



ST STEPHEN'S  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

## **Preparedness and Response Plan**

*(Updated: August 24, 2020)*

Guidelines for safely reopening our Church facilities to Congregants,  
Church related gatherings and the Community.



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## Notes:

- \* Church Facility Use by the Community – Section I only (pages 1, 2)
- \*\* St. Stephen’s In-Person Worship – Sections I and II apply (pages 1, 2 & 3)

## SECTION I

### St. Stephen's In-Person Worship & Community using church facility

- People who may be at higher risk of illness if they contract COVID-19 should stay at home. People who have a household member experiencing symptoms compatible with COVID-19 should stay at home.
- People entering the church will review the MDH facility health screen form. This information will be posted in several locations prior to entering. Entering the church and/or connected church facilities means that the person is attesting no answers to each of the following questions.

The following yes or no questions are included:

- Fever or feeling feverish?
- Chills?
- A new cough?
- Shortness of breath?
- A new sore throat?
- New muscle aches?
- New headache?
- New loss of smell or taste?

If answer is "yes" to any of the screening questions, the person will be advised to go home, stay away from people, and contact their health care provider.

- People will sign in with full name and contact information appropriate to their relationship with St. Stephen's Church, e.g. members of the church would only need to give their names. Phone numbers, addresses and e-mails will be requested in a method most effective for others who use the church and are not members. (This will be used for tracing if necessary.)
- Hygiene practices include: People will use hand sanitizer upon entering the building and a cloth or surgical/paper type mask/face covering (surgical/paper masks will be available at the entrance). People will wear masks at all times. Hand sanitizer will be available at all entrances, in each sitting area, and other prominent locations. Cleaning supplies will be available to clean surfaces/equipment that are used.
- There will be 6 feet distance between all persons, unless they are from the same household. Only members from the same household can sit together, and they must sit in groups 6 feet away from others. There will be no hugging, handshaking, or other types of physical contact.
- Occupancy will not exceed current Minnesota Department of Health Guidelines.
- Restrooms will be available for use. Access will be limited to one person at a time. Within the restroom there will be a "clean your hands poster". There will be daily checking and replenishing of soap dispensers, paper towels and hand sanitizer, and more often in heavily trafficked public spaces.

- Other than restrooms there will be no common areas available.
- Facility use by others needs to be approved. An application form needs to be completed and returned to St. Stephen's church for approval. People who use the facility will have to review and follow guidelines and training information provided by St. Stephen's. They will have to conduct appropriate social distancing; wear masks; wash hands; cover their cough; and take attendance to include name and contact information. **(See Appendix B for the application form.)**

## SECTION II

### St. Stephen's In-Person Worship

- Guidelines for the flow of people attending In-Person Worship at St. Stephen's Church is described in **Appendix A**.
- Entrances, exits, restrooms and other areas of possible congestion will be marked to provide for social distancing of at least 6 feet, including floor markers for distance, and outside if people congregate to wait for rides or other purposes.
- There will be an open pew between people seated (every/other pew).
- There will be no congregating at doors at any time, e.g. no "receiving lines".
- There will not be congregate singing.
- There will be no written information distributed, e.g, bulletins.
- Offerings will be received by placing the offering in a basket in the Narthex. There will be no passing of items from person to person.
- There will be no food/meals or beverages.
- Cleaning includes: documented sanitation schedule and checklist, identifying surfaces/equipment to be sanitized, the agent to be used, and the frequency with which sanitation occurs. Frequently clean all high-touch items, such as door knobs, countertops, barriers, railings, handles, ends of pews, tops of chairs and other surfaces.
- Hymnals and texts will be removed.
- Communion will not be given in the sanctuary.

