St. Alban’s

Plan for In-Person Gatherings

Alban’s Episcopal Church

21405 82nd Place West

Edmonds, WA 98026

COVID-19 exposure control, mitigation, and recovery plan

January 7, 2021

In compliance with the State of Washington’s, *Phase 1, Modified Phase 1, Phase 2, and Phase 3 Religious and Faith-based Organization COVID-19 Requirements*, August 10, 2020 version, we establish the following procedures and protocols for our church and all other organizations using our facilities. This document was last updated on April 27 11, 2021.

**General Comments and Initial Steps:**

* At the beginning of the Pandemic, we began live-streaming worship services, as well as vestry and committee meetings. We will continue streaming worship even after we return to in-person worship.
* Taking the age and overall health of members of our congregation, it is the general intent of the leadership (clergy and vestry) of this congregation to refrain from conducting indoor, in-person worship services until Snohomish County is in Phase 3 but more likely Phase 4 of Covid-19 Pandemic recovery.
* Exceptions to this would be funerals, weddings, and other pastoral offices or rites. These exceptions will be considered on individual basis, and they will be conducted only with minimal numbers of attendees, limited principally to immediate family members and conforming to the strictest levels social distancing and hygiene protocols as established below.
* Outdoor services could be offered when Snohomish County is in Phase 2 and above, weather permitting and only with established social distancing and hygiene protocols, as established below.
* A protocol for in-person Office and Business work is included in this document.
* It is anticipated that this document will require changes and updating as the Covid-19 Pandemic evolves and as our knowledge of the virus and its effects and repercussions increase.
* We have encouraged people 65 years and older and those with health concerns to stay away from church until they are fully vaccinated (both dose plus the two week incubation period).
* Establish a housekeeping schedule that includes frequent cleaning and sanitizing with a particular emphasis on commonly touched surfaces.
* Conduct a deep cleaning of the sanctuary prior to holding in person services and remove all hymnals, prayer books, note paper, pencils, etc.

**PPE utilization:**

* All present entering the building, either for worship or office work, or participating in outdoor services will be required to wear a mask.
	+ If someone has a medical exemption for not wearing a mask, we will assume that their medical condition precludes them from gathering in-person.
* In the event that someone refuses to wear a mask and enters the building or joins an outdoor service, we will immediately end the service and dismiss those gathered.

**Hygiene:**

* People will be required to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer upon entry in the building.
	+ Signs demonstrating proper handwashing techniques are posted in all bathrooms and at all sinks.
* Masks will be available for those who do not have one.
* Attendees will be asked and reminded to cough~~s~~ or sneeze into their elbows.
* Hand sanitizer will be readily available in many locations throughout the building, including entrances.
	+ Alcohol-based hand sanitizers with greater than 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol
* Bathroom occupancy may be limited.
	+ Occupants will be asked to maintain 6’ social distances.
	+ Socially distance lines will be demarcated in front of both bathrooms.
	+ The women’s bathroom has two doors; one the East door) will be identified as Entrance, the other (South Door) as Exit.
	+ Post signage outside stating number of persons permitted inside at one time.
	+ Post protocols for use of bathrooms inside and ensure that a ready supply of paper towels, soap, disinfecting wipes are available.

**Sanitation:**

* Boxes of tissue, covered waste containers, along with accompanying hand sanitizer dispensers are readily available throughout the building.
	+ In the Office area and in the Parish Hall
	+ Throughout sanctuary when in-person services begin

**Signage (see Appendix for examples):**

* At all entrances
	+ Entrance and Exit (inside and outside of church)
	+ Symptoms and warning signs
	+ Mask wearing required
	+ Proper Handwashing technique (posted in Bathrooms, Kitchen, and Sacristy)
	+ Entrance protocol
		- Sign in Attestation Form (including statement of health and non-exposure and agreement to following protocol).
			* Documents kept for 21 days in case contact tracing is required.
			* Have sanitized pens available and holder for used pens.

**Symptom monitoring:**

* Before entrance for worship services.
	+ Temperatures (with no-touch thermometer) taken by a designated Person – Sharon Joy.
* Attestation that individuals are free of the following (see appendix)
	+ A new **fever** (100.4 F or higher) or a sense of having a fever?
	+ A new **cough** that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
	+ New **shortness of breath** that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
	+ A new **sore throat** that you cannot attribute to another health condition
	+ New **muscle aches** that you cannot attribute to another health condition or that may have been caused by a specific activity, such as physical exercise?
	+ New **respiratory symptoms**, such as sore throat, runny nose/nasal congestion, or sneezing, that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
	+ New **chills or repeated shaking** with chills that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
	+ New **loss of taste or smell** that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
	+ Attestation should include not testing positive for COVID,
	+ No exposure to another in household testing positive or having symptoms,
	+ or attending gatherings in which protocols not followed.
* Attestation forms kept at least 21 days in the event they are needed for contact tracing

**Response Plan for when a staff member or congregant becomes presents symptoms of Covid-19 either on site or reports being infected after having been on site:**

* Onsite:
	+ In the event that someone begins to exhibit COVID-19 symptoms while on the premises, that person will be asked to leave immediately. If they are unable to leave immediately (if, for example, other family members are in other parts of the building) a separate waiting area away from others (likely in the Parish Hall away from the main entrance) will be established to limit exposure to other occupants.
	+ If the person with symptoms is unable to get themselves home or to a healthcare facility, emergency personal (911) will be called.
* Onsite or subsequent to being onsite:
	+ Notify Snohomish County Health District (425) 339-5200.
	+ Communicate with staff, volunteers, and congregants about potential exposure.
	+ Advise those with exposure to a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to stay home and self-monitor for symptoms and contact their healthcare provider if symptoms develop.
	+ Close off areas used by the sick person and do not use the area until after cleaning and disinfection.
	+ Advise staff and congregants with symptoms of COVID-19 or who have tested positive for COVID-19 not to return to the facility until they are symptom free and have tested negatively for the virus.

