

COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for Glenwood Lutheran Church

Revision 09/13/21

Glenwood Lutheran Church is committed to providing a safe and healthy place to worship for all our members and visitors. To ensure we have a safe and healthy place for worship, Glenwood Lutheran Church has developed the following COVID-19 Preparedness Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. All staff members at all levels of the congregation are responsible for implementing this plan. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 in our parish and communities.

The COVID-19 Preparedness Plan is administered by Rev. Katherine Rood, Lead Pastor and Leadership: Church Executive Board and Council, who maintains the overall authority and responsibility for the plan. However, employees are equally responsible for supporting, implementing, complying with and providing recommendations to further improve all aspects of this COVID-19 Preparedness Plan.

Our COVID-19 Preparedness Plan follows the 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. COVID continues to be fluid and this plan is subject to change based on the situation.

The Plan addresses the following components:

- Staff Protection and Protocols
- Ways to Minimize Possible Transmission
- Minimizing Transmission in Worship
- Protections and Protocol for Managing Occupancy

Plan Key Requirements

Glenwood Lutheran Church has developed and implemented this COVID-19 Preparedness Plan with input from faith leaders, staff and church leadership.

Occupancy/Social distancing:

- We recommend at least six feet between people who do not live in the same household
- Staff are encouraged to be always at least 6 feet apart. Six feet of distancing in work areas, including workstations and shared offices.
- Recommend 6 feet of distance between staff and the public whenever interacting
- Encourage meetings be held in large spaces where people can spread out at six-foot intervals.
- Virtual meetings may be implemented when employees or committee members are in quarantine or as needed

Vaccinations:

- The FDA has approved the Pfizer vaccine in people over the age of 12. We encourage you to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, whether in two doses at the recommended intervals (i.e., 21 or 28 days apart) or in one dose if a single dose is available.

Masks:

- Workers are encouraged to wear a face covering when working indoors or outdoors in situations where social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Masks should be worn by all people (ages 2 and older) who are not fully vaccinated.
- Students in grades 5-9 and adults assisting will be required to wear a face covering while attending Confirmation Classes.

Face coverings may be removed while communicating with someone who is deaf or hard of hearing, or who has a medical condition, disability, or mental health condition that makes communication with that individual while wearing a mask difficult, provided that social distancing is maintained to the extent possible. Face shields should be used as an alternative in these situations.

If participants are needing to quarantine, virtual attendance (Zoom) will be available to those individuals.

Staff Protection and Protocols

Faith Leaders, staff, and volunteers, including those responsible for using the facility for support groups or other activities are all considered “staff” in this document.

The plan is posted on-site in easily accessible locations (front lobby, outside church office, and back parking lot entrance) as well as the church’s website, this allows the Plan to be readily reviewed by all leadership, staff, and volunteers.

Large gatherings continue to present a risk for increasing the spread of COVID-19. Therefore, we retain the right to close at any time that events or circumstances are deemed unsafe.

Ensure Sick Staff Stay Home

Glenwood Lutheran Church has established health screening protocols prior to entering the facility. All who enter shall self-screen by using the Visitor and Employee Health Screening Checklist.

Visitors will be asked to sign in at the office and fellowship pads in the sanctuary for church services.

Employees have been informed of and encouraged to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. The following policies and procedures are being implemented to assess employees’ health status prior to entering the workplace and for employees to not report to work when they are sick or experiencing symptoms.

Health Screening Protocols for Employees at the start of each shift:

Employees should self-screen prior to coming to work answering the health screening questions, in addition the questions will be posted at the entrance:

If an employee or visitor answers “Yes” to any of the screening questions, they should be advised to go home, stay away from other people, and contact their health care provider.

Have you had any of the following symptoms since your last day at work or the last time you were here that you cannot attribute to another health condition? Please answer “Yes” or “No” to each question.

