

St. Peter Lutheran Church

COVID-19 Preparedness Plan

(Updated 9-14-20)

PURPOSE: This document is based on industry guidance for safely reopening faith-based communities, places of worship, weddings, and funerals. This plan must be evaluated, monitored, executed, and updated under the supervision of a designated “Plan Administrator” within the organization of St. Peter Lutheran Church. The designated “Plan Administrator” shall be the Executive Committee.

This plan must be posted on site in an easily accessible location that will allow for the Plan to be readily reviewed by all leadership, staff, members and visitors.

Occupancy must be reduced to accommodate for the required social distancing of at least six feet between people who do not live in the same household. In indoor settings, occupancy must not exceed 50% of total occupancy, with a maximum of 250 people in a single self-contained space. In outdoor settings, gatherings must not exceed 250 people.

This guidance is limited to church services, weddings and funerals as described above and does not apply to related celebrations or social gatherings.

“Staff”, in this document, will be considered Called and Support workers of St. Peter Lutheran Church.

“Participants”, in this document, will be considered anyone else attending events at St. Peter Lutheran Church and School.

A. STAFF PROTECTIONS AND PROTOCOLS

Ensure Sick Staff Stay Home

1. Staff are required to conduct a self-check and stay home if they have symptoms of COVID-19. Staff are also required to complete the health screening checklist each day they come to work and document those results. 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. ***If you or anyone in your household has had any related symptoms over the last 4-5 days, stay home.***
2. Staff with COVID-19 symptoms should be sent home immediately. If they cannot be sent home immediately isolate them in a closed room until they can be sent home. Staff

who have been in close contact with a household member with COVID should not be at work until their quarantine period is finished.

3. If staff have been exposed to confirmed COVID-19 in the facility, or tested positive, they shall communicate this with the Executive Committee, who will gather the necessary information and begin the tracking of events and those who have been in contact with said staff. Notification to those in possible contact will follow.
4. Regular sick leave is stated in the Compensation Policy for Called Workers. COVID-19 is an exception, and staff will be required to quarantine if confirmed with COVID-19.

Social Distancing - Staff Must Be At Least Six-Feet Apart

1. Staff will maximize remote -working as much as possible, except for those duties that require on-site presence.
2. Office hours are from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Monday - Friday. When more than one staff is in the building at a time, they are each in their own office.
3. There are rooms in the facility that provide the physical distance of 6 feet required for meetings. The fellowship hall will be designated and used for this purpose.

Church Office Hygiene

1. Staff are required to regularly wash their hands. Hand sanitizer is readily available and accessible in the office at all times. Each staff member has a face mask, and gloves are available when needed.
2. Each staff member will be required to clean and disinfect their work area when finished. The main office computer and desk is used by multiple people, and it is imperative that it is cleaned after each use to reduce any transmission possible.
3. Windows can be propped open to provide fresh air ventilation.

Drop-Off, Pick-Up, And Delivery Practices and Protocols

1. Whenever possible, attempts will be made to do everything electronically to eliminate the need for close contact with staff and delivery personnel.
2. Any visitors to our facility that stay for longer periods than 15 minutes (i.e. service calls) will be required to sign a guest register for tracking purposes.

B. CHURCH SERVICES, BIBLE STUDIES, FUNERALS, AND WEDDINGS

Occupancy Of The Sanctuary

1. The full occupancy of our sanctuary, including the balcony, is 280 persons. The balcony will be designated for musicians. We will have 2 Pastors, a few musicians, 4 ushers and 1 AV person for each service. With the social distancing requirements and the layout of

our sanctuary, we will not even come close to 50% capacity. Our goal will be to maintain social distancing when seating participants.

Service Times with Designations and Family Bible Hour

Staff will implement an electronic sign-up for services, or members can call the office to designate a time for the service they prefer to attend. This will help us manage seating in the Sanctuary to maintain social distancing.

Thursday Night @ 6:30 p.m. - This service will be designated for the most vulnerable community members. Based on currently available information and clinical expertise, these people are ***older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions***. We are also asking that families with young children abstain from attending this worship service. Young children generally do not understand or practice “covering their cough,” or other measures needed to prevent transmission. Please utilize the late service on Sunday morning.

