

# Gethsemane

LUTHERAN SCHOOL



The mission of Gethsemane Lutheran School is to partner with families to provide a Christian education where academic excellence and faith formation walk hand in hand. We celebrate all students as children of God, nurturing their development in mind, body, and spirit to equip them as servants of Christ in the world.

The current global COVID-19 pandemic has prompted unprecedented reflection on how to best educate children while considering their overall social, emotional, physical, intellectual, and spiritual health. Having deeply considered all these factors, the leadership of Gethsemane Lutheran School has concluded that what is ultimately best for our students and families is that we open the 2020- 2021 school year on-campus and in-person. This re-opening is contingent on having a well thought-out, data-informed system of health and safety protocols implemented from day one.

It is always possible that we may be required by MDH, the state of Minnesota or our National Government's orders to be shut down at some point. If this happens we will transition into a time of distance learning. Teachers will use time in the beginning of the school year to prepare students should such a situation arise.

It is with great joy and thanksgiving that we look forward to, once again, coming together to live, work, and play in Christian Community! The following health and safety protocols reflect just how much we do truly value this opportunity. All of the following policies and procedures are designed to keep both our students and staff healthy, so that we might continue to do school together and in-person. Because Gethsemane exists for students, their health and safety is of paramount concern. However, the safety of faculty and staff, who are in higher risk categories

than students, is also vital, because a healthy staff is critical for our ability to carry on operations and serve students and families. We have all learned that things regularly change, sometimes quickly, in the midst of this pandemic. Therefore, the following procedures and protocols are, of course, subject to change.

## **I. EDUCATION FOR GETHSEMANE FAMILIES**

1. We believe that the best option for students is to be on campus for class five days a week.
2. If this scenario does not work for you and your family you may talk with Mr. Revoir about an alternative plan.

While we believe it is ideal for students to attend school in person and on-campus, we recognize that there may be unique circumstances where parents wish to keep their children at home. Annual tuition is the same for on-campus and stay at home students. To participate in a stay at home program, parents must email Scott Revoir at [srevoir@geth.org](mailto:srevoir@geth.org) by August 25<sup>th</sup> so that a schedule can be prepared for that student.

## **II. BEFORE-SCHOOL SCREENINGS & ENTRANCE PROCEDURES**

Parents are asked to evaluate their children's health every day before sending them to school. Children that have had a fever or vomited within the past 24 hours should remain at home. Every student entering Gethsemane will have their temperatures taken before being allowed to enter their first class of the day. Additionally, any parent or building visitor will have temperatures taken before being allowed entrance.

When students are dropped off parents must walk them inside the front door and sign them in while their temperature is taken. Parents should not leave until their child's temperature has been taken and they have been cleared. This will take place right inside the front entrance of the school doors. Parents should wear a mask when entering the building for any reason.

Following the school day we are asking that parents pick up their child in the car line. Students will be brought out to the front entrance to be picked up. This will be explained in greater detail the first few days of school with many staff giving guidance.

### **III. ENHANCED SANITATION MEASURES**

- Hand sanitizer will be available throughout the school.
- Student desks will be sanitized before each use.
- All common areas and frequently touched surfaces (door handles, counters, trash containers) will be cleaned throughout the day.
- Restrooms will be cleaned twice a day.
- A plan to teach/remind students about healthy sanitation practices will be implemented throughout the year.

### **IV. ENHANCED IN-SCHOOL SAFETY MEASURES**

#### **No Physical Contact**

Students and faculty are to avoid all physical contact with one another. Exceptions to this may be made in PE and extra-curricular activities.

#### **Masks**

Cloth or paper face masks, covering nose and mouth, will be worn by students and visitors at all times while in the building except when eating and drinking, participating in aerobic activities, or outside and distanced. Students should put their mask on prior to exiting their vehicle when they arrive at school. A medical exemption letter must be provided if wearing a mask is problematic due to existing health conditions. A face shield is an acceptable alternative for students with a medical exemption.

#### **Classrooms**

Teachers will use increased spacing between desks and/or tables and arrange seating to maximize distancing at all times. As recommended by the World Health Organization (“Student desks will be at least 3-6 feet apart”) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (“Desks should be

placed 3 to 6 feet apart when feasible”), we will keep desks a minimum of 3 feet apart. All desks will face the front. Students are expected to remain in their seats for the duration of the class period. Only with teacher permission should a student move about the classroom. All student desks and high-touch areas will be sanitized before every class.

### **Hallways**

Hallways should be seen as travel routes, not gathering places. Students will be encouraged to maintain increased spacing as they move through hallways.

### **Restrooms**

Students must wear masks while in restrooms.

