

# Cross of Glory COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan

(Last updated: January 2021)

## Biblical Framework and Community Values

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Cross of Glory COVID-19 Task Force has prayerfully considered what it looks like to live in God's love as a community of faith. This has led us to adopt additional precautions for in-person and on-site gatherings. Cross of Glory is working hard to meet the additional spiritual and mental health concerns that surround physical isolation, and understand that this time apart can be extremely difficult. The Cross of Glory community is here to walk with you, and Pastor Ali is available for prayer and pastoral care. If you are struggling, please do not hesitate to reach out for help.

The physical safety of all our neighbors is our top and most immediate priority. The plan below outlines ways that we will all be working together to ensure the physical safety of one another. Below are some of the biblical commitments and theological values that shape this plan:

**We are called to love one another** - Loved by God, we are called to love one another, not for our own sake but for theirs. "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another" (John 13:34-35).

**We are the body of Christ** - We confess that the devastation of this pandemic is more urgent and acute for some members of the body than others. We also believe that because we are all connected, our suffering is shared, and that we are called to care for and stand in solidarity with those who are most vulnerable: "When one part of the body suffers, the whole body suffers alongside it" (1 Cor 12:26).

**We are a resurrection people** - Because death on a cross could not stop Jesus from living and from sharing the gift of life with the world, we are a resurrection people, called to see new life breaking forth even in the midst of death. "For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience" (Romans 8:24).

**God is with us** - "The Word became flesh and dwelled among us" (John 1:14). We believe that God's presence is not limited to the physical structures of a church building, but is active and alive in the world. Witnessing God's continued presence in this time apart gives us confidence that while the pandemic changes some of the ways we *do* church, it does not keep us from *being* church. On the contrary, we believe the Spirit empowers us with new ways of loving one another.

As we continue to learn more about the rapidly-changing nature of the pandemic and the best practices around safely gathering, we will adjust our response plan accordingly, and will share regular updates with the Cross of Glory community. We are grateful for your flexibility, patience, and understanding, and invite you to reach out at any time with any questions and concerns. Please review this plan as one way to prepare to participate in our shared life together.

## Resources

The following plan was created with information from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and Stay Safe MN, the city of Brooklyn Center, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the Minneapolis Area Synod, (MAS), and fellow Wildfire churches. Information about and access to these resources can be provided by the Task Force at any time upon request.

## Terminology

**Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)** is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. Members of the Cross of Glory community should take action to protect themselves and their neighbors from infection.

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html>

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/basics.html>

**Symptoms of COVID-19 can include** fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea. These symptoms may appear 2-14 days after you are exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

A decision tree about how to respond given various symptoms can be found here:

<https://mn.gov/covid19/for-minnesotans/decision-tree/index.jsp>

**Exposure:** According to the CDC and MDH, individuals have a known exposure if they have had “close contact” with an individual who has a confirmed case of COVID-19.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/public-health-recommendations.html>

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/contact.pdf>

**Close contact** is defined as being within six feet of someone for more than 15 minutes up to two days before they began experiencing symptoms, until the time they entered isolation. Close contact includes:

- Being within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes
- Providing care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19
- Having direct physical contact with the person (touched, hugged, or kissed them)
- Sharing eating or drinking utensils
- Being sneezed, coughed, or breathed on and receiving respiratory droplets

If you have had close contact with someone who has tested positive, you will need to quarantine for 14 days and self-monitor for symptoms, and/or get tested.

**Quarantine** is for those who are feeling sick (but do not have a positive test result) or who have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive. Quarantine helps prevent the spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. Anyone who has been in close contact with someone who has

COVID-19 needs to quarantine. This includes people who previously had COVID-19 and people who have taken a serologic (antibody) test and have antibodies to the virus.

**Isolation** is for those who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 (tested positive). See the difference between quarantine and isolation and steps to take:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/COVID-19-Quarantine-vs-Isolation.pdf>

**Contact tracing** is used by health departments to prevent the spread of infectious disease. In general, contact tracing involves identifying people who have an infectious disease (cases) and their contacts (people who may have been exposed) and working with them to interrupt disease transmission. For COVID-19, this includes asking cases to isolate and contacts to quarantine at home voluntarily. Contact tracing for COVID-19 typically involves: interviewing people with COVID-19 to identify everyone with whom they had close contact during the time they may have been infectious, notifying contacts of their potential exposure and need to quarantine, referring contacts for testing, monitoring contacts for signs and symptoms of COVID-19, and connecting contacts with services they might need during the self-quarantine period.

