First Congregational Church of Geneva

Coronavirus Monitoring and Action Plan

updated: June 30, 2020

This Monitoring and Action Plan is intended to cover the church’s response, not only to SARS-CoV2 (the 2019 coronavirus and its related disease, COVID19), but any future virus or other contagion (including accidents involving a health risk to the community), that might require action on the part of the church in order to help protect its members and the community. It covers both monitoring procedures and the protocols that will be put into place once a health risk is identified.

*Monitoring procedures*

The following procedures will be put in place for monitoring this, or any, health risk to the congregation, the building users or the community in general:

1. The church council will identify the website used by the city, county and state to communicate transmission and incidence rates for SARS-CoV2 or any potential health risk, as well as best practices for reducing the spread of the disease. For the SARS-CoV2 virus
   1. The city of Geneva website is: <https://www.geneva.il.us/1305/Coronavirus>
   2. The county website is: <https://www.kanehealth.com/>
   3. The state of Illinois website is: <http://dph.illinois.gov/covid19>
   4. Additional informative websites: <https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/s/county-map>
   5. Additional Informative websites: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
   6. Additional Informative Websites:
2. The church will use the advice and recommendations of health experts at the state and local level to determine at what point we should be on our Action Plan.
3. We will periodically church membership data (twice a year) to make sure that we have a current email address *and* phone number for all adult members or friends, as well as any individuals or families that may have been visiting often enough that they should be notified of changes in the action plan.

*Action Plan*

The church council will take action, in relation to any health threat to the congregation, building users, or community based on the current Action Level, as outlined below:

1. Action Level: Green – The church and its building are operating normally, with no risk to the life or health of the congregation or community.
   1. No procedures are necessary to protect members, building users or the community.
   2. No gathering limitations for meetings or events.
   3. The congregation (Members, friends and visitors who have come frequently enough to warrant notification) will be notified when we have moved from Yellow to Green via email only.
   4. Sunday school and nursery care can proceed as usual.
2. Action Level: Yellow – A virus or other threat is detected/present, but both the risk of transmission is low and the risk of death from the disease or other threat is low. An example of this would be normal seasonal flus in the winter. The following procedures will be instituted:
   1. In addition to regular weekly cleaning, the church building will be disinfected weekly with an electrostatically sprayed disinfectant (all high touch surfaces around the building as well all toys/games in the nursery area).
   2. Hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes will be placed at the entrance to the sanctuary.
   3. Sensible social distancing protocols will be suggested (same household families should sit together rather than spread out, people should be encouraged to stand several feet apart when talking or meeting, indoor meetings should be shortened or held online where convenient).
   4. Frequent had washing will be encouraged and additional supplies of soap will be put out in all the bathrooms and kitchen sinks.
   5. Sunday school and nursery care are still permissible.
   6. We will switch to an individually wrapped communion wafer and cup.
   7. The offering plate will not be passed but will be station at the entrance to the sanctuary. Online giving will be encouraged.
   8. The congregation will be encouraged to stay home if they are not feeling well in any way, regardless of the reason.
3. Action Level: Orange – A virus or other threat is detected/present, and the risk of transmission is moderate and/or the risk of death from the disease is moderate, and the county or state is suggesting limiting the size of indoor gatherings. An example of this would be the current Coronavirus outbreak. In addition to the Yellow Action Level procedures, the following *additional* procedures will be instituted:
   1. Everyone in the congregation will be notified that we have moved from a Yellow Action Level to and Orange Action Level, and that new procedures will be in place. Notifications will be both online (website notice and email blast) and via phone call from the church office.
   2. Non-essential meetings will move to Zoom (all church board meetings except church council meetings or pastoral search committee – if applicable – meetings). Participants in essential meetings must sit at least 6 feet apart, must wear face masks in the building, and are encouraged to meet outside whenever possible.
   3. Building users will be encouraged to cancel meetings or move them to an online platform whenever possible. If they need to continue to meet in the building, they must agree to practice safe social distancing (all participants at least 6 feet apart) and must wear masks inside the building.
   4. Church services may be held inside the building, but only when gatherings of 50 people or more are allowed in the Kane County area. If gatherings are allowed, but the number is limited to less than 50 people the church will consider itself still at a Red Action Level.
   5. Hymnals and bibles will be packed away, and the entire Sunday bulletin will be projected for the congregation to follow along.
   6. Singing along with hymns will not be permitted during services. The words to the hymns will be projected along with the bulletin, so that people can read along or hum along only.
   7. Masks *must* be worn inside the building.
   8. Families will be asked to maintain a six-foot distance, in all directions, from other families.
   9. Personal safety bands will be used. These bands will help everyone in the congregation understand how their fellow members feel from a physical safety point of view, so that each member can participate in Church in a way that feels safe for them personally, without having to explain their position to every person they come across.
   10. Coffee hour will be held outside when weather permits but will not be held at all if weather does not permit.
   11. The Sunday bulletin will be posted to our online bulletin blog, so that members at higher risk can enjoy services from home, until the risk level moves back to green.
   12. No nursery care will be provided, and children will not be allowed in the nursery area. No Sunday school will be provided. Children will need to stay with their parents in church and will be allowed to bring a phone or tablet with headphones on which they can watch a movie or play games.
4. Action Level: Red – A virus or other threat is detected/present, and the risk of transmission and/or death from the disease is high, and the county or state is requesting residents stay at home except for essential travel (groceries, essential work, etc). The following procedures will be implemented:
   1. The church building will be closed, and all church staff will work from home.
   2. The congregation will be notified by both email and phone call of the change in Action Level, and reminded that this means services and activities have been suspended.
   3. Church services will be conducted online only through the church’s WordPress bulletin blog.
   4. Outside users of the church building must cancel or postpone all planned events.
   5. All church sponsored meetings will move to Zoom.