Sunday Morning Worship Early @ 8:00 a.m. - Open to anyone

Sunday Morning Family Bible Hour @ 9:15 a.m. (June-August) - Family Bible hour is an intergenerational Bible study for all ages. We will be broadcasting in between services from **9:15am until 10:15am**. This leaves enough time for first service attendees to get home after that service, and enough time for late service attendees to leave after FBH is done. This year we will be following Paul on his missionary journeys, as he spreads the gospel to people who had never heard of Jesus before. Hear the story, play unique games, sing songs, and learn about Jesus, the God of all.

Sunday School @ 9:15 a.m. (Sept. - May) - The co-coordinators of Sunday school at St. Peter have proposed a reopening plan that will take into account current restrictions and recommendations. We are planning to have all students age 4 - 8th grade meet as one group in the church sanctuary, spread out from each other as much as possible (using the pews that were opened for 8:00 service and sanitized by the 8:00 ushers). We will ask that masks be worn by all. We will have one teacher introduce and teach the lesson each week. If space permits, we will have a song or other activity. Then we'd like to move kids to age groups, still within the sanctuary and still maintaining distance as much as possible, and have each group work with a teacher on an activity or discussion. Then we would close with a review and a prayer as a whole group. We are planning to buy crayons/pens/pencils *for each child*, so there will be no sharing of materials. We would like to start Sunday school each week as close to 9:10 as possible--after the early service ends and the ushers have had time to do their work. We would need to end each week by 10:10, to allow teachers to put away materials and wipe down the pews. We will need parents to be there at 10:10 to pick up their child(ren), so that kids don't congregate in the hallway.

Sunday Morning Worship Late @ 10:30 a.m. - Designated for families with young children. ***Please do your best to keep your kids seated and next to you.*** Kids' bags will NOT be available, so having them bring something from home to keep them occupied would be best.

Sunday morning services will continue to be live-streamed. We encourage those who cannot attend to tune in and worship!

Bible Studies @ various times - Bible Studies will be held in the Fellowship Hall with tables spaced apart according to social distancing requirements. Individuals will also follow social distancing requirements when moving around the room.

Ensure Sick Participants Stay Home

1. Participants are required to conduct a self-check and stay home if they have symptoms of COVID-19. 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. ***If you or anyone in your household has had any related symptoms over the last 4-5 days, stay home.***

Social Distancing - All Participants Must Be At Least Six Feet Apart

1. For each service conducted, there will be a 4-man team of ushers that will guide and encourage participants to maintain social distancing when in the facility.
2. Ushers will seat participants and ensure six feet of distance is maintained at all times. More detail on the logistics of the services is included in the usher duties section of this policy.
3. The balcony area will be designated for the musicians.
4. The Lord's Supper will be conducted with participants staying in their designated pews. Rather than forming lines and gathering at the communion rail, the Pastor(s) (with facemask and gloves) will go to each participant in their pews and administer the sacrament reducing the movement of people and reducing contact.

Hygiene and Source Controls

1. Participants ***will be required*** (Ex. Order 20-81) to wear a face mask, we ask that you bring your own face mask. However, The church will have on hand face masks for those who do not have one.
2. Usher teams ***will be required*** to wear either a face shield or mask and gloves when ushering.
3. Participants are required to regularly wash their hands. Hand sanitizer will be available in designated locations throughout the facility.

4. Tissue for proper cough/sneeze etiquette will be available in designated locations throughout the facility.
5. The offering plate will NOT be passed through the pews, but stationed in the Narthex. Participants can drop off their offerings prior to exiting the facility.
6. Hymnals and Bibles have been removed from the pews. Service bulletins will NOT be reused.
7. Children's bags located in the Narthex have been removed.
8. Community drinking fountains will be "out of order" and signage will be posted.
9. The church mailbox area in the Narthex will be barricaded off. This will eliminate close contact between members and eliminate lingering.

Persons Exempt from Wearing a Face Covering

1. Children under age 2 years must not wear face coverings. Children between the ages of 2 and 5 years old are not required to wear face coverings, but are encouraged to wear a face covering when in public if they can do so reliably.
2. Persons who have medical or other health conditions, disabilities or mental health, developmental, or behavioral needs that make it difficult to tolerate wearing a face covering.
3. Any person who has trouble breathing, is unconscious, sleeping, incapacitated, or is otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance.

