



Good Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church

28680 Cherry Hill Road
Garden City, MI 48135-2799
Church Office (734) 427-3660
Church Fax (734) 522-5613
Deacon Keith A. Miller

June 1, 2020

Good Hope Sisters and Brothers,

Grace to you and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

I trust and pray this letter finds you and your family well and safe during this time in our lives when we're living with the reality of COVID-19. Our State government has been closely monitoring the various COVID-19 metrics, and today (Monday June 1st) has rescinded the stay at home order, effectively immediately, and declared southeast Michigan to be in Phase 4 (as defined by the MI Safe Start' plan.) That is very good news as it means that we are one step closer to returning to the community worship that we all wish, although we are not there quite yet.

Over the next few weeks, it is essential that we continue to take care of each other, and do what is necessary to continue to reduce the spread of COVID-19. As such, for your information, I've included our 'Return to Work Guidelines' that all paid staff, visitors, and groups (when allowed to do so) will be required to follow in order to enter church. Please read the guidelines carefully, but you will notice that there really are no new requirements over what most of us have already become used to, things like using hand sanitizer when entering the building, wearing a face covering, and maintaining distance.

As I stated in my letter dated May 23rd, your Council is hard at work doing everything it can, and taking all the necessary precautionary steps, to ensure that our faith family is safe. And just because the stay at home order is now no longer in effect, if you are 'experienced' (a.k.a. elderly) or you have an underlying health condition that make you more vulnerable, please strongly consider staying at home.

Today's message is very good news, and while we are not able to return to community worship quite yet, based on the States guidance, we are hopeful that will be soon.

Stay safe, stay healthy, and stay spiritual.

Your brother in Christ,

Deacon Keith (DK)

Good Hope Lutheran Church
COVID-19 Return to Work Guidelines for Employee and Visitor

Introduction

Good Hope's mission statement is, *'We are the people of God shaped by Jesus Christ and transformed by the Holy Spirit into a community for others.'* And while we trust and believe that we are God's children and he will care for us and provide us safe refuge, in this time of COVID-19, we must take all reasonable actions, and communicate guidelines, that enable us to work safely toward our mission.

The purpose of this document is to provide clear communication of the expectations of paid staff, volunteers that are essential to the mission of this church, visitors, and groups (when allowed) when entering and using our building. The actions identified in this document are consistent with the 'Church Safe Start Plan' generated by the SEMI Synod, and the State of Michigan's 'MI Safe Start' plan.

Entering the Building

As of June 1st, southeast Michigan moved to Phase 4 (as defined by the 'MI Safe Start' plan) and the Governor's stay at home order was rescinded (i.e., no longer in effect.) The relevant phases are defined as:

1. Phase 3 (Flattening) – COVID-19 is no longer increasing and health system capacity is sufficient for current needs.
 - a. Good Hope implication: Minimal / essential workers only may enter the building.
2. Phase 4 (Improving) – COVID-19 is clearly decreasing and health system capacity is strong with robust testing and contact tracing. Additional business can reopen given adherence to strict safety measures.
 - a. **Good Hope implication:** Small Groups (of less than 10 people) are allowed with strict safety protocols being followed (see section below.)
 - i. In-person Board meetings may resume (only in Volkmar Hall to maintain the required social distancing), however video and/or audio meetings may still occur.
3. Phase 5 (Containing) – COVID-19 levels are extremely low and outbreaks can be quickly contained. Health system capacity is strong with robust testing and tracing. Most business can reopen given adherence to strict safety measures.
 - a. Good Hope implication: Larger groups are allowed with strict safety protocols (see section below)
 - b. Resume sanctuary worship (limited to 50 people at a time – see Worship Policies for In-Gathering Worship under COVID-19 document.)
4. Phase 6 (Post-pandemic) – Community spread is not expected to return (e.g., because of a vaccine) and the economy is fully reopened.

As of June 1, 2020 southeastern Michigan is in Phase 4.

Safety Protocols

The following safety protocols will be in place and required until Phase 6 is declared for southeastern Michigan:

1. No person may enter the building if they are sick, not feeling quite right, or have a fever
2. During normal business hours, entrance into the building will be allowed through the north doors near the church office (near the white privacy fence)
 - a. For those requiring a barrier-free entrance, use the doors near the Deacon's study.
 - b. When Sunday morning worship is allowed (expected during Phase 5), entrance into the building will be via the main Narthex doors (additional communication will be sent at that time.)
3. All people must wear a face mask or face shield while in the building in all common areas (hallways, restrooms, etc.) While people are not required to wear face coverings when alone (e.g., in an office or at a desk) it is advisable to do so.
 - a. No person may enter the building without a face mask or face shield.
 - i. A face covering must completely cover the nose and mouth at all times.
4. Immediately upon entering the building, all people must use the hand sanitizer located near the building entrances.
5. Social distancing is required. COVID-19 spreads mainly among people who are in close contact with each other (within about six (6) feet.) Transmission can happen when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks, and droplets from their mouth or nose are emitted into the air and come into contact with people nearby, typically entering through the mouth or nose. Disease transmission can also happen when infected droplets fall onto surfaces.
 - a. All people entering the building will maintain at least six (6) feet space between themselves and any other person in the building.
6. While gloves are not required, they may be worn while in the building.
7. Consistent with CDC guidelines, it is recommended that all people entering the building frequently wash their hands with soap and water, avoid touching their face, and when not wearing a face shield when alone, use a tissue to cover their mouth when they cough or sneeze (and immediately dispose of the tissue.) If they do not have a tissue, they must cover their mouth with the inside of their elbow.

Cleaning

During the COVID-19 pandemic (and until southeast Michigan enters Phase 6 of the 'MI Start Safe' plan), additional cleaning and sanitizing will be necessary. Since it is impossible for one person to know all the areas that are used in the building on any given day, it is the responsibility of all paid staff, essential volunteers, visitors, and groups who enter the building to support the need for increased cleaning by performing the following:

1. Use sanitizing wipes or a dampened paper towel with disinfectant provided near the building entrance to wipe:
 - a. All commonly touched surfaces (e.g., door handles, office equipment (such as paper cutters, staplers, computer keyboards, copy machine buttons and screens), kitchen / restroom water faucets and handles, coffee pot handles, etc.)
 - b. All chairs and tables that were used during a meeting in Volkmar Hall
 - c. Desk top and work surfaces (as required.)
 - d. Any other area known to be frequently used

Reporting COVID-19 Symptoms or Known Exposure

Should paid staff, essential volunteer, or visitor develop COVID-19 symptoms while apart from the building, become ill while in the building, or become aware of a known exposure, the following is required:

1. Go / stay at home, and seek medical care and / or advice
 - a. Paid staff will continue to be paid during this time
2. Notify the church office as soon as possible of the potential exposure, the date(s) and time(s) in the building, and if other people were in the building during that time. This will assist in contact tracing.
3. Returning to the building (by any paid staff, essential volunteer, or visitor) will only be allowed after the affected person has been given written clearance from their medical professional.