

# WELCOME MEMBERS OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA!

While you wait for the presentation to begin, open your browser and visit the following sites for relevant resources:

<https://coronavirus.churchmutual.com/>

# Safely Returning to Worship

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This webinar, in conjunction with Church Mutual, is being sponsored by:



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

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# CURRENT SITUATION

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Houses of worship play a critical role in the life of the community.

As the COVID-19 pandemic progressed, many houses of worship suspended in-person gatherings in accordance with government mandates or recommendations to limit the spread of the virus.



# CURRENT SITUATION

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Now that states and local communities are planning to ease restrictions, houses of worship are considering how and when to resume gathering for worship service and other activities.

# TOPICS FOR TODAY

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## Prevention

- ✓ Understanding transmission.
- ✓ Tools for reducing spread.

## Preparation

- ✓ Critical information to know.
- ✓ Make a plan.
- ✓ Communicate and train the plan.

## Implementation

- ✓ Putting the plan into action.



# PREVENTION



Transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) may occur through:

- ✓ Person-to-person contact
- ✓ Thing-to-person contact

Knowing this information helps inform tools and preparation needed to successfully reopen.



# PREVENTION

Primary tools to reduce the risk of transmission/spread are:

- ✓ Social distance
- ✓ Disinfection

Organizations should establish protocols and procedures around adequate distancing, as well as enhanced cleaning practices.



# PREPARATION



## Critical numbers for planning:

- ✓ Six feet of distance = 113 sq. ft. per person.
- ✓ Virus can live up to seven days on surfaces.
- ✓ Disinfectants may need 2-10 minutes of contact (see EPA list).
- ✓ Symptoms show in 7-14 days.

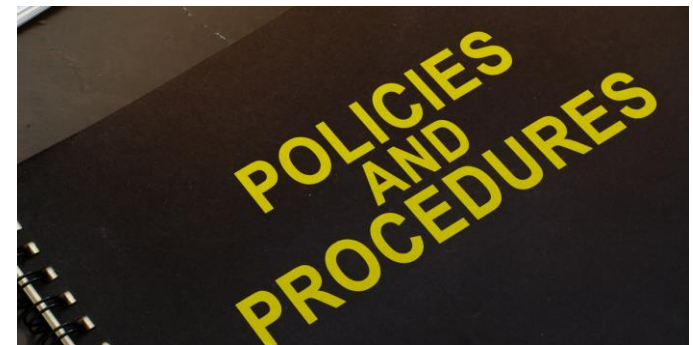
The EPA provides guidance on [registered antimicrobial products for use against coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).



# PREPARATION

**Make a plan** that recognizes things will likely change over time.

- ✓ Assign responsibility for monitoring and incorporating government orders and guidance.
- ✓ Assign responsibility for coordinating with local health authorities and law enforcement.



# PREPARATION



**Make a plan that applies to different circumstances:**

- ✓ Events and activities bring people together.
- ✓ Each space is different in area and contents.
- ✓ Staff and volunteers serve others.
- ✓ Some should not gather.
- ✓ Some may become ill at your facility.

# PREPARATION

## Make a plan that explores alternative worship solutions:

- ✓ Projecting the order of service, readings and songs.
- ✓ Substituting offering baskets for collection boxes or online giving.
- ✓ Weighing communion alternatives such as single use communion sets, sanitary preparation and distribution.
- ✓ Avoiding shared use of microphones by worship service celebrants and musicians.





# PREPARATION



**Gather supplies** needed to support proper disinfection and personal hygiene.

## **Disinfecting supplies**

- ✓ Disinfecting agents for your facility.
- ✓ Hand sanitizer for staff, volunteers and attendees.



## **Covering supplies**

- ✓ Masks and gloves for staff and volunteers.
- ✓ Face coverings for attendees.

# PREPARATION

**Communicate** your plan via multiple channels – email, website, newspaper, etc. – prior to reopening.

- ✓ Share details of the plan as circumstances change.
- ✓ Make the plan available to members and non-members alike.
- ✓ Reinforce message that persons who are ill or higher risk should continue worshipping remotely.





