



epiphany
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Best Practices and Procedures

As we prepare for a "return from exile" in the coming weeks/months, we have outlined best practices and procedures for engaging in ministry. These guidelines are based on current recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in American (ELCA), as well as state and local officials. These practices and procedures apply to members of the congregation, church staff, and persons and/or groups utilizing the church building.

We recognize that we are living in a rapidly evolving environment surrounding COVID-19. These best practices and procedures have been created based on recommendations to date; to ensure that each person who enters our facility feels comfortable and understands what "loving your neighbor" means as we navigate this time. Our team will continue to monitor the situation and make adjustments as needed to provide the safest environment for our Epiphany Family.

Thank you for reading this document in its entirety and your commitment to follow these steps to keep each of us safe and healthy!

Pastor Brad Gee

Lynn Chrisman
Council President

Disclaimer

Despite our best efforts, we cannot guarantee that no one will be infected with COVID-19 while they are in the church building. Under current circumstances, being in public spaces involves risks for which each of us must take responsibility.



Loving Your Neighbor means you are in **good health** when you:
visit the church
attend worship
attend special events at Epiphany

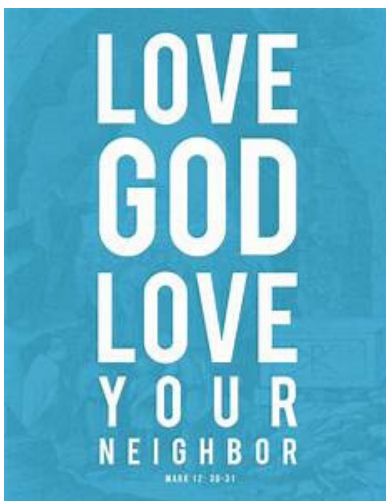
Please Stay Home If

If you Travel, are Exposed to or Test Positive for COVID-19

- You or someone in your household has a fever of **99.8°F or above**
- You have a cough or difficulty breathing
- You have body aches, chills, vomiting or diarrhea
- For international travel or travel on a cruise ship, per CDC guidelines, we ask that you do not visit the church for 14 days following your return.
- If you have been exposed to someone who tests positive for COVID-19, we ask that you do not visit the church for 14 days following exposure.
- If you test positive for COVID-19, we ask that you do not visit the church for 14 days following test results and resolution of symptoms.

Based on current CDC guidelines we also recommend that if you have a weakened immune system, predisposing health conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, kidney disease, and lung disease, or are over the age of 65, that you continue to join us for virtual worship.

If you are over 65 or have health issues, please consult with your healthcare provider regarding in-person attendance for worship.





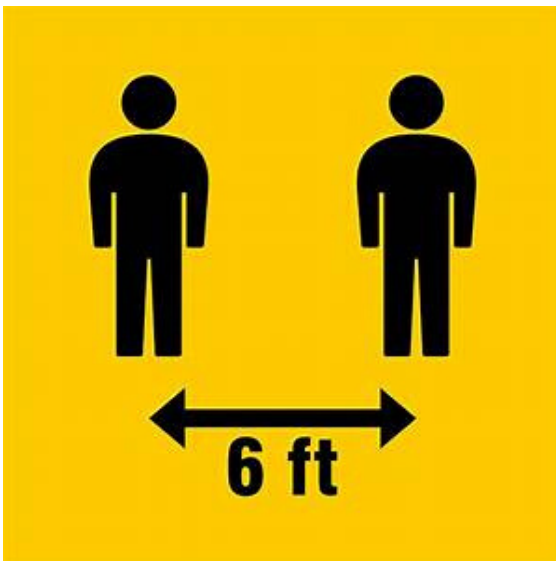
We ask that everyone who enters the church over the age of 2 wears a mask.

More details about masks below.

Please wash your hands with soap and water frequently and use hand sanitizer as you enter the church and as needed.



Please practice social distancing and love your neighbor while remaining 6 ft apart.



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What to Expect for Worship Services

Entering the Church

The north entrance of the building by the preschool and nursery will be closed. We ask that you enter the main doors by the office.

The doors will not open until 15 minutes prior to each service. There will be a greeter at each door to hold the door open and help to facilitate safe spacing as you enter the church.

As you enter, we ask that everyone uses the hand sanitizer that will be provided. Next, please be patient as a member of our team takes your temperature with a non-contact infrared thermometer that allows us to get your temperature up to 2 inches away from your skin. If anyone in your household has a temperature of **99.8° F or above**, your **entire** household will be asked to return home and join us virtually for worship.

As you enter the gathering space, you will notice very limited furniture and items. This is to limit touching surfaces that would need to be cleaned before, between, and after worship service, and to ensure we are not congregating.