### **Drinking Fountains**

Students are encouraged to bring their own water bottles and fill them on a regular basis. The “fountain” function of each drinking fountain will be turned off.

### **Chapel/Assemblies**

There will be no all-school chapels or assemblies where the entire student body gathers in one space. Chapels will be held via zoom meetings or in smaller groups depending on our chapel speaker.

### **Lunch**

Students will eat lunch during one of two periods and be spread out across a larger number of lunchroom tables. This will allow for greater physical distancing.

### **Teachers and Staff**

Teachers and Staff will abide by the same health and safety protocols as students and visitors, with the exception that teachers have the option of wearing a face shield, instead of a mask, while teaching. Protection of these teachers is one of the reasons we require students to wear masks in the classroom.

## **Outdoors**

The outdoors will be used as much as possible.

## **V. BEFORE AND AFTER-SCHOOL PROCEDURES**

Parents are requested to use the before and aftercare program as little as possible during this time. If you have alternative options we would love to limit the number of students in our extended day program. When students are dropped off parents must walk them inside the front door and sign them in while their temperature is taken. Parents should not leave until their child's temperature has been taken and they have been cleared. This will take place right inside the front entrance of the school doors. Parents should wear a mask when entering the building for any reason.

Following the school day we are asking that parents pick up their child in the car line. Students will be brought out to the front entrance to be picked up. Parents who pick their children up from the extended care program should enter the school doors where a staff member will check your child out for the day.

## **VI. EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

We are currently planning to move forward with all extra-curricular activities. Future announcements by the Catholic Athletic Association (CAA) will greatly impact this.

## **VII. PROTOCOLS FOR SUSPECTED OR POSITIVE CASES OF COVID-19**

We follow all MDH guidelines for students and staff who have symptoms or test positive with Covid-19.

Students who exhibit Covid-19 symptoms during the school day will be sent to the nurses office. This space will no longer be used for simple cuts, scrapes, etc. If it is determined that the student needs to go home, they will remain in the isolation room until their parent/guardian can

pick them up. Parents are required to pick students up within an hour from when they are notified. Students sent home with flu-like symptoms must be tested for COVID-19. Parents must notify the school of the test results. Information regarding this test will be kept confidential and will not appear in a student's record. Non-confidential, non-identifying information will be provided to local health officials, staff, and school families in accordance with the American With Disabilities Act (ADA) or the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), as recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. If the student has been ill without testing positive for COVID-19, he/she may not return to school until fever free and symptom-free for 72 hours without the use of over-the-counter medications. Students who test positive for COVID-19 must remain quarantined for 10 days prior to returning to school. Students who live in the same household as the infected person are also required to quarantine themselves for 14 days prior to returning to school. If a parent, sibling attending another school, or anyone else in a student's household should test positive for COVID- 19, that student must quarantine for 14 days prior to returning to school. If the school becomes aware that its own in-school safety protocols were not followed during a time when a student was known to be infected, or that an infected student interacted with other Gethsemane students outside of school in an unsafe manner (more than 15 minutes, unmasked, without physical distancing), all students who interacted with the infected student in an unsafe manner will also be required to self-quarantine for 14 days. Depending on the circumstances larger groups of students may need to be quarantined. Gethsemane requires that all teachers have and enforce a seating chart. To the extent that the school is aware, parents will be notified if their student was within 3-6 feet, for more than 15 minutes, of a student who is known to have tested positive for COVID-19. Please Note: We know that the majority of our students care deeply about their academics. They hate to miss school for fear of "falling behind". This may be especially frustrating for a student asked to self-quarantine while feeling perfectly fine. Students who are sick or self-quarantined, will be contacted by their teacher to attempt to keep the students caught up on their school work.

## VIII. HOW YOU CAN HELP

- **Please regularly pray for our students, teachers, staff, and families.**

Pray for safety, health, wisdom, and the Joy of the Lord to transform even the greatest challenges of this year.

- **Please be patient and gracious with our administration, teachers, and students.**

They are all attempting to do their best to serve students and families in incredibly challenging times.

- **Volunteer**

There is a need for volunteers who are able to commit to helping. If interested in learning more, please contact Scott Revoir at [srevoir@geth.org](mailto:srevoir@geth.org).

- **Please share about Gethsemane with families who might like to learn more.**

Public-school families may become interested in other options once public school's plans for the fall are announced. A positive word from a trusted friend or colleague is the number-one reason why families consider transferring schools.

- **Consider donating.**

We are accepting donations to the Gethsemane Lutheran Coronavirus Assistance Fund. This fund allows for tuition grants to Gethsemane families who have significant need because of lost income due to the coronavirus.

