

Covid-19 Policy and Procedures for First Church

Introduction:

The purpose of the policies and procedures is to guide First Church into operating safely during the Covid-19 pandemic. The purpose of this plan is to:

- Maximize the protection of all who enter First Church while allowing staff, members, and guests to continue fulfilling First Church's mission.
- Enable First Church to continue operating during the day, night, and weekends.
- To guide decision makers in all areas of Covid-19 response.

Background of the Virus

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. The virus that causes COVID-19, can cause illness ranging from mild to severe and, in some cases, can be fatal. Symptoms typically include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Some people infected with the virus have reported experiencing other non-respiratory symptoms. Other people, referred to as asymptomatic cases, have experienced no symptoms at all. According to the CDC, symptoms of COVID-19 may appear in as few as 2 days or up to 14 days after exposure.

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person, including: Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet). Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has SARS-CoV-2 on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the primary way the virus spreads. People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (i.e., experiencing fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath). Some spread might be possible before people show symptoms; there have been reports of this type of asymptomatic transmission with this new coronavirus, but this is also not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. Although the United States has implemented public health measures to limit the spread of the virus, it is likely that some person-to-person transmission will continue to occur.

First Church Policies on Basic Infection Prevention Measures:

- We promote frequent and thorough handwashing. We will provide many places to handwash.
- We promote avoiding touching your face, particularly eyes, nose, and mouth with your hands to prevent infection.
- If soap and running water are not immediately available, First Church will provide alcohol- based hand rubs containing at least 60% alcohol.
- We encourage anyone who is sick to stay home.
- We encourage everyone over the age of two to wear a mask, encouraging respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes.
- We will provide everyone in the building with tissues and trash receptacles.
- We will discourage handshaking.
- We discourage employees from using other employees' phones, desks, offices and other work tools and equipment when possible.
- First Church will provide cleaning supplies in all areas, allowing all to clean the space before and after.
- First Church will maintain regular housekeeping practices, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces, equipment, and other elements of the work environment.
- HVAC will be monitored closely to make sure that air is constantly moving in the rooms being used in the building.
- Sanctuary, Celebration Center, Preschool and Fellowship Hall will have new, higher-filtration filters installed.
- First Church will communicate with any contractors or on-site visitors about policies in place to stop the spread of Covid-19.
- Signs will be posted to remind people of our policy points: Wear a mask, Self-Screen, keep 6 feet apart, Wash your hands, Cover sneezes/coughs, record attendance, clean your room when finished.

Policy for a sick Person in building

- Prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious individual is critical.
- Sick person will be asked to leave immediately or a relative will be called to take the sick person home.
- Sick person will be placed in room 134 until they leave the building.
- Rooms where the sick person has been will be sanitized and cleaned, after a 24-hour waiting period.

Policies for Groups and Events in Building

- We are thankful for each group that walks through our doors at First Church. We all must work together to reduce the risk of spreading Covid-19. With that said, each group must understand that there will always be a risk to catch Covid-19. The only way the risk is gone is for the building to close until a vaccine is found. First Church will endeavor to do as much as possible to ensure cleanliness, and each person walking through our doors needs to protect themselves and make good decisions to stay healthy.
- Each group will take attendance and turn in list to office at conclusion of each event. List will include name and contact information. For groups that require anonymity, the leaders of groups will retain list of attendance.
- We ask when someone gets sick and they have been at First Church within the last 14 days, that we are contacted as soon as possible.
- Each group will have all members fill out a waiver form. Turn in with attendance sheet to office.
- Leaders of each group will guide all members in adhering to social distancing rules and enforcement of guidelines.
- If you are considered high risk, please use discretion, and stay home. This needs to be communicated with your group.
- After meetings, groups are responsible to wipe down chairs/surfaces. Supplies to clean will be provided in each room.
- Social distancing is recommended, 6 feet away from other people.
- Face masks are required in the building for all people over the age of 5.
- Bring your own coffee and beverages. No coffee or food will be allowed to be made on premises.
- Please ask members of group, to wash hands before coming to meeting.
- All rooms will have a maximum capacity put in place. Each group will work with facility director to find an appropriate space for their event.
- Any group that disregards any of these guidelines will be subject to having their meetings suspended.

Policies for Staff

- Staff members will take temperatures every time they enter the building. They will self-monitor making sure they feel no symptoms of Covid-19 and their temperature needs to be below 100.4 to stay in the building.

- If staff is feeling ill, but can work, they can request to work from home if appropriate.
- If staff has recently returned from a trip where they were on a plane, train or out of country, we will ask staff to work from home for 14 calendar days and return to the office only if fully asymptomatic.
- If staff has been exposed to Covid-19, with high chances of being infected, they will need to voluntarily self - quarantine for 14 days. They will be allowed to work from home if it applies.
- We will recognize that staff with ill family members many need to stay home and care for them. Staff will be permitted to return to work 14 calendar days after the family member has fully recovered, provided staff is asymptomatic.
- If a doctor has placed a staff member on quarantine or a staff member contracts Covid-19, First Church will follow the guidelines of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.
- Staff will use Zoom to conduct meetings or whenever possible.
- All staff will wear masks when in the building.

Policies for Sunday Morning Services

- We will have designated entrances and exits to the building.
- We be taking temperatures of all entering the building on Sundays.
- There will be no refreshments following worship.
- We will be blocking areas of the building not in use.
- We ask that all who use the bathrooms, use cleaning supplies to sanitize surfaces used.
- Ushers will seat people in staggered way allowing for social distancing. Rows in the sanctuary will be roped off.
- At conclusion of service, ushers will dismiss by rows, as in weddings, to avoid everyone in the aisles at once.
- Services will be 45-50 minutes long.
- We will eliminate paper bulletins and use projection or electronic bulletins.
- We will increase the use of soloists, instrumentalists, and small ensembles.
- Worship Leaders will wear masks except when speaking.
- Congregational singing will be discouraged.
- We will eliminate passing the plate for offerings and have baskets available.
- For communion we will use pre-packaged bread and juice.
- We will eliminate “receiving line” with pastors. Pastors will be available at certain places for prayer and counseling.

Policy Points – Posters will be created and posted in each room and common area

- Wear a mask at all times in the building
- Self-Screen: if you feel sick, please stay home!
- Keep 6 feet apart
- Wash your hands
- Cover sneezes/coughs with your elbow
- Record attendance
- Clean your room when finished

We will follow the guidelines set by the CDC and reserve the right to change our policies at any time.

Document Revised: 9.8.2020 LM

References:

<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>

<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>