



# RESTORATION PLAN AND GUIDELINES FOR COVID-19

## Return to Building Policies and Procedures

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

Ad-hoc Policies Committee for COVID-19

# Good Shepherd

## LUTHERAN CHURCH

*"Embracing the diversity of God's creation and celebrating our oneness in Christ"*

September 30, 2020

This document is intended to provide direction and guidance to ensure the safety of all who participate in the life of our community and ministries. During this COVID-19 outbreak we have come to know and understand new ways of being the "church." We have been out of our building since September 5th, 2018 due to the fire and unfortunately this COVID-19 pandemic has continued to keep us from our building. One thing we have learned during this experience is how to be flexible and to come together as one community and congregation. As we begin to make plans for our physical spaces to reopen, the way we carry out our ministries as a church will look and feel different. While this may be uncomfortable, we do it for the sake of safety for our members and friends.

This document is an invitation to return to our building in a way that can help mitigate some of the risk of the CoVid-19 pandemic, while allowing each of you to make decisions about return that reflect your own needs for self-care (physical, spiritual, and emotional). While there are no guarantees that can be made as it relates to safety, these guidelines allow us to mitigate those risks at this moment. Since this pandemic is a fluid and ongoing event, so is this document in that as we learn more we will return to it and adapt and change our guidelines as time goes on.

I want to personally thank the members of the Covid-19 Policy taskforce for all their time and contributions to these policies. The care and attention they took to the details and discussion was helpful in ensuring that these guidelines reflect Good Shepherd and our unique congregation.

Please take the time to familiarize yourself with this document as it sets forth a vision for how we may continue to safely use our spaces in these unique times. Please feel free to contact Pastor Kathy or me if you have any questions.

In faith,



Troy Koch

Council President, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Oak Park

## Overview of Process and Acknowledgements

Out of the love and concern for one another Good Shepherd Lutheran Church’s Ad-Hoc Policies Committee for Covid-19 was formed after the July Council meeting to develop health and safety guidelines to protect the Good Shepherd community and users of the building. The committee reviewed information published by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), Metropolitan Chicago Synod of the ELCA, and other institutions to develop guidelines deemed to be appropriate for Good Shepherd’s community and context. Approved by the Church Council on Monday, September 21, 2020, these guidelines will be made available to the Good Shepherd community and used to make informed decisions related to COVID-19 in all five phases of the “Restore Illinois: A Public Health Approach to Safely Reopen Our State” summarized below:

<b>Phase 1 Rapid Spread</b>	<b>Phase 2 Flattening</b>	<b>Phase 3 Recovery</b>	<b>Phase 4 Revitalization</b>	<b>Phase 5 Illinois Restored</b>
<p><b>Strict stay at home and social distancing guidelines are put in place, and only essential businesses remain open.</b></p> <p><b>Every region has experienced this phase once already and could return to it if mitigation efforts are unsuccessful.</b></p>	<p><b>Non-essential retail stores reopen for curbside pickup and delivery.</b></p> <p><b>Illinoisans are directed to wear a face covering when outside the home and can begin enjoying additional outdoor activities like golf, boating &amp; fishing while practicing social distancing.</b></p>	<p><b>Manufacturing, offices, retail, barbershops and salons can reopen to the public with capacity and other limits and safety precautions.</b></p> <p><b>Gatherings of 10 people or fewer are allowed.</b></p> <p><b>Face coverings and social distancing are the norm.</b></p>	<p><b>Gatherings of 50 people or fewer are allowed, restaurants and bars reopen, travel resumes, child care and schools reopen under guidance from the Illinois Department of Public Health.</b></p> <p><b>Face coverings and social distancing are the norm.</b></p>	<p><b>The economy fully reopens with safety precautions continuing.</b></p> <p><b>Conventions, festivals and large events are permitted, and all businesses, schools and places of recreation can open with new safety guidance and procedures.</b></p>

## Plan Modifications

Good Shepherd’s Restoration Plan and Guidelines are subject to change and will be modified, as needed, to comply with local, state, and federal requirements, as well as changing guidance from the CDC, IDPH, ECLA, and Metropolitan Chicago Synod of the ELCA. The Good Shepherd Policies Committee for Covid-19 will convene as needed to discuss modifications and propose them for council approval.

