

COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for Edina Morningside Church

Edina Morningside Community Church United Church of Christ (“Edina Morningside Church” or “EMC”) is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff, members, friends, volunteers, guests and visitors (collectively referred to as “stakeholders”). To ensure we have a safe and healthy community, Edina Morningside Church has developed the following COVID-19 Preparedness Plan in response to the pandemic. All stakeholders are responsible for implementing this plan. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 in our church facility and communities, which requires full cooperation among our staff and stakeholders. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of all persons in our church and community.

The COVID-19 Preparedness Plan is administered by the COVID-19 Task Force at the direction of the Vision Council, who maintains the overall authority and responsibility for the plan. However, all staff and stakeholders are equally responsible for supporting, implementing, complying with and providing recommendations to further improve all aspects of this COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. Edina Morningside Church’s staff, Vision Council and ministry volunteers have our full support in enforcing the provisions of this plan. The COVID-19 Task Force will also review state guidelines and other developments to recommend further modifications of this plan to the Vision Council.

Our staff and church community are our most important assets. Edina Morningside Church cares greatly about promoting safety and health for our staff, members, friends, volunteers, and visitors. We have involved our staff and community in this process by conferring with the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ, gaining input from staff, convening collaborative task force meetings with church leaders, and receiving feedback from the church’s Vision Council.

Edina Morningside Church’s COVID-19 Preparedness Plan follows industry guidance developed by the state of Minnesota, which is based upon Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines for COVID-19, Stay Safe MN guidelines, Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MNOSHA) statutes, rules and standards, and Minnesota’s relevant and current executive orders. It addresses:

- ensuring sick staff and stakeholders stay home and identification and isolation of sick persons;
- social distancing – staff and stakeholders must remain at least six feet apart;
- staff and stakeholder hygiene and source controls;
- building and ventilation protocol;
- cleaning and disinfection protocol;
- drop-off, pick-up and delivery practices and protocol; and
- communications and training practices and protocol.

Edina Morningside Church has reviewed and incorporated the industry guidance applicable provided by the state of Minnesota for the development of this plan, including the “**Industry Guidance for Safe Reopening: Faith-Based Communities, Places of Worship, Weddings and Funerals**”. Other documents used for discernment include protocols produced by the state of Minnesota, United Church of Christ, Minnesota Council of Churches and the Centers for Disease Control.

Ensure the health and welfare of staff and stakeholders

Workers have been informed of and encouraged to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Policies and procedures are being implemented to assess workers’ health status prior to entering the workplace and for workers to report when they are sick or experiencing symptoms. All staff and other

stakeholders are asked to sign-in upon arriving on the premises, review a Health Screening Checklist and attest that they have none of the symptoms listed there. Symptomatic staff and stakeholders will be sent home immediately, urged to stay away from other people, and advised to contact their health care provider. Staff members who suspend work due to COVID-19 symptoms are asked to notify the Pastor via email, phone call or text. The Pastor will maintain communication with and gather information from staff who may be ill, so as to maintain the privacy of staff. In the case of the Pastor's absence, the Church Moderator will serve in such roles.

Staff members are encouraged to stay home when they or household members are unwell. Standard leave policies will be in effect, and staff are encouraged to work remotely when possible while in quarantine. When appropriate, the Church Administrator or Pastor may conduct contact tracing interviews to ensure appropriate steps have been taken to address the potential for exposure, and to ensure proper cleaning and sanitizing procedures have been followed. Information about any staff member or stakeholder will be held in confidence unless permission is given to share in public. Otherwise, only those with a legitimate need to know (in order to manage other staff or church protocols regarding the health and safety of others) will be notified of essential information.

Social distancing for sanctuary space

Maintaining social distancing of at least six feet will be a vital part of creating a healthy sanctuary environment. Ushers will be trained to help worship participants ensure safer practices in the sanctuary. Ushers will assist in the flow of movement before, during and after a worship service. Church entrances and exits will be limited to the main entrance and the elevator entrance. Procedures may require restrictions or adjustments on higher-risk worship activities, and pews will be marked to define appropriate social distancing. Those gathering for worship will be limited in time allowed in the building before and after worship.

Staff and stakeholder personal hygiene

Basic infection prevention measures are being implemented throughout the building at all times. Hygiene protocols are provided to staff, church members, visitors, volunteers and guests. Handwashing with soap and water will occur frequently during time spent in the church building. Hygiene signage reinforces the importance of covering coughs and sneezes, vigorous hand-washing, use of face coverings, and the use of hand-sanitizers when hand washing is not practical. Face coverings that cover both nose and mouth are expected to be worn by all stakeholders, and will be made available to those who do not have one. In individual offices, staff may choose to remove face coverings as long as no other person is sharing that space.

Church building and ventilation protocol

Operation of the church building includes necessary sanitation, assessment and maintenance of building systems, including water, plumbing, electrical, and heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems. Heat for the building is supplied via boiler/radiators. There is a licensed Boiler Operator on site who operates and maintains the system. The maximum amount of fresh air is being brought into the workplace, air recirculation is being limited to 3 air conditioning units in the building, and ventilation systems in both the lower level kitchen and the Sanctuary are not being used. All other ventilation is accomplished via opening windows. Steps are also being taken to minimize air flow blowing across people by not using oscillating fans, box fans or the six ceiling fans in the building.

Church cleaning and disinfection protocol

Regular practices of cleaning and disinfecting have been implemented, including a schedule for routine cleaning and disinfecting of work surfaces, equipment, tools and machinery, and areas in the work environment, including worship spaces, restrooms, classrooms, meeting rooms, staff offices, and drop-off and pick-up locations. Frequent cleaning and disinfecting is being conducted of high-touch areas, including phones, keyboards, touch screens, controls, door handles, elevator panels, railings, copy machines, audio-visual equipment, pew tops, delivery equipment, etc. A contract cleaning service has been hired to provide these services. Appropriate and effective cleaning and disinfecting supplies have been purchased and are available for use.

Drop-off, pick-up and delivery practices and protocol

Whenever possible, packages are left at the front door for the Church Administrator to bring into the building. Deliveries within the building are left at a table outside the main office. If a courier or technician needs access to the church building, a face covering is required. All on-site technicians are required to sign in and out, and leave contact information with the Church Administrator.

Communications and training practices and protocol

This COVID-19 Preparedness Plan will be available on the church website and paper copies will be available upon request. Communication of this plan and training will be ongoing quarterly or when deemed necessary. Our COVID-19 Preparedness Plan and information on practices and protocols will be communicated to all staff, church members, friends, volunteers and guests, temporary or seasonal staff, independent contractors, subcontractors, vendors and outside technicians. Training will be provided to all staff and volunteers who did not receive the initial training, and prior to initial assignment or reassignment.

The COVID-19 Task Force will monitor how effectively the program has been implemented. All staff and stakeholders will take an active role and collaborate in carrying out the various aspects of this plan, updating the protections, protocols, procedures and training as necessary. This COVID-19 Preparedness Plan has been reviewed and adopted by the Edina Morningside Church Vision Council. Any updates to the plan or practices and protocols will be communicated to all stakeholders.

Certified by:

Title: Moderator Lisa Lally, on behalf of the Vision Council

Date: September 22, 2020