

Guidelines for Returning to In-Person Gatherings

Purpose

This document is maintained by the COVID-19 Sub Committee and approved by the Church Council. The guidelines within this document inform the congregation on how we will gradually return to in-person gatherings using defined phases that progress as the community impact lessens.

The COVID-19 sub-committee will oversee execution and revision of these guidelines. They will make recommendations to council for approval. Council will have final authority over moving between phases and guideline revisions.

When we are ready to move from one phase to another, we will send a letter to the congregation (or include the communication in the Ambassador). Included in that letter will be a reminder of what safety measures are being taken and what is open during that phase. Other methods of communication will also be used, e.g. Ambassador, website, facebook, outdoor sign, etc.

Our return to in-person gatherings will take place in phases:

- Phase 0. No in-person gatherings
- Phase 1. In-person gatherings outdoors with precautions
- Phase 2. In-person gatherings outdoors and indoors with precautions
- Phase 3. Return to (new) normal without precautions

We will monitor health department guidelines, COVID-19 trends and our use of precautions and process changes to inform our decisions. Once we reach a given phase, we may return to a prior phase if there is a need to reduce the risk. We will not have in-person gatherings indoors if the local schools are closed due to COVID-19. We will not have in-person gatherings indoors if the local hospitals stop or greatly reduce elective procedures. We will communicate any changes through mail, email, facebook, outdoor sign and our website.

Precautions and process changes are defined in the Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church's COVID-19 Policies (separate document).

References and Resources

Southeast Iowa Synod Covid-19 Resources (Includes Iowa and CDC resource links)

<https://seiasynod.org/covid-19/>

ELCA Covid-19 Resources

<https://www.elca.org/publichealth>

Covid-19 in Iowa (Statistics)

<https://coronavirus.iowa.gov>

Scott County Covid-19 Information

<https://www.scottcountyiowa.gov/health/covid19>

CDC Guidelines:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/index.html>

CDC information for schools and childcare

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/indicators.html#thresholds>

Singing during the pandemic - American Choral Directors Association:

<https://acda.org/resources-for-choral-professionals-during-a-pandemic/>