



Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church's Action Plan for  
resuming corporate worship services  
Heath, Ohio, Southern Ohio Synod , ELCA  
REV 0.0 May 18, 2020

**Description of the Phases**

1. Phase 0
  - a. This is our current phase
  - b. Building is closed for all small group ministries except virtual worship service recording
  - c. Intentional phone and card ministry
  - d. All meetings to be done on Zoom or other virtual platforms
2. Phase 1
  - a. Phase 1 begins after Council deems it safe enough to resume in-person services
  - b. The congregation will have two weeks of notice via email before those services resume
  - c. All Phase 1 references in the Action Plan will begin simultaneously
3. Phase 2
  - a. Phase 2 begins three weeks after school reopens for in-school sessions
  - b. All Phase 2 references in the Action Plan will begin simultaneously
4. Phase 3
  - a. Phase 3 begins after all restrictions have been lifted by the Department of Health
  - b. All Phase 3 references in the Action Plan will begin simultaneously

**Action Plan**

1. What if your worship gathering is initially limited to no more than 100 people?
  - a. I checked with Craig White and the seating capacity for our sanctuary is 180
    - i. Nine rows per column assuming nine people per row
    - ii. Number does not include the choir pews in the chancel
  - b. Pre-restrictions
    - i. First service attendance 35-45 people
    - ii. Second service attendance 45-60 people
  - c. Reopening plan
    - i. Phase 1 Worship service seating
      1. Phase 1 lasts as long as business face client census restrictions
      2. Sit in quarantine groups
        - a. If you quarantine together, sit together. Otherwise, worshippers need to maintain social distancing
      3. Wear masks
      4. Must have three pews separation vertically and six feet horizontally



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5. Hard cap of 50 people maximum in the Sanctuary
- ii. Phase 2 Worship service seating
  1. Phase 2 becomes implemented three weeks after school reopen for in-school sessions
  2. Evaluate procedures the schools implement for corroboration or correction
  3. Continue to wear masks unless Department of Health says otherwise
  4. Hard cap will be dependent on recommendations from the Department of Health
- iii. Phase 3
  1. Phase 3 becomes implemented three weeks after restrictions are lifted by the Department of Health
  2. Resume pre-COVID 19 format with the understanding that Phase 1 and Phase 2 might need to be re-implemented in the future
- d. Note: this plan assumes all worship services will occur in the Sanctuary. It may be easier to implement seating restrictions if we worship in the Fellowship Hall and allow the Sanctuary to be open as a Chapel during other times.
2. What adjustments will you make to the Lord's Supper, baptisms, and your choir ministry?
  - a. Lord's Supper
    - i. Phase 1
      1. Discontinue corporate celebration
    - ii. Phase 2
      1. Resume practice (bread only) with quarantine groups approaching the pastor standing on the floor
      2. Wear masks and partake of communion when they get seated
      3. People who cannot come forward, pastor brings communion to them. Congregant removes mask after the pastor has achieved appropriate social distancing
    - iii. Phase 3
      1. Resume distribution of both kinds
      2. Explore how that will be done when we get closer to that moment.
  - b. Baptism
    - i. Phase 1
      1. Encourage people to have baptisms at a later time



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2. If emergent, then private baptism in the Sanctuary with pastor, parents, sponsors, person being baptized, and one person to record.
  - a. Everyone wears masks.
  - b. To minimize contact
    - i. Parents hold child the entire time
    - ii. Unlit, boxed candle which the family will pick up immediately before the service starts. Will be referred to during the rite.
3. Announce to the congregation that the baptism occurred
- ii. Phase 2
  1. May occur during the service if the family wishes. Otherwise, private ceremony with up to 10 people in attendance including all participants.
  2. Everyone wears masks.
  3. Unlit, boxed candle which the family will pick up immediately before the service starts. Will be referred to during the rite.
- iii. Phase 3
  1. Resume normal practice
- c. Choir ministry
  - i. Phase 1
    1. Same format as the virtual service
    2. No more than a quartet maintaining social distance
  - ii. Phase 2
    1. Highly dependent on recommendations by the Department of Health as well as school systems
    2. Increase numbers of participants while maintaining appropriate social distance
    3. Explore moving the piano or electric piano for better direction and accompaniment
  - iii. Phase 3
    1. Normal resumption of music ministry
3. How will you go forward with VBS?
  - a. No LOMO Day Camp this year.
  - b. LOMO already cancelled in person camping this year
  - c. Explore LOMO's virtual camp options
  - d. Explore a virtual summer program for our children
4. Is a physical "pass the plate" offering a thing of the past?
  - a. Phase 1