**Physical distancing** is the intentional language we at Cross of Glory use as opposed to “social distancing.” While our Building Entry Policy requires 6 feet physical distance between persons in our building during COVID-19 (or 12 feet physical distance for singers in worship), we will work hard to ensure that we stay socially connected during this difficult time.

Physical distancing, which applies to Levels 1, 2, and 3 of this plan, entails refraining from hugs, handshakes, and all other physical contact with all persons living in separate households.

**Re-entry** is the intentional language we at Cross of Glory use to describe the increased access of our facility as opposed to “re-opening.” We do so because we believe that the church community--and God’s work within it--has continued to be open and operating! Even while our church building was closed, the church itself was never closed. Re-entry refers to the resumed use of our church building and facilities.

### **Phased Re-Entry for Facility Use and In-Person Gatherings**

Discerning how and when we gather in-person is a dynamic process, responsive to what is happening in our immediate communities, guidance from state and synodical authorities, and the needs of the most at-risk and vulnerable people within our community. It presents a multi-level approach that we can all follow as we make deliberate and measured changes over time.

This document contains four levels of operations, with the final level being Level 4. Under each level are recommendations for office and staff schedules, worship, in-person gatherings and facility use, and sanitation, as well as a response to a positive COVID-19 case within our community.

**Metric:** The COVID-19 Task Force will monitor and make decisions to move between levels. In particular, we will use the metric used by the Hennepin County School District and Progeny

Academy (14-day positive case count per 10,000 people over a 14 day period in Hennepin County), which is located on the MDH website and updated weekly. Also to be considered are the case counts for the counties of Anoka, Dakota, Ramsey, Scott, Washington, and Wright, and the case counts for the cities in which Cross of Glory community members reside.

As the body of information regarding effective mitigation of COVID-19 grows, as circumstances around the virus and vaccine evolve, and as we assess the needs of our community, this document may be amended by the COVID-19 Task Force.

### **Building Entry Policy**

Our first priority is the health and safety of all persons within the Cross of Glory community. While the Task Force will assist in implementing these protocols in their areas, we ask that all members, visitors, and contractors adhere to all health and safety protocols when gathered together as a community and in our daily lives.

All persons entering the church building are required to follow COG COVID guidelines:

- Wear a mask while inside the building. A supply of masks will be available at the Welcome Desk in the event that one is needed. Masks must be worn over the nose and mouth.
- Sanitize hands when entering and exiting the building. Sanitizer is provided at the Welcome Desk and throughout the church building.
- Sign in and out on the contact tracing form at the Welcome Desk upon entering and exiting. A supply of pens will be available and there will be a separate space for clean pens and used pens.
- Maintain 6 feet of physical distance at all times, with the exception of family units.
- Enter and exit through designated marked doors to discourage tight traffic and “bottle-neck” areas.
- No more than 2 people should be in a restroom at the same time to ensure adequate physical distancing.
- Anyone feeling ill or exhibiting symptoms is asked to leave immediately, not enter the building, or stay home to quarantine or isolate.

### **Level One**

We will operate at this level when the 14-day Positive Case Count per 10,000 people is 30 or greater for Hennepin County. Also to be considered are the counties of Anoka, Dakota, Ramsey, Scott, Washington, and Wright, and the case counts for the cities in which Cross of Glory community members reside.

At this level, the facility will be closed for use. All gatherings will take place virtually, with the exception of essential personnel and building maintenance.

### Office and Staff Schedule

- The church office is closed for in-person visits. Office staff may be reached by phone and email during office hours: Monday-Wednesday 9:00am-3:00pm.
- Staff will work on site for essential duties only. All work that can be done remotely should be done remotely.
- Pastor Ali will be available for pastoral care by phone and computer (Zoom or email).

### Worship

- All worship services will be virtual. Pre-recorded services will be available online and bulletins containing the full service will be mailed to all those who do not have access to online services.
- Only staff, worship leaders, and technical recording personnel are permitted in the sanctuary for recordings on Wednesday evenings and will follow Building Entry Policy guidelines.
- No special services (weddings, funerals, baptisms) will take place indoors. Questions regarding other accommodations can be directed to Pastor Ali.

### In-Person Gatherings & Facility Use

- All gatherings will take place virtually.
- Outdoor gatherings are permitted on COG premises but with no admission to the building, and while maintaining 6 feet physical distancing precautions and wearing masks. Groups planning to do so must contact the COG office to inform the church of an outdoor meeting.
- Only essential personnel and persons performing essential facility maintenance tasks are permitted in the building.

