# COVID19 Business Specific Health & Safety Plan

#  for

**Grace Lutheran Church**

200 Wabash Avenue

Ukiah, California 95482

Mendocino County

####

#### Introduction:

Grace Lutheran Church is a small church with approximately 150 members and an average of 50 participants in worship service pre-Covid19. Because many of our members are elderly, we anticipate a significant decrease in worship attendance during the epidemic. With that said, this reopening plan will include plans for outdoor service and office/volunteer guidelines. Indoor services will not be held at this time, an updated plan will be submitted when we decide to return to indoor service.

####

#### Office staff and volunteer health and safety plan:

1. **Describe the type of signage you will have and locations.**

Each of our buildings will have signs requiring masks to enter the building. Social Distancing hand washing will be included in signage in accordance with CDC recommendations. Bathrooms will have signs on proper handwashing technique and reminders to wear masks and social distancing.

1. **Describe the PPE you will provide to your employees, volunteers and congregants.**

Disposable masks will be available for all staff, volunteers and visitors who don’t bring their own. It is expected that masks will be worn in the building other than working alone in an office.

Hand sanitizer will be available at all entrances and in offices.

Disposable gloves will be available and required when working with groups of people or handling common use items such as bibles and bulletins.

1. **Describe your plans for training employees, volunteers and temporary workers on the use of PPE; disinfection; sanitation and other cleaning techniques.**

Employees and volunteers will be given significant instruction based on CDC guidelines. A folder with updated County and State orders will be kept in the reception area for staff and volunteers to review. A reminder or necessary and mandatory guidelines will be mailed/emailed before meeting detailing how and what is expected of everyone who joins us.

1. **Describe the methods used for cleaning religious garments and linens.**

Religious garments and linens will not be utilized until the Covid19 epidemic is over. Pastor’s stoles will be cleaned weekly at Pastor's home.

1. **Describe your plans for protecting your employees' and volunteers’ health.**

 Common areas will be sanitized 2x a week utilizing cleaners with CDC recommended ingredients.

 Common use items will be removed. These include bibles, hymnal and weekly bulletins. Food and

drinks will not be prepared or consumed on the premises, except Communion which is a single use grape juice/ wafer self-contained and disposable. The kitchen is closed, all group activities,

 including our weekly worship service will be held outside when possible. When the church is opened up again for worship, professional sanitizing will be performed twice monthly. Staff and volunteers will do the bi-weekly cleaning. Only two staff members are in the office, and not on the same days.

1. **Describe your plans for protecting the health of congregants.**

As a small church organization, we only have 4 employees who will be provided with gloves, masks

 and cleaning supplies. The volunteers are members of our congregation so all our planning concerns

everyone, staff and congregants alike. A list of attendees will be taken at each meeting so that any positive Covid occurrence can be safely reported to members.

1. **Describe how you will prevent crowds gathering at your facility.**

This is unlikely to happen given the size and age of our congregation. Communion Services are to be held on our front or back lawns, each giving wide entrance and a large amount of space to maintain 6+ feet of separation. Services will only be a very short time allowing for Confession, Communion and prayer. Parking allows for multidirectional entrance, as well as those who would like to maintain further caution to remain in their cars.

1. **Describe how you will enforce physical distancing at your facility.**

Signs on social distancing will be at the entrances to the buildings and outside meeting rooms. Chairs in meeting rooms will be placed 6 feet apart and all other chairs will be removed, markings on the floor will indicate 6 feet distance outside of bathrooms and in the reception area. During outdoor Communion, we are asking our members to maintain an 8 foot distance. This will enable us to briefly take off mask to receive Communion. Pastor will remind congregants to maintain their distance before and after service. There will also be flags which will indicate safe distances in the grass where people will congregate.

1. **Describe alternative methods of worship, for example, live streaming, etc.**

We have been pre-recording worship and posting online. Pastor has been recording readers outside and the sermon in the church proper. Most recordings require Pastor’s family plus one musician. Musician and singer or reader are spaced at least 10 feet apart. We have also been mailing family worship guidelines to all members to accompany the recorded service. We want to move to short outside service to facilitate the distribution of Communion.