Entering the Sanctuary

We understand that many people have their favorite "spot" to sit during worship. For now, we hope you will understand that our plan for entering the sanctuary and seating is to help reduce possible exposure and maintain safe spacing between people.

When you enter the building, if you enter through the doors on the right, you will be directed toward the right side of the sanctuary. If you enter through the doors on the left, you will be directed toward the left side of the sanctuary.

The center doors to the sanctuary will only be used for pastors and those assisting with worship.

Once in the sanctuary, an usher will help to seat you. **We will fill every other pew from front to back of the sanctuary.** Please let the usher know how many people are with you to properly space households/people apart.



Bulletin and Announcements

The worship service will be projected on two screens. If you still need a paper bulletin, there will be an usher as you enter the sanctuary with a limited number of bulletins available. Instead of a paper insert for upcoming events and ministries, these will be projected during announcements, before and after worship. We kindly ask that you place your bulletin in the blue recycling bin as you exit the sanctuary.

Ministry leads, continue to email the church office at epiphany@epiphany-lutheran.com with updates to be shared with the congregation.



Sanctuary Preparations

You will find that all bibles, hymnals, paper and pencils have been removed from the sanctuary. The bells tables will be stored to allow for more seating and increased spacing within the sanctuary.

Offering Plates & Giving

For the safety of our congregation, we will not be "passing the plate". Offering plates will be located on pedestals on each side of the sanctuary as you enter for worship. Please place your offerings here as you enter or exit the sanctuary.



Holy Communion

The committee is thrilled to have found a way to continue to partake in Holy Communion. Individual communion packets have been purchased which contain a communion wafer and a juice cup for each household member receiving communion.

The communion packets will be picked up as you enter the sanctuary. At the appropriate time in the service, all will partake in holy communion together. Bins will be located in each pew for disposal following communion.



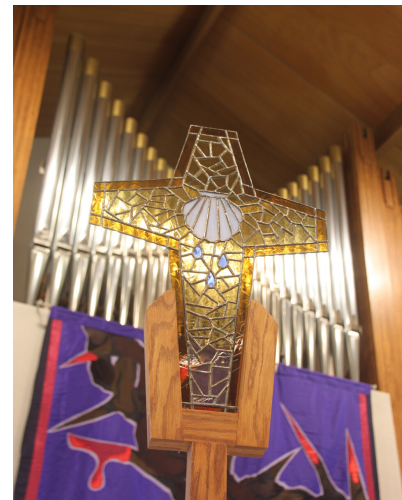
Passing the Peace

While physical distancing measures are in place, we will be implementing touch-free greetings of peace with non-household members. We encourage you to wave or share the symbol of peace.

Music and the Spoken Word

Countless studies have shown that singing, even when wearing masks and following social distancing, is one of the riskiest behaviors due to the spread of aerosol and droplets that can carry the virus. Per the guidance from the ELCA, the National Association of Teachers of Singing, and the CDC, singing of songs and hymns will not be allowed. Suspension of singing will be temporary.

We will continue to engage the musical gifts of our Epiphany family and will offer music with safety measures in place. **Please enjoy the words of the hymns, in lieu of singing.**



Welcome and Worship Team

Our team of staff, ushers, and greeters will be wearing a unified shirt "Catch the Spirit, Not the Virus". The shirts will allow you to easily identify those helping and able to answer questions.



Exiting the Sanctuary

When service ends, please wait to be dismissed from your pew. Ushers will dismiss starting with the back of the church.

Once you exit the sanctuary, we ask that you continue to exit the building and do not congregate in the gathering space so that our team can clean and prepare for the next service.

Cleaning

Our normal cleaning crew will continue to clean the church per their contract.

Before, during, and after all services, we will have a team of staff and trained volunteers to clean all touch surfaces in the sanctuary and gathering space; including doors, table tops, pews and restrooms. Those cleaning during this time will have a checklist to make sure all needed areas are cleaned.

Despite our best efforts, we cannot guarantee that no one will be infected with COVID-19 while they are in the church building. Under current circumstances, being in public spaces involves risks for which each of us must take responsibility.

