

Mt. Olive Lutheran Church & School COVID-19 Preparedness Plan

7-24-2020

Mt. Olive Lutheran Church & School Leaders have reviewed the “Industry Guidance For Safely Reopening: Faith Based Communities, Places of Worship, Weddings, and Funerals” provided by the Minnesota State Government, and found on their website at: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/safefait.pdf>

Under the advisement of this guidance, and seeking to comply with Governor Tim Walz’s Emergency Executive Order 20-81, to fulfill the requirements needed in order to offer worship services with over 10 people, we have put together the following “COVID-19 Preparedness Plan” for Mt. Olive Lutheran Church & School.

A. For Mt. Olive Lutheran Church & School Employees & Staff:

1. We ask that any staff member or employee of Mt. Olive monitor themselves for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. If they have symptoms; if they have been exposed to others with such symptoms; if they have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19; we ask them to stay home and to seek medical attention. We encourage those able to work from home to do so.
2. Our employees and staff have been trained and instructed in how to maintain proper social distancing in the workplace—maintaining six feet of physical distance between other workers and those entering our facilities.
3. Worker hygiene and source controls are being implemented at Mt. Olive Lutheran Church & School at all times. Employees are frequently making use of hand sanitizer and washing hands. All staff/volunteers working in indoor settings are to wear face coverings unless working alone in an office, room, or work space. (EO-21 pg. 7 #10.j)
4. Our facilities are new and up-to-date with proper ventilation and well maintained water, plumbing, electrical, and HVAC systems.
5. Regular cleaning and sanitizing takes place in our facilities by trained professionals. Common areas and high-contact surfaces are regularly sanitized.
6. Our office administrative assistants oversee drop-offs, pick-ups, and delivery protocols while maintaining social distancing with any persons involved in such interactions.
7. Our staff and employees have been made aware of this information and are instructed to follow these policies. This “Office Preparedness Plan” is accessible to all staff and employees in our office from our COVID-19 Preparedness Plan Administrator, Pr. Luke Ulrich.

B. For Worshippers/Attendees of Church Services:

Mt. Olive’s Live, In-Person Worship Plan: (7-24-2020)

Minnesota churches may hold in-person worship services indoors if 1.) they develop and implement a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan (this document); 2.) if they reduce occupancy to 50% of capacity, up to 250 (according to Fire Marshall, Mt. Olive's regular maximum seating capacity—with seating in Narthex—is 450); and 3.) as of July 25, 2020, with the Governor's Executive Order 20-82, Face Coverings are required at all "indoor public settings" which include in-person Worship Services in our sanctuary. (For specifics, please see:

<https://www.leg.state.mn.us/archive/execorders/20-81.pdf>

& <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/safefait.pdf>.)

This "Worship Plan" is produced in order to comply with Executive Order 20-81. Our Board of Deacons continue to monitor and discuss the requirements of our government and will continue to update this Preparedness Plan to stay compliant insofar as it is possible without defying God's Word.

Weekly, in-person, live Worship Services are held Sundays at 8:30am and 10:00am, and Mondays at 6:30pm. A pre-recorded service continues to be streamed and archived on our website and Facebook page for those who prefer to continue worshipping online. The Service is also available to view on KTV & via podcast.

Seeking to maintain compliance with the orders of state Government, the following guidelines are in place for our in-person, live Worship Services:

1. If you or a family member:
 - a. have any symptoms of COVID-19 including fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, headache, muscle pain, sore throat or loss of taste or smell;
 - b. have been exposed to someone with these symptoms; or
 - c. have been exposed to someone who tested positive for COVID-19, please do not attend our in-person services until cleared by your doctor. You are encouraged to take advantage of our online and televised services.
2. If you are in a higher risk category for COVID-19, you are encouraged to continue worshipping with us online or on television.
3. All who desire to attend our live, in-person worship service are asked to register online or register by calling the church office at 507-345-4966. If maximum capacity is met, we will ask you to attend an alternate service.
4. We ask all attending to please enter by the main entrance doors, under the portico, on McConnell St. These doors will be propped open for all entering and leaving.
5. All attending our live, in-person worship services inside our facility are required by EO 20-81 to wear a face covering. Please note there are exemptions provided in the Order "for people who are unable to wear or tolerate a face covering due to medical or mental health conditions or other reasons." Children under 5 years old are also exempt. Pastor will remove his face covering while conducting the Service, Soloists and musicians may also remove a face covering while singing/performing.

6. Our live, in-person services will also be abbreviated in length—seeking to stay between 30-40 minutes.
7. Our 8:30am Sunday service will not have congregation singing of hymns. A Soloist will sing during this service, worshipers are encouraged to hum or follow along while meditating on the lyrics. Our 10am Sunday service & 6:30pm Monday service will have congregational singing (while wearing face coverings.)
8. Social distancing (6ft) will be practiced as worshipers are coming and going from the service.
9. Attendees are asked to follow the directions of the ushers, especially while being seated, and excused.
10. Ushers will ensure family groups remain separated by 6-8 feet to comply with social distancing requirements. If you have special seating needs, please let the usher know.
11. Bulletins will be placed in the pews where worshipers will be seated.
12. Our Bulletins will be single-use. Please discard them or take them home after each service.
13. The offering plates will not be passed during in the service. The plates will be out for you to leave your offering on each side of the pews as you are coming or going from the service.
14. If a bathroom is needed, please use the bathrooms located in the hallway leading to the south parking lot. Please maintain proper social distancing.
15. After the service, wait to be dismissed by an usher in order to comply with with social distancing requirements.
16. We ask that socialization/fellowship take place outside the building.
17. Hand sanitizer is available for use throughout the building.
18. Holy Communion will be celebrated on the 1st & 3rd weekends of each month. It will be distributed at the very end of the Service, once receiving Communion, we ask that those communicants see themselves out of the building. The Ushers and Pastor will provide more guidance and information at each Communion Service—seeking to comply with state guidelines for distancing etc..

We are thankful to be gathering again for live, in-person worship services. We pray that the inconveniences that we are dealing with may be met with patience and Christian love and that we may soon return to our regular worship life. Thank You.