The one part of worship which according to ELCA Guidelines that can not be done remotely is Communion. In order to give members a safe opportunity to partake of this Holy Meal, we have set up “Communion in Extraordinary Times”. We will invite congregants to join us between 8:45-9 to find a safe place on the lawn 8 feet from others. At 9 we will have a 10 min service. As members come to find a place to stand, they will pick up a Self-contained Communion kit (wafer/grape juice) purchased through Amazon, at one of three stations. Before taking the Communion kit, they will be asked to sanitize their hands with provided sanitizer.

All information will be sent earlier, so they can bring a bulletin with them. All are required, as posted and expressed in mailing ahead of time to keep masks on, except when they are to take it off quickly to take communion, and then will be asked to return them to their faces.

Those who want to stay in cars, can pick up communion kit then, or I can leave them on their porches ahead of time.

When service is over, they will be encouraged greet each other with a wave and continue to maintain 6-foot distances as they leave.

1. **If applicable, describe the payment methods you will use (contactless is preferred).**

We continue to encourage members to mail in offerings or drop them off at the office. No formal offering will be taken.

1. **Describe how you will ensure that shared items such as audio headsets are disinfected.**

We are eliminating all shared items. Any personal use items handled only by the person using them, and will be sanitized/ cleaned by the person using them between uses.

1. **Describe the occupancy limitations for the indoor facility and outdoor area.**

Indoor occupancy for meeting and office work is limited to a maximum of 10 people at this time. We expect approximately 20-30 people for communion at most.

1. **Describe the limitations in the number of services and any methods for maintaining stable groups of congregants.**

We will be offering “Communion in Extraordinary” times, beginning bi-monthly. Bible studies are already stable groups and are small groups less than 10 people and are only meeting based on the comfort of the members. Online or “ZOOM” Bible Studies are encouraged.

1. **Children attend places of worship. What are your plans for their care during services?**

Childcare and Sunday school will not be provided during the epidemic. Any children will stay with parents or grandparents.

1. **Describe how you will reconfigure seating and walking areas to maintain six feet of physical distancing between congregants.**

As people will be required to take masks off for a very brief moment, we are asking people to maintain a 8 foot distance outside of family groups once they are in place\seated. Flags used for lawn work will be utilized to indicate the place people/families can stand. Communion kits can be picked up ahead of time, hand delivered or picked up that morning at one of three stands. Each stand is fitted with appropriate signs and hand sanitizer. Volunteers will be monitoring these stations.

1. **Describe alternatives for items such as fonts, sinks and vessels and equipment used to eliminate contaminant (water) splash.**

Through single use Communion containers, we will be avoiding the use of many of our usual vessels. The Altar, and altar accessories will be handled only by Pastor and sanitized by pastor before and after.

Baptisms will be held outside with only the immediate family as needed. Masks and gloves will be worn by all parties. Baptismal water will be in a sanitized vessel using CDC instructions on sanitizing, a new towel will be provided which will go home with the parents.

Funerals will be restricted to family only. Mask will be required.

1. **If applicable, describe how you will indicate separate entry and exits to/from your facility.**

At this time, there will not be separate exits and entrances. This will be reevaluated when we move to indoor services. An effort has been made, to reduce any “clogging” by both encouraging early attendance, spacing out locations to pick up Communion kits, early pick up or drop off of Communion Kits, and by allowing people to remain in their car, we have more than 10 parking spots people can park and participate from inside their cars.

1. **Describe your methods for reconfiguring parking areas to avoid congregation points.**

We are asking anyone who is not remaining in car to park in one of two parts of the parking lot or along the street.

1. **Describe how you will ensure physical distancing in restrooms.**

We only have single occupancy restrooms. Lines 6 feet apart will be marked on the floor outside the restroom for those waiting to get in.

1. **If your facility serves food and/or beverages, describe the health and safety guidelines you have taken to protect employees and congregants.**

The kitchen is closed. Communion is prepackaged.

1. **Singing and group recitation are known to spread COVID19. Describe the steps you have taken to modify how singing and recitation are practiced.**

There will be no singing and very limited responses during worship/ Communion service. People will be 8 feet apart to compensate for the very few seconds they will need to remove masks for communion.