

Planning Document – COVID 19 - Draft Template Immediate Actions to Assure Health, Safety, Wellbeing

(Record how these actions will be carried out and who has responsibility)

Examples:

- Notify staff and faith community members of your plans and the rationale. (*See sample letter at the end of this document*). Include the pastoral rationale, and rationale as responsible citizens and community members. (Content depends on your plans – remaining open, closing, hybrid, etc.) Include how community might stay in touch throughout (phone tree, live streaming of services, online events, etc.). Provide contacts for pastoral care, and questions. Links to communications from Bishop Curry and Bishop Prior.
- Decisions re: if staff work on site or remotely.
- Provide informational resources for faith community members to stay healthy and have up to date information (CDC, Minnesota Department of Health, etc.) communications from Bishop Curry, Bishop Prior, etc.)
- Notify others who may share your church building/property of your decisions and plans, and what your expectations of them are.
- Assure that critical business/building operational needs are up and running/being carried out. For example – building is secure, payroll met, monitoring of boiler/heating plant, internet connectivity, electronic mailing lists, phones and web-site give correct information, etc.).
- Decide protocols/methods for pastoral visits, etc.

Business Continuation Outline: Pastoral Pastoral - 30 Day Priority Planning

(Record if an action must be done on location or may be done offsite)

Examples

Priority 1 - Must be done daily.

- Check and return pastoral calls, emails, etc.
- Critical communications re: changes/updates (may be daily or less frequent)

Priority 2 – Must be done within 2 to 4 days.

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Priority 3 – Must be done within 5 to 7 days.

- Options for and technology for live streaming of worship services
- Weekly communication with faith community members

Priority 4 – Must be done within 8 to 14 days.

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Priority 5 – Must be done within 15 to 30 days.

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Business Continuation Planning - Building and Administrative Operations

30 Day Priority Planning - What must be done and when

(Record if an action must be done on location or may be done offsite)

Examples:

Priority 1 - Must be done daily.

- Building monitored
- Heating/cooling monitored

Priority 2 – Must be done within 2 to 4 days.

- Business-related emails

Priority 3 – Must be done within 5 to 7 days.

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Priority 4 – Must be done within 8 to 14 days.

- Payroll

Priority 5 – Must be done within 15 to 30 days.

- Finances, bills, etc.

Business Continuation – Return to Business as Usual

(Record If an action must be done on location or may be done offsite)

Note: The return to “business as usual” takes planning, with considerable time spent on communication, as well as pastoral guidance, and CDC/Health Department assurances to congregation members that all is well and a return to “normal” or a new “normal” feels safe.

Note: Consider what will be needed to bring your building back to full operation. (Cleaning, sanitizing, etc.)

Priority 1 - Must be done daily.

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Priority 2 – Must be done within 2 to 4 days.

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Priority 3 – Must be done within 5 to 7 days.

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Priority 4 – Must be done within 8 to 14 days.

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Priority 5 – Must be done within 15 to 30 days.

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Sample Letter to Faith Community Members:

Closing church for a period of time

March XX, 2020

Dear Members of _____,

God's peace with you as we journey through a difficult and anxious time for our nation and our world. As you know, the number of Corona Virus (COVID-19) cases have been increasing, including the number of cases in Minnesota. Based on recommendations from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), and communications from Michael Curry, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church USA, and Minnesota Bishop Brian Prior, we have decided to close _____ Episcopal Church for at least _____ weeks beginning _____.

We made this decision in the Spirit of caring for all God's people and to assist with controlling the spread of the virus by "social distancing". "Social distancing" means keeping people out of close proximity with each other.

Beginning on _____, all worship, programming, and gatherings of any sort at _____ Church are cancelled until further notice. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation on this as we seek to be responsible citizens and to care for each other as the Body of Christ.

So that we can find ways of being in community, Rev. _____ and staff members are working on options for using technology (live streaming, podcasts, accessing material on-line, etc.) for worship, and adult, youth, and children's education. More information will be coming on this in the next week.

The _____ (*name of electronic newsletter*) will continue to go out _____ (*whatever the normal schedule is*). We, Rev. _____ and the Wardens _____ and _____ will do our best to send timely communications to _____ Church members.

For more resources on COVID-19, please see the following information and links:

- **Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.**
- **Stay home when you are sick.**
- **Cover your cough.**

Minnesota Department of Health (MDH):

[Minnesota Department of Health](#)

Center for Disease Control (CDC)

[Center for Disease Control](#)

If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact _____ by phone or e-mail

While we may be physically apart during this time, God's love and the love we have for each other as a faith community remain with us throughout. Please continue to hold each other and the world in prayer. Let us walk in love as Christ loved us.

Rev. _____

_____, Senior Warden

_____, Junior Warden