Do you have:

- Fever or feeling feverish?
- Cough?
- Chills?
- Shortness of breath?
- Sore Throat?
- Muscle aches?
- Headache?
- Loss of smell or taste?
- Fatigue?
- Runny Nose or Congestion
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea

Employees with COVID-19 symptoms will be sent home immediately. If they cannot be sent home immediately, isolate in a closed room until they can be sent home. Employees who have been in close contact with a household member with COVID-19 will not be at work until their quarantine period is finished.

Watch for Symptoms

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure to the virus.**

Please consult your medical provider for symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.

If you have symptoms of acute respiratory illness (temperature of 100.4 F or higher, or from the list above) you are asked to stay home. You can return to work after these three things have happened:

- a. Employee feels better; and
- b. It has been 10 days since they first felt sick; and
- c. They have had no fever for the last 24 hours, without using medicine that lowers fevers.

This may mean that employees might be out of work for more than 10 days.

If an employee with symptoms is testing for COVID-19:

1. The employee should stay home and isolate away from other people until test results are available.
Isolation: Separate yourself from other people in your home. Stay away from others: As much as possible, you should stay in a specific “sick room” and away from other people in your home. Use a separate bathroom, if available.
2. **The employee who tests negative:**
 - a. May return to work if their symptoms are better.
 - b. Should stay home if they still have symptoms and consult a health care provider.
3. **The employee who tests positive:**
 - a. Employees who test positive for COVID-19 and have symptoms should stay isolated at home and away from others in the house until all three of the following are true:
 - i. Symptoms have improved; AND
 - ii. At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared; AND
 - iii. At least 24 hours have passed without fever, without using fever-reducing medications.
 - b. Employees who test positive for COVID-19, but do not have symptoms, must stay isolated at home and away from other people in the house for 10 days from their testing date.
 - c. Consider alternative housing if you test positive for COVID-19, when you live in close quarters, such as in a shared apartment or in the same living space with extended family and risk of exposure to others in the house is ongoing.

If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, Plan Administrator will

1. Identify commonalities among employees who have tested positive for COVID-19. This will include dates illnesses started; job positions; location of workstations in the facility; work shifts; transportation to work, and social or family connections.
2. Workplace contact tracing:
 - a. The purpose of workplace contact tracing is to limit disease spread by identifying co-workers who have had contact with an infectious employee, then excluding these contacts from the workplace and require employees to quarantine at home.

What is a close contact:

Being less than 6 feet from someone for 15 minutes or more throughout a 24-hour period. However, even shorter periods of time or longer distances can result in spread of the virus. The longer someone is close to the person who has COVID-19, and the closer they are, the greater the chance the virus can spread.

Quarantine: Separating oneself from others- is recommended for people who have been close to a person with COVID-19 (an exposure). Since people infected with COVID-19 may have no symptoms or can be contagious before symptoms start quarantine is an important way to keep COVID-19 from spreading. To protect family, other close contacts, and the community a person who is not fully vaccinated and has been exposed to a person with COVID-19 needs to stay home and away from others (quarantine; get tested immediately; and, if the test is negative, get tested again three to five days after the last exposure.

Employees who are fully vaccinated (at least two weeks after completing a vaccination series, which is two doses in a two-dose series or one dose in a one-dose series) and have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 do not need to quarantine. However, they should get tested three to five days after exposure, even if they do not have symptoms. They should also wear a mask indoors in public until they get a negative test result or for 14 days following exposure. Anyone who develops symptoms of COVID-19 should separate from others and get tested immediately, whether they are vaccinated.

Who needs to quarantine?

Employees with the following types of exposures need to quarantine if they were not fully vaccinated (less than two weeks after completing a vaccination series, which is two doses in a two-dose series or one dose in a one-dose series) before the exposure occurred:

- Employees who were within 6 feet of someone contagious with COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more over the course of a day (24 hours).
- Employees who live in the same household as someone with COVID-19.
- Employees who had direct physical or intimate contact (e.g., kissing, hugging, other types of physical contact) with a person who has COVID-19.
- Employees who provide care for a person who has COVID-19 at home.
- Employees with direct exposure to respiratory droplets from a person contagious with COVID-19.
- Sometimes quarantining after travel is also recommended.