### Cleaning

- Cleaning services will be maintained by custodial staff.
- Persons on-site for essential personnel and facility maintenance duties are responsible for disinfecting used areas after each use. Cleaning kits are available at the Welcome Desk and throughout the church building.

### COVID-19 Positive Case Protocol

- Anyone who has been in the building and who has been exposed to or has tested positive for COVID-19 must contact Pastor Ali or the church office immediately.
- While maintaining confidentiality, all COG staff, Progeny staff, and custodial staff will be informed of a positive COVID-19 case.

## **Level Two**

We will operate at this level under the condition that the 14-day COVID-19 Positive Case Count per 10,000 people is between 20 and 29 for Hennepin County. Also to be considered are the counties of Anoka, Dakota, Ramsey, Scott, Washington, and Wright, and the case counts for the cities in which Cross of Glory community members reside.

Indoor gatherings of 10 people or fewer are permitted assuming all Building Entry Policy guidelines are maintained (see Building Entry Policy above).

#### Office and Staff Schedule

- The church office will be open Monday-Wednesday 9:00am-3:00pm.
- Staff are encouraged to work remotely as able, and can be reached by phone or email.
- Pastor Ali will be available for pastoral care over the phone, via computer (Zoom or email), and for in-person meetings with 10 or fewer individuals inside the building.

#### Worship

- All worship services will be virtual. Pre-recorded services will be available online and bulletins containing the full service will be mailed to all those who do not have access to online services.
- Pre-assigned lay lectors and musicians may assist with recording worship in the sanctuary, with a limit of 10 persons in the sanctuary, adhering to the Building Entry Policy guidelines.
- Special services (weddings, funerals, baptisms) with 10 or fewer individuals (including staff) will be permitted in the sanctuary. Other inquiries regarding accommodations can be directed to Pastor Ali.

#### In-Person Gatherings & Facility Use

- Gatherings of 10 people or fewer are permitted for indoor gatherings with all Building Entry Policy guidelines are maintained. All groups larger than 10 people will continue meeting virtually under this level.
- Indoor gatherings must take place in either the Fellowship Hall or sanctuary due to ventilation and space.
- Outdoor gatherings are permitted on COG premises while maintaining 6 feet physical distancing precautions and wearing masks.
- Groups planning to meet either indoors or outdoors must contact the COG office to schedule with the church.

#### Cleaning

- Cleaning services will be maintained by custodial staff.
- Groups and individuals will disinfect used areas before and after each use. Cleaning kits are available at the Welcome Desk and throughout the church building.

#### COVID-19 Positive Case Protocol

- Anyone who has been in the building and who has been exposed to or has tested positive for COVID-19 should contact Pastor Ali or the church office immediately, and may not attend any on-site activities for two weeks.
- While maintaining confidentiality, all COG staff, Progeny staff, and custodial staff will be informed of a positive COVID-19 case.
- MDH contact tracing notification protocols will be followed.

## **Level Three**

We will operate at this level under the condition that 14-day COVID-19 Positive Case Count per 10,000 people is between 10 and 19 for Hennepin County. Also to be considered are the counties of Anoka, Dakota, Ramsey, Scott, Washington, and Wright, and the case counts for the cities in which Cross of Glory community members reside.

Worship gatherings with a maximum of 25% sanctuary capacity (approx. 180 persons) and social gatherings with a maximum of 50 people are permitted at this level (see Building Entry Policy above).

### Office and Staff Schedule

- The church office will be open Monday-Wednesday 9:00am-3:00pm.
- Staff will determine their schedule for on-site work.
- Pastor Ali will be available for pastoral care over the phone, via computer (Zoom or email), and for meetings with 50 or fewer individuals inside the building.

### Worship

- In-person worship services will take place with a maximum of 25% sanctuary capacity (approx. 180 people) following all Building Entry Policy guidelines. Services will continue to be recorded from the sanctuary, with online worship provided indefinitely for persons unable to attend in-person.
- Pre-assigned lay lectors and musicians may assist with recording worship in the sanctuary, adhering to the Worship Guidelines and Building Entry Policy.
- Weddings, funerals, and baptisms will take place with a maximum of 25% sanctuary capacity (approx. 180 people), adhering to all Worship Guidelines and Building Entry Policies.
- There will be no indoor coffee hour or food service. Fellowship may take place outdoors while maintaining 6 feet physical distancing precautions and wearing masks.

