



**Abiding Presence**  
Lutheran Church

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*Connecting people to Christ through Community*

## **Staff, Volunteer, and Visitor COVID-19 Protocols**

### ***Abiding Together in the Time of COVID-19***

Throughout these “pandemic times,” we have been *Abiding Together* as a congregation. As we continue to navigate our way through the COVID-19 crisis, we will ask all staff and volunteers who enter the building regularly to commit to the following covenant. The hope is that this covenant allows us to 1) care for self, 2) care for community and 3) witness to the good news of God’s love. The protocols in this covenant are based on current CDC guidelines and the advice of our congregation’s medical advisors. They will be reviewed and updated monthly at Church Council meetings.

#### **Care for Self**

First, these protocols are meant to encourage and empower staff/volunteers to care for themselves and their households. We want to create an environment where staff/volunteers feel that they can follow best practices of quarantining, isolating and/or testing without being penalized. Further, we want to create a culture that values the health and wellbeing of staff/volunteers.

#### **Care for Community**

Second, these protocols are meant to encourage and empower staff/volunteers to care for the larger community. Over and over again in scripture, we hear Jesus’ call to not only care for our neighbors, but also to go so far as to lay down our lives for them. Right now, this means doing our part individually to stop the spread of COVID-19 in our community.

#### **Witness to the Good News of God’s Love**

Finally, these protocols are meant to enable us to boldly witness to the good news of God’s love for all people. Too often during the COVID-19 crisis, churches have been in the news for creating super spreader events and challenging government restrictions. We believe our ability to witness to the gospel is directly tied to our ability to care for self and community during these “pandemic times.” We want to set the example that following Jesus looks like following recommended COVID-19 protocols.

## COVID-19 Protocols

### Mask Wearing<sup>1</sup>

Anyone entering the facility is required to wear a mask at all times except when in private offices with the door closed. Per CDC guidelines, masks must cover the nose and mouth. No masks with valves or neck gators will be permitted. Per the recommendation of our medical advisors, surgical masks, KN95 or masks with carbon filters are recommended.<sup>2</sup>

Staff/volunteers will be provided with a KN95 mask during food pantry distribution or at other times when adequate social distancing may not be able to be followed due to tasks being completed.

### Social Distancing<sup>3</sup>

Anyone entering the facility is required to follow social distancing to the greatest extent possible. Per the recommendation of our medical advisors, 6 feet should be considered the minimum distance required between people indoors. Per the CDC: *Social distancing, also called “physical distancing,” means keeping a safe space between yourself and other people who are not from your household. To practice social or physical distancing, stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms’ length) from other people who are not from your household in both indoor and outdoor spaces.*

### Hand Hygiene<sup>4</sup>

Anyone entering the facility is required to sanitize hands each time they enter or exit

- The facility
- Bailey Hall
- The sanctuary
- Restrooms

### Definition of a Close Contact

Per the CDC, a “close contact” is defined as: *Someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.* For the CDC glossary of other key terms, click [here](#).

### Travel and Exposure to a Close Contact

Staff members, volunteers, and visitors must stay home and not come to the church facility if

- They have had a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher or any of the symptoms listed by the [CDC](#). Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.vox.com/22220301/covid-spread-new-strain-variants-safe-grocery-store-n95-masks-vaccine?fbclid=IwAR2awEcmTcUMKMBONhBHw052PhBjoAC0Btq4Uv48t\\_KvaSX0EVhsolXR6oE](https://www.vox.com/22220301/covid-spread-new-strain-variants-safe-grocery-store-n95-masks-vaccine?fbclid=IwAR2awEcmTcUMKMBONhBHw052PhBjoAC0Btq4Uv48t_KvaSX0EVhsolXR6oE)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/hand-hygiene.html>

- They are awaiting a COVID-19 test results or have been in close contact with a person who is awaiting a COVID-19 test result.
- They or any of their close contacts are confirmed to have COVID-19.
- They have traveled outside of DC, Maryland or Virginia within the past 14 days.

Upon returning from travel outside of DC, Maryland, and Virginia, a person must follow [CDC guidance](#), which includes either

- self-quarantining for 10 days
- being tested 3-5 days after return and, if the test is negative, self-quarantining for a total of 7 days after return.

If a staff member, volunteer, or visitor report any of the Covid-19 symptoms or exposure, or is confirmed to have COVID-19, they must not return to the church office and other buildings until:

- 72 hours after the fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medication (e.g., Motrin, Tylenol) and respiratory symptoms have improved; AND
- at least 10 days after symptoms first appeared, whichever is later.

If any staff member, volunteer, or visitor has been in close contact with a person who is positive for COVID-19, they are expected to follow [CDC quarantine guidance](#), which includes either:

- quarantining at home for 14 days
- taking a test on day 5 or later and staying home for a minimum of 10 days after exposure.

If a staff member or volunteer hosts a guest in their homes and/or shares a home with a guest (i.e. vacation home, etc.), then the staff member or volunteer should get a test 3 days after the guest arrived. Otherwise, the staff should remain at home for 7 days. This testing and quarantine protocol is also recommended for the guests by the CDC. If the test is negative, or if there are no symptoms during the 7-day quarantine, the staff member or volunteer may come to church office and buildings.

### **Communication to Staff, Volunteers, Council, and Congregation**

Communication about a person's Covid-19 exposure or positive test, should protect the privacy of affected individuals and alert the staff, volunteers, and other to a COVID-19 case.

- The Senior Pastor will consult one of the medical professionals in the congregation for guidance and notify the Council President.
- The Senior Pastor will then notify via email, text, or phone call any staff members and/or volunteers/visitors who were in close contact with the affected individual. The communication will include the expectation that anyone (staff or others) who was in close contact will follow the close contact protocol listed above.

### **Cleaning, Sanitization, and Disinfection of Affected Spaces**

If seven days or fewer have passed since the person who is has a positive COVID-19 test result and/or COVID-19 symptoms has been in the church office or buildings, follow these steps:

- Close off areas used by the individual.
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the areas.
- Wait up to 24 hours or as long as possible before cleaning or disinfecting to allow respiratory droplets to settle.
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the individual, such as offices, bathrooms, and common areas.

If more than seven days have passed since the person who is has a positive COVID-19 test result and/or COVID-19 symptoms used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary. Continue routine cleaning and disinfection.

### **Setting an Example**

Staff, in particular, but volunteers as well should be mindful that people take note of the example we set as leaders. In these “pandemic times,” it’s important that we set the tone of modeling safe practices both professionally in the work environment and personally in our day-to-day lives. It is expected that staff will do their best to adhere to CDC guidelines in all aspects of life and be mindful of the example they set in real life and on social media.

In signing in this document, I covenant to abide by the Abiding Presence Staff, Volunteer, and Visitor COVID-19 Protocols.

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Signature

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Date

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Printed Name