If you must travel and are not vaccinated, follow public health recommendations below:

- Every time you travel, you can spread COVID-19 variants to your community when you return. If you travel, wear a mask, wash your hands a lot, and stay 6 feet away from others. Do not travel if you feel sick.
- You should quarantine for 7 days if you have a negative test and no symptoms. Quarantine for 10 days if you do not get tested. Continue to monitor for symptoms for 14 days.
- Get tested 3-5 days after returning from travel.

Who does not need to quarantine?

If an employee is vaccinated and is exposed, they do not need to quarantine if **BOTH** of the following are true:

- The COVID-19 exposure was at least 14 days after their vaccination series was fully completed.
- They do not currently have any symptoms of COVID-19.

If someone has recovered from COVID-19 in the past 90 days and is exposed again, they do not need to quarantine if **ALL** of the following are true:

- Their illness was laboratory confirmed in the past 90 days.
- They have fully recovered.
- They do not currently have any symptoms of COVID-19.

How to quarantine

Employees who need to quarantine should stay home for 10 days after the exposure ended. This is the best strategy to minimize the spread of COVID-19 to others.

- Do not go to work, school, or any other place outside the home.
- Do not invite guests from outside your household into your home.
- In some specific situations, there may be options to shorten the quarantine period. Refer to Options to reduce quarantine in specific situations below.

Separate from other people in your home and monitor for symptoms, such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, headache, muscle pain, sore throat or loss of taste or smell. Get tested if you develop symptoms.

Stay away from people who are at high risk for getting very sick from COVID-19, including older adults, persons under 12 unable to receive a vaccine, those living in long-term care facilities, and people with health conditions like asthma, diabetes, heart disease, liver disease, severe obesity, and weakened immune systems.

If you are not fully vaccinated, get tested for COVID-19 immediately and again three to five days after the last exposure if the first test was negative, even if you do not have symptoms.

When quarantining at home, you must make sure to:

- Stay in a specific room and separate from others in the home. Use a separate bathroom, if available.
- Wear a face mask if other people are around.

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash hands thoroughly and often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.
- Avoid sharing personal household items, such as food, dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding. After using these items, wash them thoroughly with soap and water.
- Avoid using public transportation and ridesharing

Contact tracing will be conducted in a way that protects the confidentiality and privacy of an employee with COVID-19.

Lead Pastor will tell exposed employees how to keep from spreading COVID-19 to others, including staying home for 10 days from the last day they were exposed to the person.

Lead Pastor will track the number of days that exposed employees stay home to make sure they do not come back to work too soon. Employees who are sent home who develop symptoms should stay home until all three of these things are true:

- d. Employee feels better; and
- e. It has been 10 days since they first felt sick; and
- f. They have had no fever for the last 24 hours, without using medicine that lowers fevers.

This may mean that employees might be out of work for more than 10 days.

Lead Pastor will maintain communication with and gather information from employees who may be ill, to ensure the privacy of employees is maintained.

How long to quarantine

Fourteen days is the standard length of time to quarantine at home after contact with someone (in the workplace or elsewhere) who has tested positive for COVID-19. However, CDC guidance does permit employees in critical infrastructure sectors to continue working after exposure to a confirmed case of COVID-19 if their absence would create staffing shortages; they adhere COVID-prevention protocols; and they remain symptom-free.

Strategy: Employees should quarantine at home for a minimum of 10 days. To determine when the quarantine period will end, identify the last date of exposure to someone with COVID-19. This is considered day zero. The next day is the first full day of quarantine, or day one. People are able to resume normal activities the day after their quarantine period is completed.

If symptoms develop, the employee should get tested and remain home until results are available. If the employee does not develop symptoms, they may return to work on day 11, without any restriction; no medical exam or testing is required. Although testing isn't required, we do recommend you have a test administered on day 7.