Nursery and Sunday School

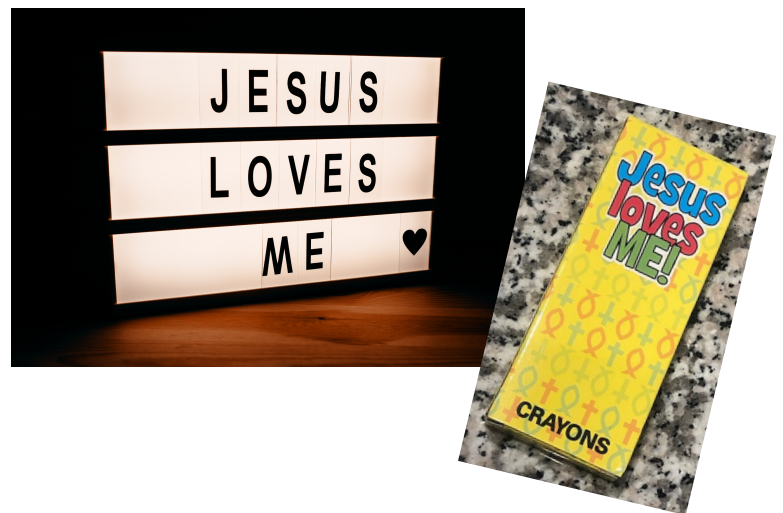
Unfortunately we will not be able to offer nursery or Sunday school when we return. We invite your children to join us during worship.

During worship, there will be a children's sermon to offer a special message for them. During the children's sermon, we ask that the kids remain in their seats with their parents.

The canvas kids activity bags that were on the usher's cabinets have been removed from the gathering space. As you enter the sanctuary, there will be a ziplock bag available for each child with crayons, coloring pages, and potentially a small prepackaged snack. When worship is over, please take these bags home with you. Any bags left in the sanctuary will be discarded.

We will continue to evaluate when it is safe to reopen the nursery and begin Sunday school.

Please see below for more information about youth ministries available at Epiphany.



Fellowship

You may discover that you are able to interact with others who have attended worship, maintaining social distancing practices, in the parking lot or grassy area to the south of the church building.



Access to Other Areas

There will be *no* access to the Helen Meier Outreach Center (HMOC), classrooms, nursery, or kitchens. If you need something from another area of the church, we ask that you please come during business hours Monday through Friday 9am - 1pm.

Office Area

There will be *no* access to the staff office area, including the copy room. If you need something from the office, we ask that you please come during business hours Monday through Friday 9am - 1pm.

Communications Tables

All papers on the communication center tables have been removed. The baskets for donations will remain under the tables.

Virtual Services

Once we return to in-person worship, we will continue to offer a livestream worship opportunity each week. We invite you to join virtually through Facebook or YouTube at 9am for traditional worship or 11am for contemporary worship; or both.

If you need help getting connected for virtual worship, please reach out to the Epiphany staff Monday through Friday at (614)837-2826 or email epiphany@epiphany-lutheran.com.

Baptism

The baptism of a child, youth or adult can be scheduled for any worship service by contacting the church office. There will be one baptism per service. Parents and sponsors/godparents, along with the child, youth or adult who is being baptized, will be invited to stand near the baptismal font; observing social/physical distancing and wearing masks. Given the unusual circumstances in which we are living, private baptisms may also be scheduled.

Coffee Table and Water Fountain

We will not be able to offer the coffee table when we first return. We will also need to block off the water fountain. Please feel free to bring your own coffee in travel mug or water to worship.

Please be respectful and make sure all trash is disposed of when you are leaving the sanctuary. We want our group to be able to focus on cleaning the sanctuary, not picking up trash.



Restrooms

You will have access to the restrooms, however we ask that you try to limit occupancy to one person or family unit at a time. Please escort all children to and from the restroom. Hand sanitizer is mandatory as you re-enter the sanctuary.

Epiphany Groups & Ministries

Vacation Bible School

To protect the safety and health of our participants and volunteers, the decision was made to postpone Rocky Railway VBS until Summer 2021.

July 20-24, a virtual VBS will be offered: FOCUS 2020. The team will be providing kits for the participants and their families to follow along at home.



Epiphany Preschool

The preschool continues to plan for the 2020-2021 school year and registration remains open. Preschool Director, Heidi Stover, along with her teachers and the Preschool Board, will continue to plan in accordance with guidelines from the Department of Job & Family Services, the CDC, and Governor DeWine.



First English Lutheran Church

All volunteers will need to enter and exit the church following practices similar to those noted above; including checking temperatures, being in good health, wearing masks, using proper social distancing, and sanitizing with wipes/sanitizers that you provide. This includes the sanitation of all cooking surfaces and tables or surfaces used.

Additionally, be sure to sanitize door handles as you exit and lock the facility.

Youth Ministries

Ali Adams, Minister of Youth, continues to offer ways for our youth and families to stay connected during the summer. Youth and family devotions can be found on the church website.

If you have not already done so, we encourage you to download the Parent Cue app. The Parent Cue app "cues you to have simple and meaningful faith-moments with your kid that will fit seamlessly into the daily rhythm of your life". New content is loaded every Sunday.

We will continue to evaluate when it is safe to begin in-person youth activities.

