

Hope Presbyterian Church's Pandemic Preparedness Plan & Reopening Policy

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The Preparedness Plan & Policy is for all services – worship, weddings, and funeral. The plan will be permanently posted on the church's website, as well as posted at the entrance of the sanctuary and the entrance area of the chapel. Before the church re-opens to in-person worship, an email will be sent out to all parishioners as well as posted on the church's website and Facebook page to remind parishioners of the plan and procedures.

Cleaning

- After an exposure to a pandemic causing illness, the entire building will be thoroughly cleaned with anti-bacterial disinfectant cleaning supplies **before** the building can re-open to the public and worship services can commence.
- All surfaces will be cleaned thoroughly each week. Doorknobs, countertops, railings, handles, pews, chairs, tables, and any other surfaces that are high-touch items will be cleaned after each event, meeting, or service.
- All air filters in the furnaces will be changed out with HEPA filters. These filters will be changed every 3 months maximum to keep the air flow as clean as possible.
- Weekly Cleaning and Disinfecting Procedure
 - Fireside Room – Clean using disinfectant cleaner on tabletops and edges, as well as the metal backs and edges of chairs. Disinfect the room after each use.
 - Restrooms – Clean using disinfectant cleaner on toilets, sinks, faucets, stall doors, and doorknobs.
 - Fellowship Hall – Clean using disinfectant cleaner on tabletops and edges, as well as the metal backs and seats on all chairs. Disinfect the chairs and tables after each use.
 - Kitchen – Clean using disinfectant cleaner on all countertops, sinks, faucets, door handles, cabinet handles, and all appliances. Disinfect after each use.
 - Offices – Clean using disinfectant cleaner on the phone receiver, computer monitor and tower, keyboard and mouse, copy machine, chairs, and all hard surfaces.
 - Sanctuary – Clean using disinfectant cleaner on railings, door handles, pew backs, and all hard surfaces. Disinfect after each use.
 - Sound Booth – Clean using disinfectant cleaner on doorknobs, computer monitors and towers, keyboard and mouse, chair backs and seats, and carefully wipe down of the sound board.
 - Narthex – Clean using disinfectant cleaner on railings, doorknobs and handles, and all hard surfaces. Disinfect after each use.
 - There will be a table with disinfectant wipes and sprays outside the sanctuary against the sound booth wall for use by ushers if needed during services.

- Outdoor chapel (when in use) – Wipe down doorknobs on Gazebo and metal railings in the chapel with disinfectant wipes. There will be disinfectant wipes in the Gazebo for use by the ushers if needed.
- Youth Center – General cleaning after each use of the building, which includes using disinfectant cleaner on toilets, sinks, faucets, tables, hard chairs, counters, stools, doorknobs and handles, cabinet handles, appliances, and all hard surfaces.

Attendance/Seating

- In-person worship will be allowed when a maximum of 50% occupancy can gather in an area.
 - Chapel occupancy is 200 people under normal circumstances.
 - Sanctuary occupancy is 250 under normal circumstances.
 - Youth Center occupancy is 100 under normal circumstances.
- Seating will be taped off in the sanctuary and in the chapel with a number identifying how many people can sit in that area, to maintain the 6'-0" social distancing.
 - Maximum taped off seating in the chapel is 85.
 - Maximum taped off seating in the sanctuary is 82.
 - Anyone coming after the maximum capacity has been filled will be directed to go back to their cars and listen on the radio and/or watch on Facebook Live if it is the 10:00 am service.
- Parishioners are encouraged to stay home if they feel at risk or aren't feeling well.
- The 10:00 am service will continue to be broadcast on the radio (96.9 FM) as well as on Facebook Live, and later posted on the church's website (hopechurchspicer.org) for viewing, as well as sent to WRAC tv for viewing on the scheduled day.
- Everyone is to seat themselves before the service starting at the front working towards the back. Ushers will dismiss everyone row by row after the service starting at the back and working towards the front.
- Everyone needs to wear a mask. Some disposable masks will be available for those that do not have a mask. Children that are 5 years old or younger are not required to wear masks but are encouraged to wear a mask, and children 2 years old or younger do not have to wear masks due to the increased risk of suffocation.

Fellowship

- There will be no coffee/treats and a fellowship hour until the pandemic is over.
- Parishioners are encouraged not to mingle before or after the worship service; to come, sit down, participate, and then leave when ushered out after the service is done.
- There will be no "Passing of the Peace" during the service until the pandemic is over.

Worship services

- We will have 2 worship services during the summer months, and 1 service during the cooler month. The number and location of services will be reassessed as needed during each season.