A shortened quarantine option is available as long as they remain without symptoms. A seven-day quarantine with a negative PCR test (not an antigen test or antibody/blood test) if the test occurred on day five after exposure or later.

Continue to watch for symptoms through day 14 after exposure, even if the quarantine was shortened. If any symptoms occur, separate from others right away and get tested.

Determining date the quarantine ends

To determine when the quarantine period will end, identify the last date of exposure to someone with COVID-19. This is considered day zero. The next day is the first full day of quarantine, or day one. People are able to resume normal activities the day after their quarantine period is completed.

- A 10-day quarantine means the person can resume activities on day 11.
- A seven-day quarantine means the person can resume activities on day eight.

Personal Protection and facilities cleaning, sanitizing

- Surfaces are cleaned and sanitized frequently
- Wipes, sanitizer and cleaning products are widely accessible throughout the building.

- Common touch areas are cleaned each day if used.

Employee sickness reporting protocols. Follow the Attendance Policy and notify Lead Pastor.

Building and Ventilation Protocols

Glenwood Lutheran Church will maximize fresh air into the work and communal spaces.

Glenwood Lutheran Church will provide accommodations for “high risk” and vulnerable populations. See CDC’s People Who are at Higher Risk for Severe Illness (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html). Vulnerable employees are encouraged to self-identify to Lead Pastor and Glenwood Lutheran Church will avoid making unnecessary medical inquiries. Glenwood Lutheran Church will take particular care to reduce these employees’ risk of exposure.

Glenwood Lutheran Church will send home all employees who worked in close proximity to the individual for 10 days.

When to Return to Work

If someone you live with has COVID-19 or COVID-19 symptoms:

For 10 days, even if you test negative for COVID-19:

- Stay home as much as you can.
- Stay apart from others.
- Do not share anything that others touch: phones, knives, and forks, etc.

If you do not get sick, go back to work after 10 days.

If you get sick, continue to stay home and follow the instructions below for people who have COVID-19 or COVID-19 symptoms.

If you have COVID-19 or COVID-19 symptoms:

Stay apart from others; do not share anything that others touch (phones, knives, and forks, etc.): wear a mask if you must be in the same room with others; and stay home until all three of these things are true:

- It has been at least 10 days since your symptoms first started, AND
- You are fever-free for 24 hours, without using fever reducing medicine, AND
- Your symptoms of COVID-19 are better.

NOTE: You may need to stay home longer than 10 days if you have conditions that weaken your immune system or you have been in the hospital. Talk to your doctor or clinic for instructions.

Notify the Lead Pastor for instructions on next steps.

Social Distancing – Employees Encouraged to Be At Least Six-feet Apart

Recommend physical distancing in work areas, including at workstations, corridors, concession areas, production lines, break rooms, etc.

Employee Hygiene and Source Controls

Basic infection prevention measures are being implemented at our workplaces at all times. Employees are instructed to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water frequently throughout the day, but especially at the beginning and end of their shift, prior to any mealtimes and after using the restroom. All worshipers, guests and visitors to the workplace are encouraged to sanitize their hands prior to or immediately upon entering the facility. Hand-sanitizer dispensers (that use sanitizers of greater than 60% alcohol) are at entrances and locations in the church so they can be used for hand hygiene in place of soap and water.

1. Ensure employees regularly wash their hands. Employees are instructed to regularly wash and/or sanitize their hands, in particular when entering and exiting the business, before and after eating or drinking, using restroom facilities and using devices. Ensure handwashing and/or hand-sanitizer facilities are readily available and appropriately stocked. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

2. Glenwood Lutheran Church will provide recommended protective supplies, such as source control cloth face coverings, gloves, disinfectant, guards, shields, etc.

Mask Use:

Masks will be available for individuals that would like to wear face coverings.

Getting Vaccinated

We encourage you to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, whether in two doses at the recommended intervals (i.e., 21 or 28 days apart) or in one dose if a single dose is available.