**Incident Reporting:**

* Snohomish County Health District will be immediately contacted if an attendee becomes infected.
	+ Snohomish County Health District (425) 339-5200.
* Attestation Forms will be supplied to County Health Officials for contract tracing.

**Location Disinfection Procedures:**

* If there is to be another service in the building on the same day (e.g., when Templo Emanuel resumes worship services), sanctuary furniture will be cleaned and sanitized with a focus on frequently touched items before the subsequent services begin.

**COVID-19 Safety Training for Office or other Business activities:**

* Employees and Volunteers have been given the following training:
	+ Entrance Protocols
		- They sign-in when entering the building.
		- Individual health conditions are assessed.
			* No one is allowed into the office area if they have any symptoms or if someone in their household has tested positive.
		- Handwashing and/or use of hand sanitizer before proceeding to office work areas.
			* Proper handwashing – with soap, 20 seconds minimum with proper technique.
			* Hand sanitizer until it’s dry.
				+ Alcohol-based hand sanitizers > 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol
		- Masks wearing is required.
			* Proper mask use (over the nose and under the chin) has been personally demonstrated and with posters reinforcing proper mask use.
		- Given the layout of our Office Work Areas, only one person will be allowed to work in distinct areas.
		- When two people are required to ensure accountability (in counting money, for example) they will work in adjacent rooms facilitating eye contact while also maintaining 6 feet distances.
		- Work schedules are staggered to reduce the number of people in the office and subsequent exposure risks.

**Worker Safety Resources**

* All issues regarding worker safety and health are subject to enforcement action under L&I’s Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH).
* Employers can request COVID-19 prevention advice and help from DOSH.
* Employee workplace safety and health complaints may be submitted to the DOSH Call Center: (1-800-423-7233) or via e-mail to adag235@lni.wa.gov.
* General questions about how to comply with the agreement practices can be submitted to the state’s Business Response Center at https://coronavirus.wa.gov/how-you-canhelp/covid-19-business-and-worker-inquiries.
* All other violations related to Proclamation 20-25, et seq., can be submitted at https://coronavirus.wa.gov/report-safe-start-violation.

**Exposure Response Procedures:**

* Entrance Attestation Forms kept for at least 21 days in case contact tracing required.
* Staff and office volunteers will contact those who were on the premises (as known from sign-in and attestation forms) informing them of possible exposure.

**Worship Protocols:**

**Occupancy:**

* The number of congregants for in-person indoor services will follow Snohomish County and Washington State protocols.

**On-location physical distancing:**

* Worship Service Entrance Protocol
	+ Sign-in Attestation Form (including statement of health and agreement to following protocol; see appendix).
		- Documents kept for 21 days in case contact tracing is required.
* While waiting for others to complete registration process, households will wait at a minimum of 6 feet distance from each other.
	+ 6 foot makers will be taped on the floor or sidewalk in order to guide those waiting in line.
* While entering the sanctuary, attendees will be instructed to maintain 6 feet distances from others entering the Sanctuary.
* Seating will be arranged and clearly demarcated so that people living in the same home may sit together while maintaining 6 feet distance (in all directions) from other households.
* After the worship service, people will be instructed to exit the building in an orderly and regulated fashion maintaining 6 feet from those exiting before them.
	+ Those closest to the doors will exit first, in order to prevent coming into proximity to each other.
* There will be no Fellowship time after the service, attendees will be instructed to exit the building immediately after the service and maintain social distancing and mask wearing.
* We will maintain one Entrance Only doorway (the North Door) and one Exit Only doorway (the West Door).
	+ Alternatively, in the event that an individual has mobility limitations, the North Door may be used for exiting the building providing that 6’ social distances are maintained from others.

**Worship Service Procedures**

* Procession and Recessions with in-person indoor services will be discontinued until Snohomish County reaches Phase 4 in Covid Recovery.
	+ Alternately, in Processions, the altar party and worship leaders will precede anyone entering the worship space
	+ In Recessions, the altar party will be the last to leave the worship space.
* Entering and exiting the worship space will be conducted as follows:
	+ Those entering first will be instructed~~ive~~ to sit closest to the altar. Sanctuary seating will be filled in an orderly fashion front to back.
	+ When exiting, those seated closest to the rear doors will be instructed to exit first, and congregants will exit in an orderly fashion back to front.
* Maintain 6 feet distance while moving into and in the worship space.
* Households will sit in demarcated seating areas.
* Masks required except for those speaking.
* Congregational singing is postponed until Phase 4.
* Parishioners will be instructed to make Congregational responses to prayers with subdued voices to reduce the possibility of transmitting the virus.
* The Peace will be exchanged at a distance of at least 6 feet.
	+ The congregation has been taught American Sign Language versions of the Peace and its response.
	+ A slight bow or other physical expressions of greetings are also encouraged.
* Distribution of the Eucharistic Elements will be postponed until Phase 4.
* Sanctuary to be clean after each use, with a focus on frequently touched surfaces.
* And in accordance with CDC guidance.
* Bulletins
	+ Will contain the whole service.
	+ We will provide them.
	+ They will be placed in the pews at designated seating areas, thereby demarcating properly distanced seatting areas.
* OffertoryPlate:
	+ Will be placed on a small table at the entrance to the sanctuary to minimize contact.
	+ People will be asked to drop their offering into the plate.
	+ Will be brought to the altar by an usher at the Offertory.
* \Include plans for music, singing, choir (if no music, state that or state that protocols will be developed for music when it is re-introduced)