### In-Person Gatherings & Facility Use

- Groups of 50 or fewer individuals may meet in the building continuing to follow Building Entry Policy guidelines.
- Indoor gatherings may take place only in the Fellowship Hall or the Sanctuary due to ventilation.
- Outdoor gatherings are permitted on COG premises while maintaining 6 feet physical distancing precautions and wearing masks.
- Groups planning to meet either indoors or outdoors must contact the COG office to schedule meetings in advance.

### Cleaning

- Cleaning services will be maintained by custodial staff.
- Individuals and groups will disinfect used areas after each use.

### COVID-19 Positive Case Protocol

- Anyone who has been in the building and who has been exposed to or has tested positive for COVID-19 should contact Pastor Ali or the church office immediately, and may not attend any on-site activities for two weeks.
- While maintaining confidentiality, all COG staff, Progeny staff, and custodial staff will be informed of a positive COVID-19 case.
- MDH contact tracing notification protocols will be followed.

### **Level Four**

We will operate at this level under the condition that that 14-day COVID-19 Case Rate per 10,000 people is between 0 and 9 for Hennepin County. Also to be considered are the counties of Anoka, Dakota, Ramsey, Scott, Washington, and Wright, and the case counts for the cities in which Cross of Glory community members reside. All persons using the facility are encouraged to be vaccinated.

There are no restrictions to the number of people gathered. Further expectations will be outlined when we enter this Level. Building Entry Policy guidelines may be required to be followed (see Building Entry Policy above).

#### Office and Staff Schedule

- The church office will be open Monday-Wednesday 9:00am-3:00pm.
- The church staff will resume regular office hours.

#### Worship

- In-person worship services will take place adhering to building occupancy limits. Pre-recorded services will continue to be available.
- Pastor Ali, staff, worship staff, and Council will set up additional “best practices” as needed for this new normal.

#### In-Person Gatherings & Facility Use

- The building will be open to all groups and building users, indoors and outdoors.
- Groups must contact the COG office to schedule meetings in advance.

#### Cleaning

- Cleaning services will be maintained by custodial staff.

### **Covenant of Care**

For the sake of living out our values as stated in the Biblical Framework and Community Values section, we ask that all persons attending in-person gatherings and using the facility throughout all levels commit to a “Covenant of Care.” This entails refraining from attending in-person events if you are experiencing symptoms, or if you’ve had close contact or exposure to someone with COVID-19; and agreeing to clean and sanitize areas before and after use.



## Other Building Protocols

- Some room occupancy limits, particularly spaces used by Progeny Academy, have been adjusted during COVID-19. Please note and adhere to any new occupancy limits, which will be posted outside entryways.
- Water fountains will not be used. Water will be accessible at Fellowship Hall sink.
- Food and drink will not be shared communally indoors. Outdoor food and drink options will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- Doors should be propped open when spaces are in use to reduce unnecessary contact with handles.
- No more than 2 people should be in a restroom at the same time to ensure adequate physical distancing.
- No more than 1 person should use the elevator at the same time to ensure adequate physical distancing.
- Mail may be dropped off in the outdoor Cross of Glory mailbox, located to the right-hand side of the front door, to minimize contact.
- When possible, windows should be opened to ensure maximum ventilation. Make sure windows are closed during inclement weather and when leaving the area.

## Worship Protocols

Cross of Glory has adopted the following guidelines to prioritize the health and safety of all who attend in-person worship services. These guidelines, in conjunction with our protocols apply to all in-person worship services, including baptisms, funerals, and weddings.

As we live into Christ's call to love and care for one another, it is imperative that all who attend in-person worship services honor these guidelines related to changes in behavior, facility usage, traffic flow.

**Before** the service, those planning to attend must:

- Complete pre-registration as needed (occupancy limits change depending on Level).
- After registering to attend, continue to monitor symptoms and stay home if you become ill or begin to exhibit any of the symptoms associated with COVID-19.
- Sign the contract tracing form and follow Building Entry Policy guidelines.
- Persons who are in higher risk categories for severe illness are encouraged to stay home.

**During** the service, those attending must:

- Wear a face mask that covers the nose and mouth at all times and adhere to all other Building Entry Policy guidelines.
- Follow traffic flow parameters and occupancy limits.
- Maintain physical distancing of 6 feet or more at all times.
- Regularly wash or sanitize hands, cover coughs and sneezes.
- Leave immediately (with family unit) if ill or exhibiting any of the symptoms associated with COVID-19 .