## Good Shepherd Policies Committee for COVID-19

Thank you to the members of the committee for their vital role and participation in this process:

Judy Beisser	Will Campbell	Carl Fisher	Troy Koch	Mark Ledogar
Rich Novak	Elizabeth Overland	Martha Wegener	Debbie Speer	

## **Restoration Practices and Guidelines**

Good Shepherd's Restoration Practices and Guidelines are described below in ten different categories.

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The following policies and procedures shall be followed by staff, members, visitors and authorized users when using GSLC's building and grounds.

Any activities that are conducted at GSLC's building and grounds shall be approved by GSLC's council and conducted consistent with the following policies and procedures. Council approval of an activity subject to these policies and procedures that is conducted in and on GSLC's building and grounds may be obtained during a council meeting and/or from a council member or GSLC staff member who has been delegated the authority to approve activities in and on GSLC's building and grounds.

# 1. Protective Measures

## **Phases 1-2**

During Phases 1-2, Good Shepherd's building will be closed except for essential activities such as maintenance, administrative tasks, or other tasks determined by the GSLC Council.

## **Phase 3**

During Phase 3, Good Shepherd's building will be open and allow gatherings of no more than 10 people provided that all building use guidelines are met.

- Users who enter the building should use the northwest Randolph Street entrance.
- GSLC will post CDC approved signage on entrance doors stating that a visitor must be symptom-free to enter. Visitors shall sign in, wear masks, and sanitize.
- Hand sanitizer (composed of at least 60% alcohol) will be provided at all entrances to the GSLC building and used by visitors.
- Sign-in logs should include language that by signing the log, the visitors are stating that to the best of their knowledge they are symptom-free (no contact with anyone positive, no fever, no medicine to reduce fever, etc). All building visitors/entrants must sign in upon entry to enable contact tracing.
- Face Coverings
  - Masks must be worn by visitors over the mouth and nose, except for those under the age of two, whenever two or more people are gathered.
  - Masks need not be worn by a building entrant who is the only person in the building; however, every building entrant must have a mask readily available for use.
  - Disposable masks will be provided at all entrances for those who do not have one.
  - Any building entrant who does not wish to wear a face covering will be required to leave.
- Physical distancing (6 feet or greater) will be maintained at all times.
- To the extent a visitor refuses to wear a mask as required, a GSLC staff member or member of council may be contacted to ensure these procedures are honored and followed.
- To the extent a visitor has a written medical exemption from wearing a mask, such a visitor may be permitted within the GSLC building unless the visitor's failure to wear a mask, in the opinion of a staff member or council member, jeopardizes the safety of others in the GSLC building.

#### **Phase 4**

During Phase 4, Good Shepherd's building will be open in a limited capacity. All users must adhere to new building usage guidelines, including protective measures put in place in Phases 1-3. Additional protective measures include:

- Worship leaders are exempt if they maintain additional physical distance of at least 10 feet.
- Seating for worship or other gatherings will be arranged so that a safe social distance of 6 feet can be maintained. People in the same household may sit together in groups no larger than 6.
- Visitors/attendees will abide by posted capacity for meeting rooms/gathering spaces.
- Lift usage will be limited to one person, or two from the same household.
- Vulnerable populations
  - GSLC recognizes scientific and medical principles related to COVID-19 that have been enunciated by the CDC and other institutions. To the extent it can do so, GSLC will adopt and enforce policies and practices that inform and protect those who are potentially vulnerable to COVID-19.
- Ventilation / AC
  - Where possible, fresh air setting shall be set on GSLC's ventilation systems.
  - Windows will be open where appropriate to allow for fresh air circulation.
  - When logistically possible, outdoor services should be considered.
- Restrooms will be limited to single use only.
  - Restroom use may be encouraged for emergency situations only.
  - Paper towels for opening a restroom door upon exit may be provided.
- Contact Tracing
  - Attendance may be tracked and recorded for contact tracing purposes.
- Touch-points should be reduced throughout the building.
- Where possible, doors will be left open within the building.
- Bibles, hymnals, bulletins and inserts may be removed from pews
- Signage at entrances
  - Attendees will be reminded of COVID-19 symptoms. Those visitors with any of the symptoms will be reminded not to enter the building.
  - Visitors will be reminded to wear masks while inside the building.
- Reservations for attendance should be made on-line. People without access to on-line sign-ups may call the church office during office hours. Church office staff will print out the registration list for check-ins (when needed) and keep on file for contact tracing.