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- i. No physical passing the plate
      - ii. Offering means
        - 1. Mail the offering to the church office
        - 2. Automatic withdrawal
        - 3. Online electronic transfer during worship
    - b. Phase 2
      - i. Continue Phase 1
    - c. Phase 3
      - i. Resume pre-COVID 19 format
- 5. What are you doing now to sanitize and sterilize your church building?
  - a. Craig has been working on some of the water issues with the ventilation system
  - b. Craig has added to his cleaning routine disinfecting common touch points. Will be resumed in earnest once corporate worship resumes
  - c. Explore allergen filter options? Not certain how efficacious, if at all, those kinds of filters are as an anti-viral filtration device
- 6. Are you going to continue offering children's church?
  - a. Phase 1
    - i. Discontinue
  - b. Phase 2
    - i. Discontinue
    - ii. Evaluate if children's church is still a useful ministry
  - c. Phase 3
    - i. Implement decisions made about this ministry during the Phase 2 evaluation time
- 7. Are you going to continue hosting special events?
  - a. Phase 1
    - i. No special events hosted
  - b. Phase 2
    - i. Resume according to standards and guidelines established by the Department of Health
    - ii. Add a janitorial fee for pre and post event disinfecting
  - c. Phase 3
    - i. Resume pre-COVID 19 format
- 8. Are you continuing to provide coffee stations on campus?
  - a. Phase 1
    - i. No coffee or snacks offered
  - b. Phase 2
    - i. No coffee or snacks offered
  - c. Phase 3



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- i. Offer coffee. Encourage people to bring their own mugs or use disposable mugs
- 9. Will you continue offering virtual online worship?
  - a. Phase 1
    - i. Yes
  - b. Phase 2
    - i. Yes. Record one the services and then air the next day
  - c. Phase 3
    - i. Yes.
- 10. What is your plan when volunteers step down?
  - a. Phase 1
    - i. Take census of who is doing what
      - 1. Leadership checks in with the volunteers
        - a. Assess if they have taken on too much or if we are asking too much of them
        - b. Come up with action plan to reduce workload if necessary
        - c. Refer to the volunteer list for potential recruits and replacements
      - ii. Evaluate if the volunteer's duties need to be replaced at this time
      - iii. If the volunteer is able ...
        - 1. Ask for an exit interview
        - 2. Ask if they can help train replacement
      - iv. Leadership takes up the void created by the volunteer's stepping down until evaluation is finished and a replacement has been secured
  - b. Phase 2
    - i. Same as Phase 1
  - c. Phase 3
    - i. Same as Phase 1
- 11. What's your strategy to clean and sanitize your church in real time?
  - a. Phase 1
    - i. Custodian disinfects the building Saturday afternoon/evening
    - ii. Custodian/volunteers disinfect the building between services and after the last service
  - b. Phase 2
    - i. Custodian disinfects the building Saturday afternoon/evening
    - ii. Custodian/volunteers disinfect the building between services and after the last service
  - c. Phase 3



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- i. Custodian disinfects the building Saturday afternoon/evening during cold/flu season
    - ii. Custodian/volunteers disinfect the building between services and after the last service during cold/flu season
12. Do door greeters do their jobs differently, or at all?
  - a. Explore how much it will cost to purchase/install automatic door opener for one of the glass doors in the front of the church
  - b. We do not have a door greeter ministry
  - c. Ushers welcoming people to worship and bulletin distribution
    - i. Phase 1
      1. Wear masks
      2. Maintain social distance, i.e. no handshaking
      3. No bulletins. Everything will be on the screen
      4. Announcements and calendar will be emailed on Monday by Office Administrative Assistant
      5. Ask the Office Administrative Assistant to do the Power Point slides for the worship services
    - ii. Phase 2
      1. Same as Phase 1
    - iii. Phase 3
      1. Bulletins resume
      2. Social distancing not necessary, but ushers only shake hands at their discretion/comfort level
13. Passing the Peace
  - a. Phase 1
    - i. Continue doing as being done with virtual services
  - b. Phase 2
    - i. Continue doing as being done with virtual services
    - ii. Evaluate if this is something we wish to resume when Phase 3 starts
  - c. Phase 3
    - i. Implement decision made during Phase 2
14. Because people may return very slowly to church, how will you count attendance and effectiveness?
  - a. Phase 1
    - i. Check on number of hits the virtual worship service gets
    - ii. Encourage people to add prayer petitions in the comments section
    - iii. Encourage people to like the video and use as a basis for attendance
    - iv. Count number of people present during in-person services
  - b. Phase 2



