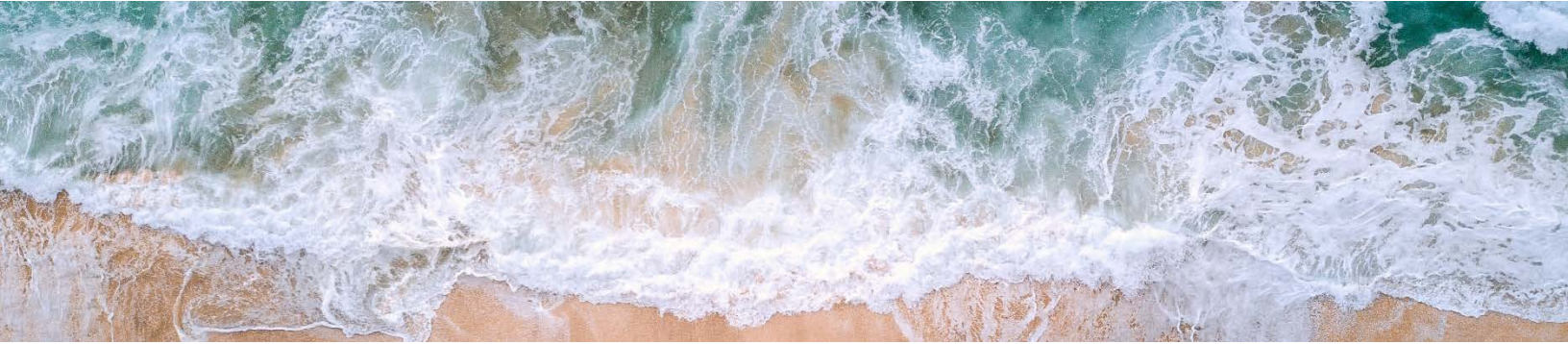


FAITH-BASED COMMUNITY FACTSHEET

Guidelines and Recommendations for COVID-19 Response



COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS

As we move through our COVID-19 response, here are some considerations and guidelines from Vilas County Public Health Department for our faith-based community.

★ SAFEST & BEST PRACTICE: VIRTUAL SERVICES

Providing virtual services is still the safest and recommended practice.

- **Continue to provide virtual services.** Religious entities are encouraged to use technology to the greatest extent possible to avoid meeting in person. Beyond this recommendation we are promoting continued virtual practice because it is a public health best practice. Because we have community spread in Wisconsin, this recommendation lowers individual exposure and protects others.
- **Promote everyday prevention measures.** Include reminders in bulletins, programs, and other materials about staying home when sick, covering cough/sneezes with tissues, and washing hands.
- **Continue providing important and essential community service and support.** Uses of the faith space covered by other areas of the Safe at Home orders, such as childcare facilities, pantries, or wellness support meetings should continue to function under guidance and regulations for those activities.

SAFER OPTION: OUTDOOR AND PARKING LOT SERVICES

While virtual services are safest and best practice, if you plan to host an outdoor or parking-lot service, please follow these precautions:

- **Ask people to stay home** if they are sick or if they have had contact with anyone who has confirmed or probable COVID-19 illness. If you leave your home, assume you are being exposed to COVID-19.
- **Limit person-to-person contact.** Ask people to stay in their cars, park away from one another, and keep windows up. Folks should not gather, even outdoors. Recommend that people to use the bathroom before they come to the service to limit use of indoor space. Using shared restrooms poses a significant risk for infection.
- **Ask people to wear a face covering.** These are an additional tool to prevent people with the virus who don't have symptoms from spreading the virus.

- **Avoid shared surfaces.** Please use an electronic or mail-in donation method and do not touch hands or mouths to any common surfaces including sacred objects, or texts. If you must share food or drink ceremonially do not use a shared vessel. Place single use items on the car or other surface for the recipient to take. Anyone sharing items should wear a cloth face covering, and wash or sanitize hands between any contact with people or surfaces.

NOT RECOMMENDED: IN-PERSON, INDOOR SERVICES

Although not recommended, if you have to hold in-person, indoor services, please consider these guidelines:

- **Shorten the length of the service.** Services held indoors should be completed as quickly as possible. Consider adding additional services to help limit the number of attendees and stagger times of entering and exiting the building to limit contact.
- **Sick individuals and vulnerable populations should stay home.** Encourage staff and church members who are symptomatic or have had contact with a COVID positive person, not enter the place of worship. Anyone with symptoms should get tested for COVID-19.
- **Limit the amount of people allowed in the building.**
- **Adopt safe practices for childcare.** Individuals living in the same household should stay together as much as possible. Childcare during services is highly discouraged.
- **Continue to promote strong everyday prevention measures,** like washing your hands and covering your cough. Attendees should not touch each other (for example, do not shake hands or hug). Keep people who do not live together at least six feet apart at all times.
- **Attendees should wear a face covering.** These are an additional tool to prevent people who don't have symptoms from spreading the virus.
- **Avoid shared surfaces.** Consider using an electronic or mail-in donation methods and do not touch hands or mouths to any common surfaces including sacred objects, or texts. If you must share food or drink ceremonially do not use a shared vessel. Place single use items on a surface for the recipient to take while maintaining social distancing. Anyone sharing items should wear a face covering, and wash or sanitize hands between any contact with people or surfaces.
- **Strongly urge no singing or choirs** as this can dramatically exacerbate the spread of COVID-19. We recommend eliminating communal singing or chanting from your gathering.
- **Increase cleaning and disinfection of the facility,** to limit staff and public exposure to COVID-19. Also, adopt protocols to clean and disinfect in the event of a positive COVID-19 case in the building.
- **Make a plan.** The CDC guidance, The Secure Community Network, WI Council of Churches, and other resources exist to help you plan and think through questions to keep your faith community safe.

For COVID-19 confirmed case and contact scenarios and recommendations, please see the Vilas County Public Health Department General Business Factsheet.