#### **Phase 5 TBD**

## 2. Cleaning Practices

### **Phases 1-3**

During Phases 1-3, Good Shepherd will be cleaned as needed to maintain safe conditions. Cleaning contracts with janitorial service will be modified as needed to correlate with building use.

### **Phase 4**

During Phase 4, Good Shepherd will implement enhanced cleaning protocols.

- Weekly professional cleaning when regular services resume; every other week if services are not being held.
- Cleaning supplies (paper towels and disinfecting spray, and/or disinfecting wipes) and hand sanitizer will be available in classrooms, restrooms, offices, as well as in the sanctuary and Fellowship Hall.
- Volunteers to be trained to assist with cleaning.
- Users in shared offices to disinfect keyboards, door knobs, and telephone receivers at the end of the day.
- All groups (Good Shepherd or others) must spray down chairs, tables, and restroom/s (if used) after gathering ends.

### **Phase 5 TBD**

### 3. Employment Practices

In general, regardless of designated Phase, Good Shepherd's employees should strictly adhere to the Protective Measures outlined in section one of this document. Additionally, employees should consider the following everyday actions per CDC recommendations:

- Stay home as much as possible.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick, even inside your home.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or the inside of your elbow, then wash your hands.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Clean your hands often, especially when you must leave your home.
  - Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
  - Alternately, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and things you touch often, such as tables, chairs, doorknobs, light switches, elevator buttons, handrails, countertops, remote controls, shared electronic equipment, shared exercise equipment, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks. Use a disinfectant that is effective against the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Pay attention to your local news and follow the steps from your local health officials.

#### **Phases 1-3**

During Phases 1-3, Good Shepherd's employees and volunteers are encouraged to work from home as much as possible. The church may provide access to the technology required to carry out all necessary tasks, including remote access to servers.

- Conduct staff meetings and all other meetings virtually.
- Essential tasks completed on-site by one individual as needed, or on staggered days.
- The Pastor and Deaconess may assist, where possible, in additional operating tasks to limit larger staff presence.
- If staff does not have access to the proper PPE to carry out a specific task, the church may provide such equipment upon request.

#### **Phase 4**

During Phase 4, Staff are encouraged to continue working from home but may resume working in the office as needed.

- Staff must stay home if they exhibit any COVID-19 symptoms.
- No punitive measures will be taken for any COVID-19 related illness.
- When leading ministries, staff are responsible for ensuring that those they are serving are following safety guidelines as laid out in this document. If issues with this arise, the staff person is responsible for immediately reporting to the Pastor or council member with authority for further consideration.

#### **Phase 5 TBD**

## 4. Liturgical and Sacramental Modifications

### **Phases 1-3**

During Phases 1-3, virtual worship may be recorded by leaders in their homes or at Good Shepherd.

Weddings, funerals and baptisms may occur with a maximum of 10 participants (including officiant).

### **Phase 4**

Worship may be done digitally until the church council approves the move to in-person worship.

When in-person worship begins, there will be only 1 service each Sunday to minimize between-service cleaning. The in-person service will be live-streamed on Facebook and added to YouTube.

Number of attendees at an in-building worship service is limited to 50 which includes leaders and volunteers.

Attendees may register on-line or by calling the church office when it is open. The church office will add called-in names to the on-line list. A final list will be provided by the church office. To accommodate drop-in visitors, registration may be cut off before the limit of 50 people is reached.

Before the service, ushers will use the sign-up sheets to determine where everyone may be seated, taking into consideration that family household groups will be seated together (no social distancing within the family is required).

Worshippers will enter and exit through the East Avenue doors, keeping social distances. If someone needs to use the lift, they may use the northwest Randolph Street door. Post-service conversations are preferably carried on outdoors.

Greeters will check attendees off the list and add drop-ins if there are seats available. They will also remind attendees about masks and social distancing, offer masks if they are needed, make sure attendees use hand sanitizer, and point out communion packets if guests wish to take communion.

Offerings will be collected on a plate in the aisle.

Ushers will guide attendees to their seats. At the end of the service, an usher will dismiss by rows, starting with the rows closest to the exit.

