



## UNIVERSITY LUTHERAN COVID RETURN PLAN/GUIDELINES

This plan/guidelines have been adopted by the ULC Council to guide our return to the building as we begin to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic. We recognize that as the pandemic evolves, we may have to adapt and change this plan/guidelines as appropriate.

We recognize that the pandemic is fluid, and the situation is changing regularly. With this in mind, this plan/guidelines will serve to guide our transition back into the building and into a post pandemic world. The Church Council will discern our move between phases of this plan and develop/approve specific policies as necessary.

### BASIC PLAN

When COVID numbers look like.....	We'll.....
Vaccinations <55% of population (Red – Harvard COVID Risk Map)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage Vaccination</li> <li>• Encourage the staff to safely work from home</li> <li>• All meetings are virtual</li> <li>• Worship online only</li> <li>• Very limited activity in the church building</li> </ul>
About 25 cases/100K in Ingham Co. (Orange – Harvard COVID Risk Map)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue worshiping online only</li> <li>• Limited activity in the church building up to 15 people following guidelines below</li> <li>• Virtual meetings are still encouraged</li> <li>• Re-evaluate phasing plan</li> <li>• Update the congregation</li> </ul>
About 10 cases/100K in Ingham Co. (Yellow – Harvard COVID Risk Map)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-open the office (masks &amp; distancing required for unvaccinated) and staff begin working in the building as needed</li> <li>• Gradual increase in activity in the building</li> <li>• Some meetings may be in-person</li> <li>• Continue on-line worship</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for limited worship/Communion gatherings outdoors</li> <li>• Update the congregation</li> </ul>
About 5 cases/100K in Ingham Co. (Yellow – Harvard COVID Risk Map)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold limited-attendance events (based on guidance from CDC and local Public Health Department)</li> <li>• Staff working in the building on a regular schedule</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings in-person or online (based on guidance from CDC and local Public Health Department)</li> <li>• Return to worship in the sanctuary when we are ready i.e. CDC and local Public Health guidance, protecting those not eligible for vaccines (children), and ability to stream is in place</li> </ul>
<p>&lt; 1 cases/100K in Ingham Co. (Green – Harvard COVID risk map)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resume worship in the sanctuary</li> <li>• Resume fellowship/coffee hour in gathering area</li> </ul>

Each above phase will be held for at least 2 weeks: Public health experts remind us that it’s best to keep in mind the incubation cycle of viruses when we change our behavior. There is a lag between our interactions and when we see their impact. Two weeks is one incubation cycle of COVID-19. If our increased interactions are resulting in greater spread, it will more likely be evident at the two-week mark. If there are increased cases or a significant outbreak, then it would be a signal to pull back on our plan. If there is no increase, it would be a positive sign that we can continue or possibly consider a slight loosening of restrictions. This might look like allowing more people to gather, having slightly longer gatherings, increasing the use of our space, etc.

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

- We will continue to implement all risk factor mitigations, such as mandatory masks, social distancing, and no congregational singing until the CDC and the local Public Health Department removes these requirements for unvaccinated people.
- We will follow the local Public Health Department guidelines and CDC guidelines, including masking and social distancing, regardless of the number of vaccinated parishioners.
- Small groups meeting in the building will keep a record of attendees and limit numbers in accordance with local Public Health Department guidelines. The group leader will keep this list. If someone who has been in the building develops COVID, the church office should be informed.
- When we are ready to return to in-person worship indoors, appropriate plans will be developed which will meet the guidelines of the local Public Health Department. Such guidelines may include:
  - Ensure building capacity restrictions are being respected based on local Public Health guidelines – in all rooms and spaces.
  - Marking spots on pews or chairs where people can sit that are automatically socially distanced.



- Developing any needed signage for the building – guidelines, navigation, etc.
- Consider converting bathrooms to single-user for the time being to limit congestion.
- Work with custodial staff to review system for cleaning high touch surfaces (doors, light switches, etc.).
- Limit access to parts of the church building that are not in use to limit the need for cleaning and sanitizing.
- Make plans to welcome people to the building in physically distanced ways. Consider sidewalk dots or chalk marks to assist entry volunteers if many people arrive at once.
- Refrain from hugs and handshakes. Non-physical expressions of greeting and Christian love are best.
- Arrange for stationary offering plates/baskets to limit movement in the worship space.
- For Communion: Individual pre-packaged portions of elements, pre-placed where possible. Otherwise, allow for social distancing in line and ensure the presider is vaccinated (if possible), and sanitizes.
- Plan for alternative, non-physical ways of passing the peace and demonstrate the new practices ahead of time, or eliminate passing the peace
- Consider what worship schedule we will use: one service or two?
- Singing, except for one lead singer, will not be allowed until approved by local Public Health guidelines.
- Make arrangements to assist people in entering and departing the worship space without forming clusters for greetings. Train ushers to do this with grace.
- Contact Tracing and COVID Outbreaks
  - Maintain a list of who is in attendance at indoor church events – RSVP's, sign-ins by usher, photos. Keep these attendance lists for one month in the church office.
  - If someone at an event/worship tests positive for COVID, everyone at that event needs to be contacted. This will be done by:
    - Worship – Britny and volunteers
    - Small Groups/Events – the event coordinator
  - If COVID cases in the community rise, we will revert back to the Basic Plan at the beginning of this document. This decision will be made by the Church Council.