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- i. Continue Phase 1 methods
    - ii. Prepare a survey to send to congregation to gauge effectiveness/meaningfulness of the various worship opportunities
  - c. Phase 3
    - i. Continue Phase 1 methods
    - ii. Implement any changes deemed possible and/or necessary based upon feedback
- 15. Should you add and/or shorten worship services to allow for social distancing?
  - a. Phase 1
    - i. Recommend worship services be only 45 minutes maximum since there will not be communion, and the offering and passing of the peace will be truncated
    - ii. Service times
      - 1. 8:15
      - 2. 10:30
      - 3. People must leave the building after worship services within ten minutes after the service ends so the building may be disinfected and so social distancing may be maintained.
      - 4. Encourage people to have conversations at an appropriate social distance from their cars in the parking lot
  - b. Phase 2
    - i. Recommend worship services still be an hour maximum
      - 1. Longer service due to communion resuming
    - ii. Service times
      - 1. Same as Phase 1
    - iii. Evaluate what should be done for Phase 3
  - c. Phase 3
    - i. Implement evaluation results done in Phase 2
- 16. What are you going to do about larger Sunday School groups?
  - a. Phase 1
    - i. Do not resume in-person Sunday School
  - b. Phase 2
    - i. Do not resume in-person Sunday School
  - c. Phase 3
    - i. Resume normal class locations
- 17. What's your plan for Sunday School curriculum?
  - a. Phase 1
    - i. No in-person Sunday School
    - ii. Children



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1. Explore online resources
  - iii. Youth
    1. Zoom conversations with Youth Leader sometime besides Sunday morning. Pastor available as a resource
    2. Use Google Classroom as a platform for a Bible study
  - iv. Adult
    1. Online video series and use Zoom to host the conversations. Not done on Sunday morning.
    2. Use Google Classroom as a platform for a Bible study
  - b. Phase 2
    - i. See Phase 1
  - c. Phase 3
    - i. Keep resources we have found helpful and revisit how we do Sunday School in general
18. Will you reopen the doors of your church with a "worship only" strategy?
- a. Phase 1
    - i. Yes
  - b. Phase 2
    - i. Small group ministries can resume on non-Sunday mornings assuming they maintain appropriate social distancing
  - c. Phase 3
    - i. Resumption of all normal activities
19. Do you have a plan for reducing expenses if your church's offerings don't rebound?
- a. Executive Committee evaluates budget and makes recommendation to Council with implementation suggestions
  - b. Communicate the process to the congregation as the conversation starts/continues to see if offerings would increase
20. How will you deal with the rise of COVID-19 related addictions?
- a. Pastor will check to see what local AA groups are meeting and give referrals as necessary
  - b. Pastor will work in consultation with the Care Committee to keep abreast of any addiction/pastoral care issues that may be affecting members and act accordingly
21. Are you going to decrease the fellowship time between on-campus worship services?
- a. Phase 1
    - i. Yes. Everyone should leave the building by ten minutes after the service concludes. Ask participants to keep their coats with them in the pews. People leave the sanctuary by rows. People sitting in the back should leave first, etc.





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- b. Phase 2
  - i. Yes. Everyone should leave the building by ten minutes after the service concludes.
  - ii. If social distancing is still in effect, then leave the Sanctuary as done in Phase 1
  - iii. If social distancing is no longer in effect, then leave as normal, but still exit building by ten minutes after the service concludes so the building may be disinfected for the next service
- 22. Are you going to postpone mid-week Wednesday night services, meals, and Bible studies?
  - a. If these restrictions are still in effect during Advent, then yes, the morning breakfast should be cancelled and an online option should be offered
  - b. Recommend online Bible studies to be held on Wednesday night
- 23. Should you be investing in new digital equipment right now?
  - a. We are already in process of this, but ways to enhance, augment, or make things more efficient could be in order.
  - b. Highly recommend our internet situation upload/download be updated so that livestreaming could become an option for various ministries
- 24. Will a new staff or volunteer position emerge from COVID-19?
  - a. Care Committee leader
    - i. We already have a Care Committee leader. If Joyce steps down, another coordinator should be groomed/trained/recruited
  - b. Technology
    - i. With more virtual ministries potentially being developed, a volunteer who is in the know on our current needs versus current capabilities would be helpful
    - ii. Person would train staff and volunteers to do Power Point, etc. as necessary
    - iii. Be in charge of keeping current technology (hardware and software) up-to-date as well as other important maintenance details