## Appendix A



## ST STEPHEN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

### Guidelines for Flow of People Attending In-Person Worship at St. Stephen's

- People entering the church will review the MDH facility health screen form. This information will be posted in several locations prior to entering. Entering the church means that the person is attesting no answers to each of the questions on the MDH facility health screen form. (See section I of Plan)
- Park in the Charlton parking lot only. The Wentworth lot is for Drive-In Worship only.
- Maintain at least 6 feet distance at all times unless from the same household.
- Register at the table prior to entering the sanctuary. This is to obtain information in case contact tracing needs to occur. There will be sanitizer and face masks available at the registration tables. There will be two table so people can enter through two doors to provide safe distancing.
- Ushers will provide guidance to pews after the person has registered. **Entering** the church will begin from the front and proceed to the back of the church. **Exiting** will begin from the back and proceed to the front of the church. Please follow usher's directions as specific aisles are designated depended upon where seated; in order to keep physical distancing.
- Items such as tape and rope will be used to identify locations that should not be entered to accommodate social distancing.
- One family will sit in each pew.
- Keep 6 feet distance when in the pew; follow physical cues in pews that are guidelines for the 6 feet distance.
- Every other pew will be used to create physical distance.
- The children's separate play area will be temporarily removed.
- Windows will be opened as weather permits.
- Offering envelopes may be dropped in specified containers in the Narthex.

**Appendix B**



**ST STEPHEN'S  
LUTHERAN CHURCH**

Dear Group Leader:

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church's priority continues to be the health and safety of all members of the community. However, we also recognize that our facility supports the missions of our congregation and our community. Consistent with the State of Minnesota orders and public health advice, this letter includes a form that will enable church leadership to identify who might be permitted back to use the facility, starting first with groups who support essential church and social justice missions for our congregation and community.

For everyone's safety, the church's intent is to slowly and gradually invite groups back. Decisions for facility use will be based on phases of the St. Stephen's church's preparedness and response plan. To facilitate approval for use of our facilities, please complete the following form:

**Request for St. Stephen's Facility Use**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Preferred Contact Method: \_\_\_\_\_

Group Size: \_\_\_\_\_

Will this gathering be repeated (e.g. weekly)? If yes, describe frequency.

\_\_\_\_\_

Date for gathering(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Provide a brief summary of the gathering and why it must be done on-site or at another location away from your home.

\_\_\_\_\_

St. Stephen's will provide guidance for use of the facility. Describe the precautions you will take to ensure your health and safety and the health and safety of those who will participate in the gathering (methods and means for social distancing, PPE, etc.).

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for completing this request form. The St. Stephen's Safety Committee will get back to you soon.

## Appendix C



## ST STEPHEN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

### Guidelines for St. Stephen's Youth Groups

- Parents of youth will be sent guidelines for St. Stephen's Youth Groups. *(Please review these guidelines with your children.)*
- Youth who may be at higher risk of illness if they contract COVID-19 should stay at home. Youth who have a household member experiencing symptoms compatible with COVID-19 should stay at home.
- Parents will provide contact information regarding their children. This will include full name, phone number, address and e-mail. *(This will be used for tracing if necessary).*
- Youth participating in the activity will review the MDH facility health screen form. The person facilitating the activity will determine the most effective method to review the form.

The following yes or no questions are included:

- Fever or feeling feverish?
- Chills?
- A new cough?
- Shortness of breath?
- A new sore throat?
- New muscle aches?
- New headache?
- New loss of smell or taste?

If answer is "yes" to any of the screening questions, the person will be advised to go home, stay away from people, and contact their health care provider.

- Hygiene practices include: Use hand sanitizer and a cloth or surgical /paper type mask/face covering. (Surgical/paper masks will be made available by St. Stephen's). Cleaning supplies will be available to clean surfaces/equipment that are used.
- There will be 6 feet distance between all persons, unless they are from the same household. There will be no hugging, handshaking, or other types of physical contact.
- It is recommended not to have food or beverages. If youth bring food or beverages they are not to be shared. If food or beverages are provided by St. Stephen's; it needs to be in individual servings, example-single bags of potato chips.
- Youth Group activities in and away from St. Stephen's Church need approval. This is done by completing and returning a St. Stephen's Application Form. **(See Appendix B for the application form.)**

**Appendix D**



**ST STEPHEN'S  
LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT AND AUTHORIZATION**

*(TO BE COMPLETED BY PARTICIPANT AND AUTHORIZED GUARDIAN)*

**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION**

**Name of participant:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of parents/guardians:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of emergency contact:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Contact Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Alternate Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**List allergies or medical conditions:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Is participant covered by personal/family medical insurance?    Yes    No**

**If yes, name of insurer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Policy or group number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION**

**PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT**

I acknowledge that participation in the activity described above (the "activity"), involves risk to the participant (and to the participant's parents or guardians, if the participant is a minor), and may result in various types of injury including, but not limited to, the following: sickness, exposure to infectious/communicable disease, bodily injury, death, emotional injury, personal injury, property damage, and financial damage.

