

COVID-19 Preparedness Plan
for Bethany Lutheran Church, Deer River, MN
prepared June 15, 2020

Beginning July 5th, Bethany Lutheran Church will host an outdoor worship service to continue into the foreseeable summer depending on member reception.

To keep everyone as safe as possible, the following procedures will be implemented:

Upon arrival, council members will direct you around the church building to the worship location behind the church. The front doors will be locked. Should a participant need to use the bathroom in an emergency situation, participants may enter the church through the kitchen door (north side) and use the single-use bathroom immediately to the right. This bathroom will be sanitized by a sainted individual after each use. Please do use the restroom before leaving home.

Participants will bring their own chair from home as well as an umbrella if sunshine is a concern (worship will be in the full sun). Family groups may sit together, otherwise, participants are asked to sit 6 feet apart. Please use your best judgment.

Most importantly, participants are asked to stay home if they show any signs of illness, have tested positive for COVID-19 in the last two weeks, or live with someone who is currently ill. Bethany also understands and respects the decision of those who wish to remain at home due to pre-existing conditions or other worrisome risk factors. The initial plan is to record the outdoor service and make it available online.

Keep in mind that this outdoor service needs to look different in response to COVID-19 precautions. That means there will be no singing, no passing the peace, no passing the offering plate, no communion, no bulletins, no access to the water cooler, no coffee fellowship afterwards.

A box will be available for offerings upon entering or exiting the outdoor worship space. Online giving is still highly encouraged. One can access online giving from Bethany's homepage at bethanydr.com.

Masks are strongly encouraged but not required since we are outside and physically distanced. Keep in mind that masks protect others, not just you! Masks will be available at Bethany for those who forgot or are in need of a mask. Hand sanitizer will also be made available to participants.

Church Council (Phil Thompson, Jane Sundin, Rich Anderson, Sheila Rae Maki) will be acting as greeters and safety encouragers. Should a participant pose a clear and evident threat to others, one of these persons will ask that individual to head home.

If it rains or snows (it's Minnesota!), service will be canceled. Cancellations will be posted on the church website: bethanydr.com.

These changes will probably feel a little awkward and that's just a reality. Let's give each other a good amount of grace as we are all trying to figure out this new way with our own concerns, hopes and expectations. The point is to connect with God and others...we can definitely do that!

Thank you to all participants who respect our common life together in Christ.

This document was prepared by Rev. Lisa Buchanan, Council President Phil Thompson, Vice-President Jane Sundin, Secretary Rich Anderson, Sheila Rae Maki and Dr. Bob Baker on June 15, 2020 in accord with the Minnesota Employer Preparedness Plan Requirements Checklist.