Worship leaders (celebrant and assisting minister) will sit on opposite sides of the sanctuary space. If they maintain a distance of at least 10 feet, they may remove their face masks. A plexiglas or other transparent barrier may be used.

No bulletins or hymnals will be handed out. The service will be projected onto a large screen so worshipers can see the prayers, readings and hymns.

For the rite of communion, worshipers will raise their communion packets for the blessing and then open their packets to eat and drink.

If worshipers wish to participate in prayers (such as the Lord's Prayer), they will be asked to do it softly. To participate in hymns, worshipers are encouraged to hum along or sing very softly.

Musical instruments are restricted to keyboard, string and percussion only, unless it is prerecorded.

If a choral ensemble sings, each singer will be pre-recorded and then mixed by the music director. This method may also be done for hymns and liturgical music.

Personal audio equipment (such as FM receivers & headphones and microphones) shall be cleaned and disinfected before being issued and upon their return to the ushers' possession. Manufacturer's suggested cleaning instructions should be followed for electronics and other sensitive items that are touched, e.g. audio mix board and table/drawers. Cleaning items and instructions should be kept at the audio workstation.

Equipment such as microphones and FM receivers will be issued to a single member and used exclusively by that member for the duration of the service or event.

The sound team member on duty should be responsible for this high touch wipe down before and after use to ensure consistency with the process.

These same guidelines, including those in Section 1, should be followed at other events including weddings and funerals.

**Phase 5** TBD

## 5. Response to a COVID-19 + diagnosis

### **Phases 1-4**

During Phases 1-4, anyone who has been in the Good Shepherd building and tests positive for COVID-19 should notify the Pastor or Deaconess immediately.

- A GSLC pastor or deaconess should provide pastoral care for the individual virtually and protect the confidentiality of the individual (include person on a prayer chain only at their request).
- Impacted individuals or those exposed to a person diagnosed with COVID-19 are encouraged to stay home and self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days and be tested in line with CDC guidelines.
- Areas known to have been used by the sick person will be cleaned and disinfected.
- Any individual with symptoms of COVID-19 or who has tested positive for COVID-19 should not return to the building until they have met CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation.
- Impacted individuals, other people who have been in the building, and public health officials should be notified, as necessary.
- Building closure may be required and will be communicated as outlined in Section 10 of this document.

### **Phase 5 TBD**

## 6. Communal Food or Drink

### **Phases 1-3**

During Phases 1-3, no communal food or beverage will be allowed (either provided by the church or individuals). Water fountains will be unavailable for use.

### **Phase 4**

During Phase 4, "Bring your own" food or beverages will be encouraged. Communal food and beverage will still not be permitted, and water fountains will remain unavailable for use.

### **Phase 5** TBD

## 7. Pastoral Care

### **How to request pastoral care at any time**

- Call the church office at 708-848-4741.
- Email Assistant Pastor Kerstin Hedlund at [kerstin.hedlund.02@gmail.com](mailto:kerstin.hedlund.02@gmail.com) or Pastor Kathy Nolte (after October 1<sup>st</sup>) at [RevK@goodshepherdlc.org](mailto:RevK@goodshepherdlc.org)
- In Emergency contact Pastor Kathy Nolte (after October 1st), 630-253-7569, or Pastor Kerstin Hedlund, 614-560-7012

### **Phase 1-3**

During Phases 1-3, pastoral care will occur virtually through telephonic / camera means.

- In-person visits to home or church building will be discouraged. *In some extenuating circumstances, (ie, in the event of critical illness) some in-person visits by the pastor or other leadership may occur, at the discretion of the parishioner, his/her family & health care provider, and the pastor.*
- Volunteers may reach out to the most vulnerable/at risk through email, phone or USPS.

### **Phase 4**

During Phase 4, limited in-person pastoral care may be provided by select individuals.

