfection will be adjusted based on building usage on an ongoing basis.
 - EPA approved disinfectants are used at all times.
 - A disinfection checklist and schedule has been developed and is followed. The checklist and schedule will be updated once the church moves through the reopening phases.
- Drop-Off, Pick-Up and Delivery Practices and Protocols
 - When possible, staff utilizes contactless methods. Gloves should be used if contactless delivery is not possible. Alternatively, staff may wash hands or use hand sanitizer after receiving deliveries.
 - Face coverings are worn at all times.
- Communications and Training Practices and Protocol
 - COVID-19 preparedness plan is posted in accessible locations and shared with all staff.

- All leadership and staff have been trained regarding COVID-19 exposure, applicable policies and procedures.
- Helping members, visitors, and guests minimize transmission
 - Signs are posted at the entry of the building and at the sign-in and sanitizing station.
 - Masks are required.
 - Physical Distancing will be encouraged and enforced at all times.
 - Sign-in required, including self-health check and reporting requirements.
 - Hand sanitizer used at initial entry.