# PREPARATION

**BEND  
THE CURVE**

Let's Do Our Part



**PLEASE  
WASH  
HANDS  
WITH SOAP**



**PLEASE  
WEAR  
FACE MASKS**

For Everyone's Protection



**PRACTICE  
SOCIAL  
DISTANCING**



Develop **onsite instructional materials** such as signs or projected images to communicate the following:

- ✓ Directions to aid the flow of people and vehicles.
- ✓ Information on physical distancing and face coverings.
- ✓ Messaging to stay home if sick.
- ✓ Importance of handwashing and hygiene practices.

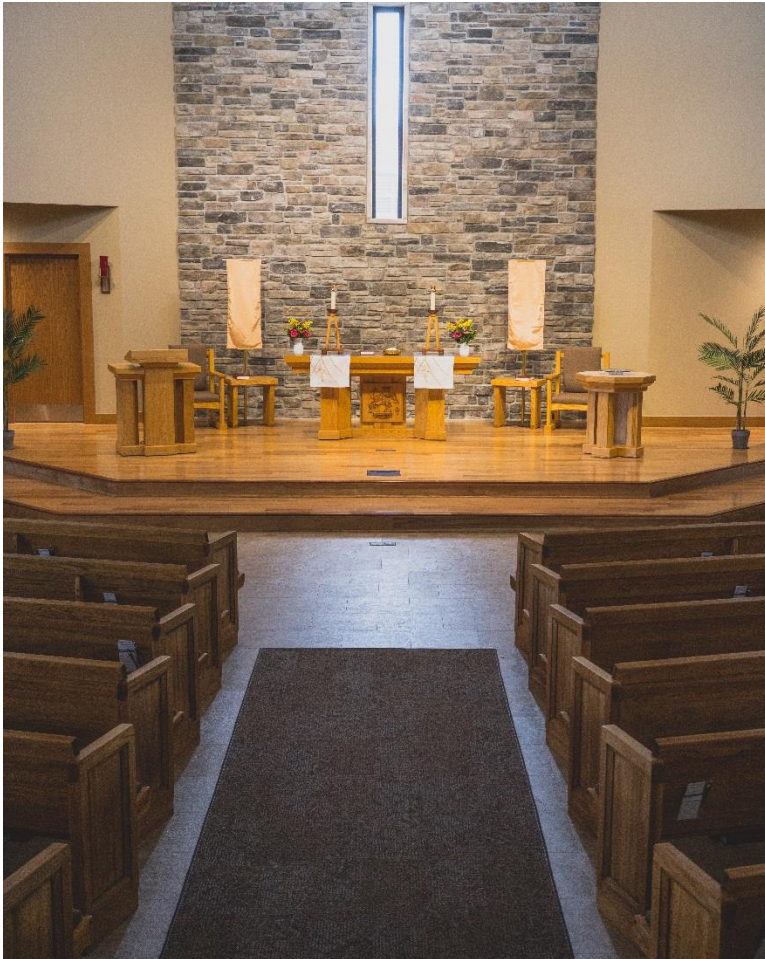
# PREPARATION

**Train** staff, leaders, ushers and volunteers on established plans and procedures for services and gatherings, including:

- ✓ Admission criteria.
- ✓ Social distancing requirements.
- ✓ Isolation protocol.
- ✓ Cleaning agents and processes.



# IMPLEMENTATION



## Before and between services

- ✓ Disinfect the worship area.
- ✓ Disinfect worship materials such as microphones and music stands.
- ✓ Disinfect restrooms and other common areas.
- ✓ Replenish disinfecting and covering supplies.

# IMPLEMENTATION

## During services

- ✓ At entrances, prop doors open (weather permitting), apply admission criteria and provide hand sanitizer.
- ✓ Maintain planned spacing for seating and seat from front to back.
- ✓ Modify “passing the peace” or greeting time to avoid physical contact.





# IMPLEMENTATION



## After services

- ✓ Dismiss congregants back to front in a way that maintains social distancing both inside and outside the building.
- ✓ Disinfect your worship area, materials, rooms used and frequently touched items such as doors, light switches, chairs, etc.
- ✓ Provide hand sanitizer and new protective equipment (masks and gloves) to those that have post-service responsibilities.