If you are interested in your child connecting with the youth, please reach out to Ali at (614)656-2388 or email her at ali@epiphany-lutheran.com



Easy encouragements to help your child start their day.



When you need something meaningful to talk about on the way to soccer or ballet.



Conversation starters as you grab tacos in the drive thru or burgers around the table.



Practical things to connect what your child is learning each month in Ollie's Clubhouse.



Simple words to reflect on while you get your child ready for bed.



Great reminders for ways to help end the day on a great note.

Drive Up/Drop Off Collections

All volunteers will need to enter and exit the church following procedures outlined above; including checking temperatures, being in good health, wearing masks, using proper social distancing and disinfecting with cleaning provided by the ministry group. This includes disinfecting all tables and surfaces used; as well as sanitizing door handles as you exit and lock the facility.

Outside Groups

Weddings and Funerals

Weddings and funerals may be held at the church. Social/physical distancing will dictate the number of persons that can be in attendance for either of these occasions.

- All people will have their temperature taken when they enter the building.
- All people will be required to sanitize their hands when they enter the building.
- All people, including children over the age of 2, youth and adults of all ages will be required to wear masks/facial coverings.
- All people will be required to maintain social/physical distancing from the time they enter the building until the time they exit.

Use of Tables and Chairs

Those borrowing tables and chairs are responsible for returning them to the church and cleaning them in the church at a time that either Karen or Dori are in the building.

The borrowers will be responsible for providing their own disinfecting wipes, spray, etc.

After tables and chairs are disinfected/sanitized, the borrowers will be responsible for putting them away in the storage room.

The borrowers will be required to wear masks and gloves as they complete this process.

Other Outside Groups

During this initial time of re-integration, we will not allow additional outside groups to utilize space within the church. We will continue to evaluate when it is safe to re-open the church to other outside groups.

American Red Cross Blood Drives

The American Red Cross is permitted to use the HMOC and restrooms just outside the HMOC. No access past these areas will be allowed. Participants will enter and exit through the north entrance following all procedures outlined above; including checking temperatures, being in good health, wearing masks, and using proper social distancing.

The American Red Cross will be required to thoroughly clean and sanitize the area of the building they have used and/or cover the costs associated with a cleaning professional whose services are provided by Epiphany Lutheran Church.

We currently have three blood drives scheduled:

- Wednesday, July 1st
- Sunday, August 16th



AA and Al-Anon

Once these groups are permitted to use the church building, all meetings will be limited to designated areas. Participants will need to enter and exit the church building following procedures outlined above; including checking temperatures, being in good health, wearing masks, and using proper social distancing.

AA will be required to thoroughly clean and sanitize the area of the building they have used and/or cover the costs associated with a cleaning professional whose services are provided by Epiphany Lutheran Church.

Other Important Topics

Masks are Required

Per guidance from the CDC, please make sure you are wearing a mask as you enter the church building. Masks are required to participate in worship and other church activities.

This applies to children over the age of 2 years, youth and adults of all ages.

For a limited time, if you arrive to the church without a mask, a mask will be provided.

If you are in need of a mask, we ask that you contact the church office Monday through Friday, between the hours of 9am - 1pm.

Use of Gloves

Per the CDC, the best way to protect yourself from germs is to regularly wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

Wearing gloves in to the church cannot be permitted, as this does not allow you to properly wash your hands.

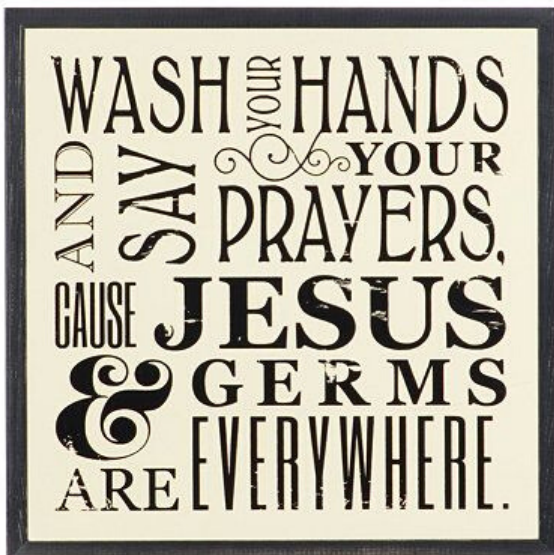
Gloves will be worn by those cleaning after worship and other church activities.

Proper Use and Cleaning of Masks

Please ensure that your mask fits snugly around your face and chin, *covers your nose* and is secured around your ears or tied in the back.

Per the CDC, *Reusable* masks should be routinely laundered and dried. You do not want to wear it when it is wet.

Disposable masks are considered one-time use.



Catch the Spirit Not the Virus

The Return from Exile