

Covid-19/Coronavirus Policies

“28 And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, “Which commandment is the most important of all?” 29 Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ 31 The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” Mark 12:28-31, (NEV)

Whereas a newly emerged, poorly characterized virus is circulating globally, is easily transmissible, causes serious illness and death for a portion of the population, and for which there is no treatment or vaccine at this time, Gloria Dei Lutheran Church (GDLC) adopts the following policies:

- 1. Our mission continues to be Gathering People to Christ, Building Believers in Christ and Serving the World as Christ.** We recognize that how we carry out our mission will change over time in order to protect the safety and well being of our congregation, our families and our community while treatment and vaccine for the virus are in development.
- 2. Decision making** is informed by our faith and love of God and our neighbor and is based on the best information available from authoritative sources such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), state and local health departments, the Ohio District, the Governor and Medical Director of the Ohio Department of Health, and current scientific publications. We will comply with all orders and implement recommended practices. We expect that procedures will change regularly as our knowledge and experience expand.
- 3. Communication** among church staff, members and the community will be frequent and offered in a variety of formats, including, but not limited to, email, Twitter, Facebook, telephone, video, written word and in-person. Every effort will be made to ensure faithful, timely communication of accurate information that reflects the hope we have in the Gospel of Christ.
- 4. Worship and communion** are vital for our members and community. We will provide all avenues for worship and communion (e.g. streaming services, DVD recordings, outdoor worship, in-person worship/communion with precautions) that can be done safely within the constraints of the changing progress of the pandemic.
- 5. Managing risk** We recognize that despite careful preparation and care, we cannot completely eliminate risk for those attending in-person services and gatherings and urge those who are ill, who are at greater risk of severe illness or who care for someone at such risk to avoid in-person gatherings until the risks have diminished or disappeared, choosing instead to continue to participate in the life of the congregation using all available technology. Where possible church meetings, fellowship and education will utilize technology to eliminate or minimize in-person gatherings while such gatherings are restricted.

- 6. Employees** Staff of GDLC are treasured assets and are encouraged to work from home or from the office (individual offices) as health and demands of each position dictate. Individual questions about health, sick leave, working from home, etc. will be resolved in consultation with the administrative committee and the Senior Pastor.
- 7. Participation with disease investigation and control measures.** When a case is identified in a GDLC employee, member, visitor or other individual accessing GDLC property, we will work closely with health department staff to quickly identify those who may have been exposed. When made aware, we will reach out to members who are isolated or quarantined to help provide for their needs during this time. In anticipation of this need, we will keep track of those accessing/using the building.