**Special Services:**

For weddings, funerals, and baptisms, participating individuals must sign the contract tracing form, which will provide a record of names and contact information for all guests entering the sanctuary, and adhere to Building Entry Policy guidelines. Cross of Glory needs a list of attendees by 24 hours prior to the event, emailed to the church office (weddings and funerals) or pastor (baptisms). Specific policies and guidelines for special services are forthcoming. All questions regarding accommodations can be directed to Pastor Ali in the meantime.

**General worship practices and guidelines:**

- Ushers will assist with entry to and exit from the sanctuary
- Designated pews will be marked to ensure 6-ft distance between individuals and family units
- During the pandemic, *congregational singing and speaking is not permitted*. Instead, the congregation will be encouraged to participate with physical gestures, sign language and other outward expressions that embody the message of the song. \*Protocols regarding congregational singing will be re-evaluated once we are consistently in Level 4 or when enough new information supports a change in this policy.
- Printed materials will not be distributed and hymnals will not be used at this time. We will use the screens to display congregational responses.
  - o Bulletins will be available online for those who want to print in advance
- Collection plates for offerings will be placed on self-standing stations at designated locations to avoid close contact and maintain physical distancing.
- The Sharing of the Peace, when it is determined to be safe, will be adapted to include sign language and other forms of greeting that maintain physical distancing.
- All other practices, including processions and recessions, will be adapted to avoid close contact and maintain physical distancing.
- Communion will be offered in alignment with public health guidance. The congregation will remain seated for communion. Communion will be distributed via pre-filled individual wafer-and-juice kits. Pastor and staff will adapt all practices related to the preparation and distribution of communion elements to minimize contact and to promote health.

**Musicians:**

In addition to worship staff, additional musicians (worship team members, choir members, and instrumentalists) are permitted to take part in worship under Levels 2, 3, and 4. Musicians will be positioned on stage left (Brooklyn Boulevard side of platform) and will use a specific microphone assigned to them, which will be sanitized before and after use. Musicians will maintain a minimum of 12 feet physical distance from one another and congregation, and will wear a mask when not singing/playing a wind or brass instrument. These requirements may be adjusted for safety considerations.

**Lectors:**

Lectors will be seated on the pulpit side of the sanctuary in the front pew. Lectors will read from the pulpit, using the pulpit mic. Disinfecting wipes will be provided to wipe off the pulpit microphone and handled areas before and after the service. Lectors will wear a mask when not reading. Persons who are feeling ill or are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms must stay home, and must leave if they begin feeling unwell while present.

**Cancel or postpone in-person worship:**

If, after returning to in-person activities, there is evidence of COVID-19 spread associated with the COG community, we will consult with health officials to determine when and if we should cancel or postpone in-person services until it is safe to return.

**Moving Forward**

The COVID-19 Task Force will continue to serve in an advisory capacity as needed, monitoring the status of cases, levels of vaccination, and new information as it is released to the best of our ability. Please reach out to the Task Force if you have questions or need clarification at any time.

In addition to worship bulletins and newsletters, please visit our website for ongoing Covid-19 related updates: [www.crossofglory.us](http://www.crossofglory.us).

We move forward in faith, committed to our call to love one another, to live as the body of Christ, to place our hope in Christ as a resurrection people, and to remember that always, God is with us.

**Contact Information**

**Rev. Ali Tranvik, Lead Pastor:** [atranvik@crossofglory.us](mailto:atranvik@crossofglory.us), 763-533-8602

**Church Office & Sue Vukelich, Office Administrator:** [office@crossofglory.us](mailto:office@crossofglory.us), 763-533-8602

**Emergency On-Call Pastoral Care:** 952-500-1803

**Mark Trease, Pianist, Worship Team Leader:** [MLTrease@comcast.net](mailto:MLTrease@comcast.net)

**Keith Williams, Choir Director:** [williams@csp.edu](mailto:williams@csp.edu)

**Dan Aulwes, Building & Grounds Committee:** 763-645-2261

**Thank You**

A very special thanks to the members of the Covid-19 Task Force: Mark Trease (Co-chair), Linda Knudsen (Co-chair), Dawn Bailey, Rev. Ali Tranvik, Lori Callier Balzer, Brenda Edstrom, & Gayle Merritt for the time you so graciously volunteered, for your thoroughness and thoughtfulness, and for your care for this community. COG is so grateful for you.

And thanks to the Cross of Glory community for your commitment to this plan--and for your creativity in finding new ways of being the church during this pandemic--as we work together to be the church during these extraordinarily challenging days. It is a gift to share life *together* even while apart!) with each of you.

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