

# Grace Covenant Church

## COVID-19 Preparedness Plan

For this plan, workers include any staff or volunteer performing in an official capacity including worship team, sound room staff, ushers, and pastoral staff. This plan will include policies and procedures designed to protect the vulnerable and provide information on how the church is responding to social distancing and sanitization guidelines.

### Mask Requirements

- Masks are required for all those who enter the church, including during Sunday morning worship.
- Masks are required at all times when EEI is in the building during the week.
- Masks may be removed if you are alone in an office or area of the building, but should be available to put on when no longer alone.
- Masks may be removed by those performing official duties from the stage.
- Masks should cover the nose and mouth.

### Protocols for Social Distancing

We ask everyone that enters the church to maintain a minimum distance of 6 feet from other households.

- Sunday Worship: Entrance and Exit
  - Workers (staff and volunteers) will park in the lower lot and enter the back door.
  - Congregants will park in the upper lot and enter through the front doors at the canopy.
  - Doors will open 30 minutes prior to the start of the service.
  - When entering the church, everyone will be asked to enter the sanctuary and be seated, following the guidance of the ushers.
  - If there is a line that forms, please use the marks on the floor to keep a 6' separation between households.
  - Everyone is asked to immediately exit the church, beyond the concrete around the canopy, to allow people to get to their vehicles and to allow for any pick up that is needed.
- Sunday Worship: Seating
  - Ushers will manage seating if needed, maintaining 6' between households sharing a pew.
  - The Fellowship Hall will be used for overflow seating, if needed.
  - Every two pews will be skipped to allow for social distancing while singing.
- Markings
  - Marks on the floor will be provided as reminders of social distancing in the front hallway.
  - The canopy and the concrete under the canopy will mark the boundary for where people need to clear beyond after the service to allow people to exit without impediment.

- Areas of the church will be blocked off to minimize the need to sanitize the entire church.

## Building Protocols

- Sunday Mornings:
  - The front doors will be propped open to minimize contact, as weather allows.
  - The nursery will be closed.
  - Bathrooms are open but are limited to two people per bathroom.
- During the Week:
  - Those entering the facility during the week (except Sunday morning) will be asked to sign in at the front door and will be responsible for self-reporting health status upon entry (excluding EEI or Aramark who have their own protocols prior to coming into the building).
  - This will serve as a record of who has entered the building throughout the week
- The Welcome Center area is closed, including the mailboxes.
- All portable walls will be drawn shut, and some hallways will be blocked off to prevent people from entering closed off sections of the church.
- Tables in the Fellowship Hall will be removed and chairs will be set up in rows, 9 feet apart, facing the TV.

### Occupancy

- Sanctuary occupancy is set at 80 and the fellowship hall at 40. This keeps us under 50% occupancy and allows for social distancing.
- The usher at the front door will manage building occupancy on Sunday mornings.
- Only two people are allowed in the office at a time
- Outside of Sunday mornings, all group meetings will be 10 people or fewer.
- All facility use will be scheduled through the church office.

## Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols

- Rooms that are used will be cleaned by EEI twice per week.
- A hand sanitizer station will be available in the front hall.
- Those who use the church facility are asked to keep good hygiene by washing their hands regularly.
- During the week:
  - Disinfecting wipes and/or spray will be available to wipe down tables, bathroom, doorknobs, and other surfaces that are touched during the week.
  - Those who use the facility are asked to wipe down any surfaces that they may have come in contact with prior to leaving the area.
  - These include: Tables, Door knobs, chairs, computers, etc.

## Experiencing Symptoms

Everyone who enters the church is asked to self-screen for symptoms of COVID-19. Anyone feeling sick should stay home.

- Anyone experiencing the following symptoms will be sent home<sup>1</sup>:
  - Cough, shortness of breath, fever, chills, headache, sore throat, muscle pain, loss of taste or smell. Other less common symptoms include gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.
- Those with symptoms can return:
  - 10 days since symptoms ended **AND** 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications
  - **OR** with a negative COVID test
- Anyone who has been in close contact with or lives with someone known to have COVID-19 or has been told by a healthcare provider that you may have been exposed to COVID-19 will be sent home.<sup>2</sup>
- If staff or volunteers test positive for COVID-19 or have been exposed, they will contact Pastor Greg so that proper steps can be taken.
- Those who have tested positive can return when the following criteria have been met:
  - 10 days since symptoms first appeared **and**
  - 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and
  - COVID-19 symptoms have improved (for example, cough, shortness of breath)<sup>3</sup>
- Those who have been exposed can return in 10 days symptom free without medication.
- Those who are “at risk” who wish to work from home are encouraged to do so.
- If an employee is sick and unable to work, they will receive paid sick leave through the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA).<sup>4,5</sup>

## Communications and Training Protocols

- The Leadership Team is responsible for development and implementation of this plan.
- Pastor Greg and the Office will communicate this plan through proper channels.
- MDH posters will go up at the entrances as reminders of best practices.
- Connect Team will train ushers.

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<sup>1</sup> MN Dept of Health Self-Screener: <https://mn.gov/covid19/for-minnesotans/if-sick/get-tested/index.jsp>

<sup>2</sup> MN Dept of Health Self-Screener: <https://mn.gov/covid19/for-minnesotans/if-sick/get-tested/index.jsp>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-employer-paid-leave>

<sup>5</sup>

<https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/covid-19-related-tax-credits-for-required-paid-leave-provided-by-small-and-midsize-businesses-faqs>

## What You Can Do to Minimize Transmission

These are things you can do to protect yourself and provide an inviting space for others to enter into worship with you. Please follow these guidelines and the direction of church workers on Sunday mornings to allow everyone to feel welcome and safe.

- Anyone who feels sick should stay home.
- If you are at high risk, you are encouraged to stay home.
- We will have disposable masks on hand for those that need one.
- You are encouraged to wash your hands before attending church or utilize the bathroom sinks or hand sanitizer station in the hallway.

## Giving

- In order to minimize risk to our ushers and staff that handle donations, we ask that you consider giving online - [www.gracecov.net/give](http://www.gracecov.net/give)
- After the service, one usher will collect the offering by the front door as you exit - we will not pass a plate during the service.
- Our financial policy requires at least two ushers count donations. This will continue. Ushers will count, deposit, sanitize the desk area, and wash their hands when complete.