You are expected to comply with all other COVID-19 safety precautions, social distancing, not using shared equipment, etc., whether you receive a vaccination or not unless and until we inform you otherwise.

Going to Work When you Have Side Effects

Side effects can happen after vaccination and can be similar to symptoms of illnesses, like COVID-19. These side effects can include pain, swelling, or redness where the shot was given. Less common side effect can include headache, fatigue, or fever.

- If you are experiencing side effects where the shot was given (such as pain, swelling, or redness), but otherwise well, you can return to work. Typically, side effects start within a day of receiving the vaccine and may last for three days.
- If you are experiencing other symptoms of illness like fever, headache, or noticeable tiredness, then you should stay home. These may or may not be due to the vaccine. With any of these symptoms, stay home until your symptoms are improved and you have not had a fever for 24 hours. If symptoms worsen or last longer than three days, stay home and call your health care provider. It is possible that you were exposed to COVID-19 before or around the same time you were vaccinated so it may be helpful to get tested.

It takes about two weeks after getting vaccinated for your body to build up protection against COVID-19 to help protect you from getting sick. There is still a small chance that you could get infected and become sick even after being vaccinated.

If someone has completed COVID-19 vaccination (two doses in a two-dose series or one dose in a one-dose series) and is exposed, you do not need to quarantine if ALL the following are true:

- The COVID-19 exposure was at least 14 days after your vaccination series was fully completed.
- You do not currently have any symptoms of COVID-19.

Glenwood Lutheran Church will require proof from individuals vaccination record if an employee is potentially exposed to verify for quarantine purposes.

Employees that are vaccinated, should continue to stay 6 feet from others, wash your hands and get tested for COVID-19 when needed.

Food Service

Currently, there is no evidence to suggest that handling food or eating is associated with directly spreading COVID-19. However, people sharing utensils and congregating around food service areas can pose a risk. Limit food or beverage service in areas in which people are more likely to congregate as that may encourage unmasked interactions.

- Use touchless payment options as much as possible, if available.
- Ask exchange of cash by placing payment on the counter rather than by hand to avoid direct hand-to-hand contact.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as pens, counters, or hard surfaces between use and encourage patrons to use their own pens.
- Provide physical guides, such as tape on floors or sidewalks and signs on walls, to ensure that people remain at least 6 feet apart when waiting in line to order or pick up.
- If dining room is used, serve individually plated meals or grab-and-go options, and hold activities in separate areas.
- Individuals should sit 6 feet from one another-maximum number of seating around the tables is five (5).
- Use disposable food service items including utensils and dishes. If disposable items are not feasible or desirable, all non-disposable food service items are handled with gloves and washed with dish soap and hot water or in the dishwasher.
- People should wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after removing their gloves or after directly handling used food service items.
- Avoid offering any self-serve food or drink options, such as buffets, salad bars, and drink stations. Consider having pre-packaged boxes or bags for each attendee.

Workplace Cleaning and Disinfection Protocols

Frequently clean and disinfect all areas, such as offices, restrooms, locker and changing rooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment, machinery, tools, controls, etc.

Protections and Protocol for Managing Occupancy

Currently there are not any occupancy guidelines but subject to change

Other Important Considerations

Some of our staff, visitors, guest, and members may be at higher risk for COVID-19; these persons are strongly urged to stay at home and not participate in any group gatherings involving people outside of their immediate household.

We will continue our radio broadcasts and virtual services. Phone contact, and other outreach to vulnerable community members will continue.

Communication Protocols

Glenwood Lutheran Church leadership will ensure the necessary or required rules and practices are communicated to employees, and adequately enforce their provisions.

Employees must ensure they comply with and follow established rules and practices.

All leadership and employees 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. It will be updated as necessary by Teresa Jergenson, President of Glenwood Lutheran Church.

Certified by:

Rev. Katherine Rood
Lead Pastor

September 2, 2020/**Rev Sept. 13, 2021**