We live in turbulent times. Stress, anxiety, and depression are on the rise. Heated divisions over culture, politics, and even how to respond to COVID-19 all too often bring out the worst in people. Young people are not immune to any of this. But praise be to our God! It is, in fact, in times like this that the Gospel of Jesus shines all the more brightly! "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God!" says our God (Isaiah 41:10). There are many things about this upcoming school year that are not ideal and will be hard for both students and faculty alike. We know this and will acknowledge this. But even more, into the very hardest aspects of this coming year, we will creatively and consistently speak the Joy of the Lord. "The joy of the Lord is our

Strength” (Nehemiah 8:10). This joy is the very power of God. We know that this joy will take even the greatest challenges of this year and transform them into vehicles of life! The mission of Gethsemane will be fulfilled. God will use this year, perhaps even more than in years past, to lead, teach, and inspire students to become all that He would have them be!

Below you will find Gethsemane’s procedure on Covid-19 exposure.



### Procedure on COVID-19 Exposure

#### **Symptoms of COVID-19 include:**

- New onset cough or shortness of breath by themselves OR at least 2 of the following:
  - Fever (100.4°F or higher)
  - Chills
  - Muscle pain
  - Sore throat
  - Fatigue
  - Congestion
  - Loss of sense of smell or taste
  - or gastrointestinal symptoms of diarrhea, vomiting, or nausea.
- If a person has a new symptom (for example, new loss of smell only) with no other diagnosis to explain it, they should follow MDH and CDC guidance and do the following:
  - Stay home, or go home immediately and talk to their health care provider about testing for COVID-19, even if it is the only symptom they are experiencing
  - Notify their supervisor
  - Do not leave the home except to see medical care
  - Separate themselves from other people in the home, using a separate bathroom, if possible
  - Follow guidelines found here: <https://mn.gov/covid19/for-minnesotans/if-sick/>

If an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) will interview the person to determine the exact date of onset of symptoms, close contacts, and provide them with health education and instruction. If MDH identifies that the employee may have exposed coworkers, volunteers, or children during their



infectious period, they will work with the local public health department and may also contact coworkers, volunteers, or parents of the children to ensure that close contacts receive adequate information regarding their exposure.

### **What to do if an employee has COVID-19**

When a supervisor is informed of an employee with COVID-19 (or assumed by a health care provider), work in collaboration with the Department Director, Director of Operations, and the Senior Pastor to do the following:

- **Notify your Department Head, Director of Operations, and Senior Pastor**
- **Identify locations where the employee had been working**
- **Identify individuals who had close contact with the employee**
- **Notify Maintenance team**
- **Notify close contacts and department staff**
- **Complete an Accident-Injury Report**
  
- **Contact your Department Head, Director of Operations (Frank Marchio), and the Senior Pastor.**
  - Include the name of the employee and date of symptom onset and/or date of positive test result.
- **Identify locations where the employee had been working.**
  - The Director will work with the employee with COVID-19 to gather a list of locations where the employee had been working 48 hours prior to having symptoms through their remaining time at work.
  - Include all locations the employee frequented in that time period including rest rooms, building entrances, lunch room, etc.
- **Identify individuals who had close contact with the employee**
  - The Director will work with the employee with COVID-19 to identify individuals who had close contact\* (less than 6 feet for more than 15 minutes) with the employee with COVID-19, during the time the employee was symptomatic, and in the 48 hours prior to being symptomatic.
    - According to the CDC: Data are limited to define close contact. Factors to consider when defining close contact include proximity, the duration of exposure (e.g., longer exposure time likely increases exposure risk), whether the individual has symptoms (e.g., coughing likely increases exposure risk) and whether the individual was wearing a facemask (which can efficiently block respiratory secretions from contaminating the environment).
- **Notify Maintenance Team**
  - Notify Randy Travers, indicating an employee in your department has COVID-19.
  - Include a list of locations, identified above, that the employee with COVID-19 had been working 48 hours prior to having symptoms through their remaining time at work. **Do not share the employee's name.**

- **Notify close contacts and department staff**
  - The CDC advises that employers should inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace, but maintain confidentiality as required by the Minnesota Data Practices Act.
  - Notifying employees with close contact with the employee with COVID-19 (close contacts)
  - The Senior Pastor will notify employees identified as close contacts by phone or in writing using guidance by the MDH. The MDH or public health may also notify these employees to provide additional quarantine guidance. Close contacts will be asked to quarantine at home for 14 days and monitor for symptoms.
    - Guidance: [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/contact.pdf](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/contact.pdf)
  - Notifying other employees (including those in the same department) who may have come into contact with the employee with COVID-19.
    - The Department Head, in coordination with the Senior Pastor, will instruct fellow employees about the employee with COVID-19 using guidance from the MDH. Staff will be advised how to proceed based on the CDC Public Health Recommendations for Community-Related Exposure, including ongoing symptom watch.
- **Complete an Accident-Injury Report**
  - The Director will complete an Accident-Injury Report if the COVID-19 exposure is a result of work activities.  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1skXGlvCjO-EKhz8w8T4tRnRUolpXfz5l/view?usp=sharing>