Cleaning And Disinfection Protocols

1. The cleaning service is on site daily to clean the main hallway, main entrance and bathrooms. They will also conduct a full cleaning of the facility after the Thursday night and Sunday morning services.
2. After each service the designated usher team will disinfect pews and other surfaces of contact.
3. The ushers posted at the bathroom entrances will disinfect the door handles after each use.

Building And Ventilation Protocols

1. The facilities main entrance and exit doors will be propped open to improve ventilation and fresh air circulation. Windows in the Narthex also have the ability to crank open.
2. Staff will also utilize our HVAC system to circulate outside air into the facility.

C. ADDITIONAL PROTECTIONS AND PROTOCOL

1. This document will be posted on site, on our website and sent out electronically to the members of St. Peter Lutheran Church and School.

2. Signage will be posted at entrances, exits and throughout the facility outlining established protocols.
3. The designated entrance and exit will be posted.
4. Live-streaming of our services will continue for those unable to attend on-site services.
5. Greeter teams will NOT conduct greeting during these restrictions.

D. USHER DUTIES DURING COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

- Ushers will play a key role during these restrictions and protocols that are required to have on-site services. We cannot conduct a service without you!!
- The Head Usher will need to confirm with the Executive Committee that a 4-man team is lined up for each service.
- Usher teams will be reduced down to 4 instead of the usual 6-7.
- ***If you are on an usher team, and do not feel comfortable doing so, do not feel obligated.***
- Captains, please contact your team and see who you have available. Let our Head Usher, Bruce Fahning know.

Before the Service

- Please be present 30 minutes before the service begins.
- ***Each usher will be required to wear a face shield or mask and gloves. Face shields will be available for usher use.***
- Prop designated entrance doors open. These are the Grace Street parking lot doors. Weather permitting, prop fire exit door open in sanctuary. This will reduce contact and increase air flow. ***Leave the designated exit doors closed until the service starts.*** This will prevent people trying to enter the exit door. The designated exit doors will be the Narthex doors leading out to Fifth Street.
- Designate one usher to be stationed at the Grace Street entrance and first set of bathrooms. This usher will have the reserved list for their service.
- Designate one usher to be stationed at the second set of bathrooms down the hall, closest to the Narthex. Limit usage to one person or one family. Clean doors after each use.
- Designate one usher to hand out bulletins. Remind those that they keep their bulletin and take it with them after the service.
- Designate one usher to seat those entering the sanctuary. Ushers will need to seat everyone who enters to maintain the required social distance guidelines. ***Seat people from front to back.*** Individuals will need to maintain 6 ft. of distance, while family members of the same household can sit together. The current distance of our pews will

require skipping two rows. You will begin with the first row of chairs, then skip two rows and so on. The length of our pews (16 ft.) will require seating arrangements in the following scenarios, assuming the average person takes up 2 ft. when seated: 4 on one end and 1 on the other. 2 on one end and 3 on the other, 2 on one end and 2 on the other, or a family of the same household of 5 or greater can occupy 1 pew. You will not get 3 individuals in one pew. To maximize seating, seat individuals on the outside portion and seat couples and families of 2-4 in the middle section, or vice-versa.

- You will receive a list of those who have signed up for the service. Although awkward, we may have to turn others down when we are at 25% capacity. Encourage them to utilize our online signup to worship with us publicly.
- IF we do have a visitor who wants to worship, do your best to accommodate for them. They are a guest in our house and we want to meet their needs as best we can.

During the Service

- Ring the bell at the beginning of the service.
- During the first hymn, light the candles.
- Prop open the Narthex doors for increased ventilation.
- Offering plates will NOT be passed around. The offering plate will be stationed in the Narthex for members to place their offering prior to exiting through the Narthex doors.
- Communion will be administered with participants staying in their pews. The Pastor(s) will move from person to person.
- During the last hymn, douse the candles.

Following the Service

- After the service, designate one usher to usher people out of the sanctuary. One pew at a time, ***from back to front.***
- The offering plate will be set up in the Narthex as they exit the sanctuary, members can place their offering just prior to exiting through the Narthex doors. Designate one usher to be stationed with the offering plate.
- Completely wipe down and sanitize pews and any other surfaces of possible contact.
- Place offerings in the safe.
- If you are the early service crew, close and lock exit doors for the late service.
- If you are the late service crew or on a Thursday night, do a walk-through and check and lock all exterior doors.