In consideration for the opportunity to participate in the activity participant (or parent/guardian if the participant is a minor) acknowledges and accepts the risks of injury associated with participation in the activity.

**Guardian Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Participant Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E



## ST STEPHEN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

### Guidelines for Holy Communion by Appointment

Call the church office, 651-457-6541, or use the following Sign Up Genius online link <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0945ADA822AAFB6-holy> and you and/or your household can receive prayer and the sacrament outside in good weather or in the sanctuary.

Our dates in September are:

Wednesday, September 2	3-4 p.m.
Wednesday, September 9	4-5 p.m.
Saturday, September 12	11 a.m.—Noon
Monday, September 14	10-11 a.m.
Thursday, September 24	3-4 p.m.
Monday, September 28	4-5 p.m.

### **Instructions and Guidelines.**

Communion will be served outside when possible. A host will meet you at the sign in table on the sidewalk. Recipients will receive communion while seated in physically distanced chairs from Pastor. All the indoor health protocols will apply.

When Indoors:

Enter the Church building through the Charlton Narthex doors. Arrive no sooner than 5 minutes before your appointment.

Before entering the building please read the CDC Health Screening Symptoms if you answer yes to any of these symptoms, please return home, stay away from other people, and contact your health care provider.

- Fever or feeling feverish?
- Chills?
- A new cough?
- Shortness of breath?
- A new sore throat?
- New muscle aches?
- New headache?
- New loss of smell or taste?

Stop at the sign in table and sign in with name and contact phone number. Apply hand sanitizer and make sure your mask is in place if not already.

Face masks are required. If you forget to bring a mask, a disposal mask will be provided for you. Masks will be worn except when receiving Holy Communion. If you are unable to wear a mask, alternative methods of communion will be discussed.

Social Distancing is required at all times. Maintain six foot distance between you and others unless you are in a household group.

Wait (in your cars if communion is outside) or at the Connection Center until directed by the host to enter the sanctuary. Please do not venture pass the Connection Center into the rest of the building.

Sanctuary doors are marked “ENTER” and “EXIT” please observe and comply. Enter by the far right door and exit by the opposite door, far right as you are leaving. Do not use the center aisle. Please proceed directly to the altar. Chairs will be available by the altar.

After communion and prayer please make sure masks are in place and exit the sanctuary using the designated door. Please remember social distancing with anyone that you see in the Narthex.

#### **Instructions for Altar Guild** (assumed to be the pastor at this time)

1. Wash and sanitize hands.
2. Wear a face mask.
3. Set up individual cups and wafers per size of reserved group. Place on altar.
4. Procure and fill pouring chalice, pastor can fill the cups during communion.

#### **Instructions for Host**

1. Keep different households from meeting.
  - a. Be traffic cop on sidewalks and at doors.
2. If serving outdoors a table with forms will be on the sidewalk,
  - a. People can wait in their cars
  - b. A set of chairs with a small communion table will be set up just outside the Wentworth doors for privacy and the lack of foot traffic for the church
3. If serving in the sanctuary the host guides guests in filling out forms, getting mask if necessary and waiting by the Connection Center if service is in sanctuary, or in cars if outside.
  - a. These will be on a table facing the Charlton doors.
4. Direct people into the sanctuary, reminding them to leave by the opposite door and to keep their masks on until outside. Or to the seats placed outside.
5. Pastor John to develop list of potential hosts. A training session will be necessary. Training to include difficult conversations and situations.

#### **Janitorial**

1. Suggest they zoom in with the Safety Committee to go over procedures following each communion session.
  - a. What quality supplies do we request?

#### **General Conclusion**

It is better to try something as important as receiving communion, even starting in a limited fashion, than not start it because we aren't sure about how popular it may be.

It is important that our efforts be as medically safe as possible. This is something we may be doing for a number of months.

As with the parking lot worship let's over staff and over think to begin with and lighten up as we can.