- Individuals in vulnerable populations are encouraged to stay home.
- In-office pastoral care visits allowed as needed.
- In-home visits allowed by Pastor, Assistant Pastor, Deaconess, or other staff as appropriate with verbal consent of person being visited or designated caregiver, as well as the comfort of staff.
  - Contact precautions will include sanitizing hands upon entry/exit, face covering, shoe coverings, physical distancing (as possible), and no direct contact.
  - Although in-home visits by the Caring Shepherds are not allowed, telephone/camera care are encouraged.
  - Communion will be shared, as appropriate, using pre-packaged elements.
- Visits to care facilities or hospitals will be allowed with verbal consent of person being visited, designated caregiver, or family member, as well as the comfort of staff.
  - Visitors should abide by all required guidelines of the facility.
  - Communion will be shared, as appropriate, using pre-packaged elements.
- Pastoral care may be conducted in person in extenuating circumstances, such as end of life. In addition to policies based on phase, pastor and family/parishioner discretion should be considered on a case-by-case basis *if feasible*.
- Funerals may be conducted per guidelines based on phases; smaller graveside burials with few family members followed by a memorial service later on, *potentially phase 5 and beyond*, should be offered. Parishioners may have a combination of a small funeral and/or graveside followed by a later memorial service (beyond Phase 5).

### **Phase 5 TBD**

## 8. Groups, Committees, Education, and Nursery Care

### **Phases 1-3**

During Phases 1-3, all groups, committees, and education offerings (including Sunday School) will be held virtually or postponed, as determined by group and church leadership.

- Groups are encouraged to meet through Zoom (contact the church office to set up meetings).
- Resources may be shared virtually, as possible.
- Nursery services will not be provided as the building will be closed.

### **Phase 4**

During Phase 4, groups are allowed to resume meeting in-person and are encouraged to hold dual-option gatherings, providing simultaneous in-person and virtual components, when possible and appropriate.

- All groups should notify the church office of their plans to resume in-person meetings in or out of the building.
- Meetings should be scheduled in advance to avoid cross-exposure.
- All groups should follow building usage guidelines, protective measures, and disinfecting procedures.
- Nursery services will not be provided during Phase 4.
- The “Pray Ground” will not be offered during services.
- The downstairs nursery space may be made available for visitors on a limited basis for nursing/ diaper changes / feedings.
  - Hand sanitizer and wipes may be provided in the space for those using it with signage to request that areas are wiped down after use.
  - All toys will be removed from the Nursery
- Space should be provided for parents to take children if the need to remove them from the sanctuary presents itself.
- Faith Formation
  - Christian Education classes will meet primarily through Zoom, with greater emphasis placed on home-based learning with resources, support, encouragement, and follow-up from the Director of Christian Education and Christian Education Committee.
  - Occasional in-person gatherings will adhere to all building usage guidelines
  - Occasional outside gatherings will require safe distancing and other protective measures
  - Classrooms and other church spaces may be offered to high school students to use at designated times during the week for remote learning. Parents may be required to sign a waiver with respect to their child’s participation in an activity at the GSLC building. Students must pre-register and sign in upon entering the building. Room capacities must not be exceeded, and all protective measures should be followed. A staff person or parent must be present when students are in the building.

### **Phase 5**

## 9. Space Rental and Community Use

### **Phase 1-3**

During Phases 1-3 the building will be closed to all community groups.

### **Phase 4**

During Phase 4, the building will be open in a limited capacity.

- Space use and community groups are allowed to resume in-person meetings (in accordance with Section 8 of this document).
  - All groups must reserve space through the church office, following established procedures.
  - All meetings must be scheduled in advance to avoid cross-exposure.
  - All groups must follow building usage guidelines, protective measures, and disinfecting procedures.
  - Group leaders are required to maintain attendance logs for contact tracing.
  - Group leaders must notify the Pastor or church staff immediately if someone who has been in our building tests positive for COVID-19 (see section 5 – Response to a COVID+ diagnosis).
- Language shall be added to any space use contracts providing for a waiver related to Covid-19 infection and adherence to these guidelines.

### **Phase 5 TBD**

## 10. Communication Practices

### **Phases 1-5**

Communicating Good Shepherd's response to COVID-19 will take place during all phases.

Communication tools include emails, eblasts, website postings, mailed letters, and phone calls.

- Updates are shared regularly, including the latest versions of this plan.
- Building closures due to COVID-19 will be announced via email, posted on our website, as well as included in the newsletter.
- Good Shepherd community will receive communication describing new building usage guidelines, worship/education information, small groups / meetings information, possible closure information and procedures, etc, as needed.
- Good Shepherd community will be notified when the State of Illinois announces a move into a new phase (either forward or back).
- Signage to remind about protections and policies (masks, distancing, hand washing, sanitizer, contact tracing) will be prominently posted throughout the building and upon entry where appropriate.