## People exposure scenarios

People (e.g. children, teachers, or staff) who received a laboratory test for COVID-19

**Positive test result:** Stay home at least 10 days since symptoms first appeared AND until no fever for at least 24 hours without medication AND improvements of other symptoms. Employees diagnosed with a confirmed COVID-19 case must notify their director of their positive test. They should not work in the building, but can continue to work from home if they are not sick.

Siblings and household members also stay at home for 14 days.

**Negative test result but symptoms with no other diagnosis:** Stay home at least 10 days since symptoms first appeared AND until no fever for at least 24 hours without medication AND improvement of other symptoms.

Siblings and household members also stay at home for 14 days.

People with a COVID-19 diagnosis without a lab test OR people with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 without a medical evaluation (e.g. monitoring symptoms at home)

Stay home at least 10 days since symptoms first appeared AND until no fever for at least 24 hours without medication AND improvement of other symptoms.

Siblings and household members also stay at home for 14 days.

For people with other diagnoses (e.g. norovirus, strep throat) that explain the symptoms, or when a health-care provider says symptoms are connected to a pre-existing condition

Stay home until symptoms have improved. Follow specific return guidance from the health care provider or follow the Infectious Diseases in Childcare Settings and School Manual ([www.hennepin.us/daycaremanual](http://www.hennepin.us/daycaremanual))

Reference: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/exguide.pdf>

### Employees exposed to lab-confirmed COVID-19 case

If the department learns that an employee was potentially exposed to a confirmed COVID-19 case (from an employee with COVID-19 or from their local health department), the department should encourage the employee to follow all quarantine recommendations related to the exposure.

- Stay at home by following the “People Exposure Scenarios” above.
- If an employee does not have symptoms and is able to do work from home, but is asked to quarantine, allow the employee to work from home.
- If the employee cannot work from home and is asymptomatic, there may be a temporary assignment to work from home as given by the supervisor.
- The employee should adhere to the following practices prior to and during their working hours:
  - Pre-screen: Employer may create a system whereby they can measure the employee’s temperature and assess symptoms prior to the employee starting work. Ideally, the screening would be done prior to the employee entering the work facility. As an alternative, the employee could be asked to take their temperature at home and report it upon arrival.

- If the employee's temperature is elevated, the employee should either go home or stay home and report it to their supervisor.
- o Regular Monitoring: Throughout the day the employee should monitor their symptoms, and immediately report if they develop any. If the employee develops symptoms while at work, they should leave immediately and seek testing.
- o Wear a mask: The employee must wear a facemask while in the workplace.
- o Social distance: Employee's workspace should be rearranged to allow for 6-foot radius of distance between employee and others.
- o Disinfect and clean common spaces: Departments should work with Maintenance Services to ensure that all areas such as bathrooms, frequently touched surfaces, etc. are cleaned and disinfected routinely.
- o Do not share equipment: Equipment such as computers, phones, etc. should not be shared by the employee with other staff.

Reference: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/returntowork.pdf>

### Options for leave

There are many leave options available to employees who are not able to work, including the paid Federal Emergency COVID Sick Leave. If an employee has used their Federal Emergency COVID Sick Leave, employees may use their accrued sick, vacation, or paid time off. Below is Gethsemane Lutheran's Leave policy:

- Every staff or volunteer will stay home if they are experiencing any suspected COVID-19 symptoms, a family member is experiencing any suspected COVID-19 symptoms, or at risk for higher susceptibility to becoming infected from or experiencing adverse effects from COVID-19.
- Every staff person in a situation described above, will receive two weeks of their average full pay followed by up to ten weeks of two-thirds of said pay
- Every staff person will not be required to use PTO while they are subject to a situation described above
- Every staff person will be able to return to their previous position.

Accommodations for workers with underlying medical conditions or who have household members with underlying health conditions have been implemented.

- Every staff or volunteer will stay home if they have an underlying medical condition or who have household members with underlying health conditions

- Every staff person in a situation described above, will receive two weeks of their average full pay followed by up to ten weeks of two-thirds of said pay
- Every staff person will not be required to use PTO while they are subject to a situation described above
- Every staff person will be able to return to their previous position

Reminder: You must keep information about employees' medical conditions confidential.