

# Peoria CRC COVID-19 Protocols

5/13/20 (Updated 7/06/20)

As Peoria CRC implements measures for COVID-19, we are seeking to love God, care for his flock, and love neighbor. To this end, we have adopted the following protocols which are designed to reduce health risk. Even so, the risk is not the same for all in the family, so please keep this in mind as we implement these protocols together and as we seek to honor God and love others.

**Protocol Team:** Janitor, Building Committee Chair, Council Building Committee Representative, Pastor, Council President, and various members in the medical profession. The team will seek to monitor any changes from various authorities and our own practices in order to implement protocols for the church and adjust them as appropriate.

## General communication about Worship

- Please come for worship if you are comfortable in doing so.
- We request anyone who is sick to remain home.
- While wearing masks are not required, anyone who wears them will be appreciated for their desire to further protect themselves and others.
- Please practice appropriate distancing inasmuch as is possible.
- Hand sanitizer is available in various locations throughout the building.
- The church building is not open during the week, with the exception of the janitor, council as needed, those involved in worship, or a specific small group. This will reduce the need for cleaning during the week in preparation for worship.

## Worship Preparation

- Cleaning: The church facility is cleaned each week and high touch areas more frequently.
- Bulletins are available in print in each hallway. They are also e-mailed to all with an e-mail address and mailed to all others.
- We have returned to the use of church mailboxes for monthly information and newsletters. This information is also e-mailed to all with an e-mail address and mailed to all others.

## Entrance to Worship

- We are using east and west entrances. Weather permitting, doors are propped open for entry and exit. Otherwise, greeters will be present to open doors for entry/exit.
- Coats and jackets: You are welcome to take your coats/jackets into the sanctuary to reduce congestion before and after the service in coat hanger areas.
- Seating plan: We are using every other bench to allow for distancing and to simplify cleaning. Benches marked white are used in the morning; benches marked black are used in the evening.
- Bathrooms in the basement are available for use; the drinking fountain is not.

## Worship

- We are providing for audio recordings, YouTube video recordings, and Facebook Live to allow as many as possible to join the body for worship.
- Nursery and attendants are not available at this time.
- Offering plates are not passed during the worship service and are available at east and west exits.

## **After Worship**

- The congregation is asked to exit responsibly, practicing distancing as much as is possible.
- Please fellowship as we love to do! Visiting outside would be best, keeping a little space within and between groups.
- Black coffee and lemonade are served outside on the south driveway following the morning service, as weather permits.

## **In the event of a confirmed case**

If Council receives information that indicates a case of COVID-19 among someone who has physically worshiped or been in the building, Council will follow appropriate cleaning protocols, determine whether it is appropriate to hold a physical worship service the following Sunday, and will communicate accordingly to the congregation. We encourage any family member or others who have been in close contact with someone who has been in contact with a COVID-positive individual to self-quarantine for the recommended time.

## **On what basis has Peoria CRC decided to meet, or not meet, in person for worship?**

1. We should not take the decision to close, or to open, lightly. Both need to be made seriously and with solid doctrinal basis.
2. The default mode for us must be that we adhere to God's call to meet for worship, physically.
3. We have refrained from public worship for a time out of respect for God's appointed authority, and out of love for the church family and our neighbor. There are times when some careful measure of civil disobedience is acceptable or required by God's people, such as when an authority commands something God forbids or forbids something God commands. We are blessed not to be in this situation.
4. While we have resumed public corporate worship, we must still honor God's appointed authorities and love the flock and our neighbor. We will put policies in place which seek to demonstrate this.
5. Lastly, Christian brothers and sisters throughout time and place have taken risks to gather for worship. As we gather for public worship, we are taking some risk as well. We need to be humble, responsible, and know the basis for our actions.