- Sunday at 8:30 am in the outdoor chapel, Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend (directed more towards families). If it rains, the service will be cancelled.
- Sunday at 10:00 am in the sanctuary year-round.
- These 2 services will be the same, so people only need to attend one – and are encouraged to only attend one service a week.
- A list of people will be made as people walk in to identify who is at each service, in case someone comes down with the pandemic causing illness, so we can contact those people to take precautions and put themselves in quarantine.
- The offering plates will be placed at the back of the sanctuary by the double doors/top of chapel steps for people to put their offering in, rather than passing the plates.
- Children’s Sermon – Xs are placed for the spots for kids to sit. The pastor will mask up to talk with the kids. The kids are encouraged to have their masks on as well.
- We will put up a sign with questions that people need to answer themselves before entering the worship space.
- Outdoor services
 - There will be no chairs set up at the top of the chapel.
 - The Gazebo will remain closed. No one will be allowed in the Gazebo except the Music Director, the ushers, and the pastor.
 - A “Enter Only” sign will be placed on one side of the Gazebo, and “Exit Only” sign on the opposite side of the Gazebo.
 - Seats will be marked to maintain a 6’-0” social distancing.
- Indoor services
 - The double doors at the back of the sanctuary will be propped open (during warmer months) and the only entrance/exit for parishioners. All other doors to the church will remain locked. The emergency exit side door of the sanctuary will be propped open (during warmer months) and the fans will be on to help with air circulation.
 - During colder months, the ushers prop open the doors before the service. Once the service starts, the doors can be closed. The doors will then be propped open at the end of the service for people to exit.
 - X’s will be placed on the sidewalk to keep the 6’-0” social distancing.
 - All hymnals, Bibles, fellowship pads, offering envelopes, and pens/pencils will be removed from the pews.

Funerals

- There will be no indoor visitation.
- Indoor funerals will follow current CDC guidelines/restrictions and social distancing.
- Outdoor funerals and visitation will follow the current state and CDC guidelines/restrictions and social distancing.

Weddings

- Indoor and outdoor weddings will follow current state and CDC guidelines/restrictions and social distancing.

Music/Singing

- Congregational singing will be at a minimum – humming or singing softly are OK as long as people have their masks on. However, singing out loud without a mask on will be prohibited. The Music Director will play the hymns and the words will be put on the screen for people to sing along softly.
- There will be no choir until the pandemic is over.
- We will continue to have a maximum of 3 song leaders. Song leaders will have plexi-glass shields in front of them.
- It is also a possibility to have instrumentalists playing rather than song leaders.

Ushering

- Ushers will wear masks. Gloves are available for those that want to wear gloves.
- Ushers will keep everyone in the Narthex and sanctuary. If someone needs to use the restroom, the usher will escort them to the restroom, wait, and escort them back up to the Narthex.
- Bulletins will be distributed but will not be collected after each service for reuse. Each parishioner can make the decision to throw it in the available trash can or take it home to use or discard it.
- One of the ushers will be in-charge of monitoring the table with the hand sanitizer, bulletins, and when needed, the prepackaged communion cup and wafer. Each person is encouraged to take one squirt of hand sanitizer before they enter the sanctuary.

Parishioner with a pandemic causing illness

- If a parishioner who was at one of the services comes down with or finds out that they have been exposed to a pandemic causing illness, the parishioner must contact the church office immediately. An email will be sent out and phone calls made to those that were at the service telling everyone who attended that service to get tested.
- If an outbreak occurs of 15 parishioners testing positive, the church will be closed to the public for two weeks starting the Sunday the person was in church. A deep sanitizing of the sanctuary, sound booth, and restrooms will be done. No one besides staff will be allowed into the building until the two weeks are over, and services will be cancelled. A sermon/message may be posted on Facebook on Sunday if the pastor/speaker desires. A message stating the closure will be emailed out immediately to everyone, posted on the church's website and Facebook page, and calls made to those that do not use computers.
- We will emphasize to all that if they feel ill, they are to stay home, rest, and get tested if they have any symptoms of the pandemic causing illness.

Staff

- Staff must wear a mask if they leave their desk when other staff or people are in the church building. If they remove their mask, they are to have it with them and available.
- If another person comes into a staff person's office, everyone must be masked.

Staff with a pandemic causing illness

- Staff members that don't feel well are encouraged to stay home and get tested if they have symptoms of the pandemic causing illness.
- If a staff member comes down with or is exposed to the pandemic causing illness, they are to report to the Pastor, or if there is no Pastor, the Personnel Committee Chairperson and the Clerk of Session. The staff member needs to forward the letter they receive from the Minnesota Department of Health stating the date that they can return to work, to the Pastor, or if there is no Pastor, the Personnel Committee Chairperson and the Clerk of Session.
- Staff will not use their sick time and will be paid during their mandatory quarantine. Staff are provided employment protections when in isolation for public health purposes per Minn. Stat. § 144.4196. If additional time off is needed to recuperate, sick time will be used. If someone needs to be temporarily hired to take the place of that sickened staff member, a request must be brought to the Session as soon as possible.
- The custodian will do a deep sanitizing of the sickened staff member's office while they are out. The custodian will wear gloves and a mask while cleaning to ensure they don't get sick.

Lifting of pandemic restrictions per this policy

- The restrictions placed in this policy will be lifted in conjunction with the lifting of the state and CDC guidelines/restrictions.
- The Session may lift any of these restrictions set forth in this policy at any time if they feel the need and have considered the safety of the congregation.