# IMPLEMENTATION

## Children's activities

- ✓ Disinfect activity areas and equipment before, between and after activities.
- ✓ Establish admission criteria and have parents drop children off outside the activity area.
- ✓ Plan for activities that maintain appropriate spacing.



# IMPLEMENTATION



## Office operations

- ✓ Create accountability for yourself and your co-workers regarding established reopening protocols.
- ✓ Maintain physical distance and wear face coverings to protect each other.
- ✓ Consider having office spaces deep cleaned on a weekly basis.

# ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

## Weddings and funerals

- ✓ Follow [federal guidelines](#) established around gathering sizes.

## Playground use

- ✓ Consider discontinuing at present or implement additional safeguards and limitations.

## Vacation bible school (VBS)

- ✓ Consider postponing to summer 2021.





# ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

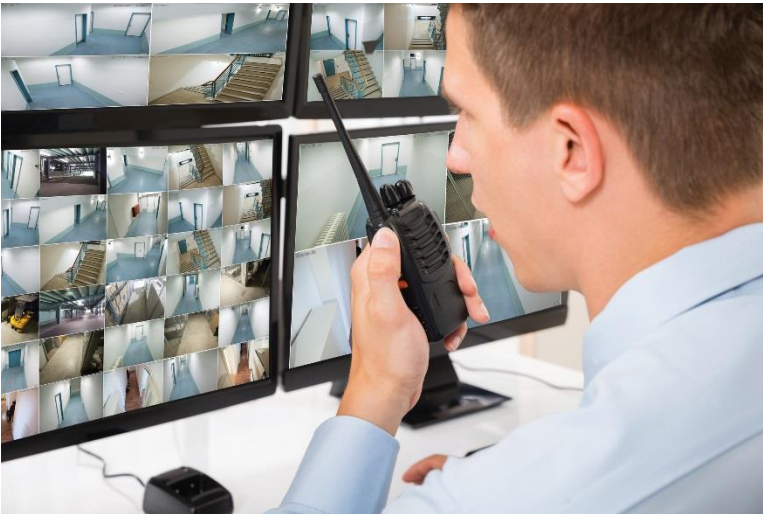


## Mission trips

- ✓ Consider postponing at present.

## Security

- ✓ Keep security considerations top of mind as economically and emotionally stressful times can lead to desperate acts.



# QUESTIONS?

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If you have any **coverage** questions, we encourage you to contact your sales agent or customer service representative.

If you have a **safety** or **risk management** question...

- ✓ Visit: [churchmutual.com/rcc](https://churchmutual.com/rcc)
- ✓ Call: (800) 554-2642 (Option 4) Ext. 5213



For more **coronavirus (COVID-19) information** and **resources**...

- ✓ Visit: [coronavirus.churchmutual.com](https://coronavirus.churchmutual.com)



# RESOURCES

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**Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html>

**Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

**Recommendations for Community Facilities with Suspected/Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)**

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

**EPA's Registered Antimicrobial Products for Use Against Novel Coronavirus**

<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>

**Federal Guidelines for Opening America Up Again**

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Guidelines-for-Opening-Up-America-Again.pdf>

**Resources for Community- and Faith-Based Leaders**

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

**Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html>

# RESOURCES

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**Basic Guide for Returning to your Church Building after COVID-19 (Georgia Baptist Mission Board)**

<https://gabaptist.org/reopening-your-church-building/>

**Guidelines for Returning to In-Person Worship Services (National Apostolic Christian Leadership Conference)**

<https://www.upci.org/file/177/Guidelines%20For%20Returning%20to%20In-Person%20Worship%20Services.pdf>

**COVID-19 Suggested Church Reopening Guidelines (Christian Law Association)**

<https://christianlaw.org/covid-19-suggested-church-reopening-guidelines/>

**Post-Coronavirus Facility Re-Opening Checklist (Smart Church Solutions)**

<https://try.espace.cool/post-coronavirus-facility-reopening-checklist/>

**Hartford Steam Boiler Equipment Checklists and Logs**

<https://www.munichre.com/hsb/en/products/commercial-lines-insurers/equipment-breakdown/commercial-equipment-breakdown/logs-and-checklists.html>