

COVID-19 Safety Guidelines for In-Person Gatherings The Associated Church

Following are the COVID-19 safety guidelines for all in-person gatherings sponsored by the Associated Church beginning August 24, 2021 and until further notice. The health and safety of our staff, volunteers, members and visitors remain our top priorities. We will continue to examine and may modify these guidelines to reflect any updates to public health recommendations and guidance from the CDC and the Minnesota Department of Health.

Participation in activities such as those offered by the Associated Church pose some level of risk to COVID-19 transmission. Participants choosing to engage in Church activities assume that risk.

In the interest of public health & as a sign of the Gospel mandate to love our neighbor, the Associated Church strongly urges all members eligible for vaccination to be vaccinated unless their doctor advises otherwise.

Worship/In-Person Gatherings/Meetings

- Vaccination against COVID-19 for those eligible is strongly encouraged, but not required, for participants in worship, meetings on Associated Church Property, and in activities/programs.
- All participants will be expected to wear a facemask and maintain physical distancing* at all indoor gatherings.
- Food and beverages may be served at indoor gatherings. When food and beverages are served, participants are urged to wear facemasks and maintain physical distancing* while in service lines and to maintain physical distancing* while eating/drinking. Food and beverages should be served to participants by servers who should be gloved in addition to being masked. Masks should be replaced after food and beverage are consumed.
- Associated Church will strive to offer worship, meetings, and programs through the medium best suited to the participants and the content. Worship will be live-streamed, recorded for at-will viewing, and broadcast over local cable. Meetings and programs may be offered strictly over Zoom, only in-person, or through a hybrid model as possible as the Team or organizers determine.
- Receiving an offering and Communion during worship: Regular financial giving will continue to be received through electronic giving and the mail. Special offerings may be received in baskets (or other container) placed on a table at the time of the event/special offering. Communion will continue to be served in a Covid-aware manner as determined by the Worship Ministry Team.
- Congregational singing at indoor worship will be avoided until further notice.

Office Hours/Staff

- Staff and volunteers in the office are expected to wear a mask when outside their individual office unless they are alone in the office suite. They are expected to wear a mask when outside the office suite.

- Staff and volunteers, at their personal comfort and safety, may decline to meet with a vendor, church member, or visitor if that person will not wear a mask. When the visit is scheduled, the staff or volunteer should state their expectation of the vendor, member, or visitor. Staff and volunteers will be supported in this action. This includes intervention by the moderator and/or lead minister as requested by the staff or volunteer.
- Staff or volunteers are required to wear a mask when a member, vendor, or visitor request this for their personal comfort and safety.