

**Northern Light United Church (NLUC)
COVID-19 – BE SAFE Plan (DRAFT Updated July 8, 2021)**

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Northern Light United Church will follow the most conservative guidance provided by the City and Borough of Juneau, the State of Alaska, or the CDC regarding capacity, social-distancing, and other COVID-19 mitigation strategies. The following are conditions for re-opening the building for in-person worship and other building use. Specific requirements may be modified by the Pastor in consultation with and notification to the Council consistent with CDC guidelines and applicable local, state, and federal law or Executive Orders.

Section 1. In-Person Worship, Sacraments, and Ceremonies

Northern Light is committed to providing a hybrid worship service into the future to allow all worshippers to participate meaningfully in worship. We will continue offering a Zoom link to worship and have secured additional technology to enhance the worship experience.

In-person attendance will occur at services, sacraments, and ceremonies under the following terms and conditions:

- a) **Capacity:** The limit will be 75 people allowed in the church at a time preceding, during and after the worship service. For events in the sanctuary, this includes 50 persons in the sanctuary and 25 in Fellowship Hall. This includes worshippers, pastors, musicians, staff and volunteers who perform technical tasks to ensure that those worshipping at home as well as in the sanctuary may participate.
- b) **Reservations:** All those wishing to be seated in the sanctuary or Fellowship Hall may register in advance but will not be required to register unless there is a concern about exceeding maximum capacity. Worshippers may register on the NLUC website or call the church office. Priority will be given to those who have not been participating, or have difficulty participating in the Zoom services and also newcomers to NLUC.
- c) **Sign in:** All worshippers and participants will be asked to sign in each time they come to church, indicating that they agree with the requirements in the BE SAFE Plan.
- d) **Vaccines:** It is recommended that those participating in the worship service will have received COVID-19 vaccines.
- e) **Social distancing and masks:** Social distancing of at least 6 feet between people not members of the same household or the same social bubble and wearing masks will continue to be required. Pews will be marked to allow adequate distance between worshippers. Chairs may be set up in Fellowship Hall to maintain 6 feet of distance between household groups. Everyone must wear masks unless they are exempt under the Plan Section 4.b. Participants (pastor, soloist, readers) may remove their mask for speaking or singing.
- f) **Cleaning between services/events:** Current CDC guidance indicates that cleaning once a day is sufficient if no people who have been confirmed or suspected to have COVID have been present. Volunteers will wipe down touch points such as door handles, light switches, stair rails and elevator buttons after each service.
- g) **Singing and Music:** Communal quiet singing will be allowed as long as participants wear masks. No choral performances will be allowed. One soloist may sing without a mask for special music as allowed per CDC and denomination guidelines (at least 15 feet from other participants or worshippers per NW Coast Presbytery guidelines from

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Washington). Music may also be provided by piano, organ, or string instruments. No wind or brass instruments may be used.

- h) **People movement & preventing bottlenecks:** We will have at least one trained usher to greet folks, help direct them to available seats, and ask them to not congregate in the entry way. Upon the end of the service, the usher will dismiss each row at a time to ensure social distancing. Access to coat racks will be disallowed as they are a choke point for adequate social distancing. A receiving line to greet the pastor will be outside or in a more open area of the church to promote social distancing.
- i) **Childcare:** No childcare will be provided but families with small children may sit in the Fellowship Hall if they wish. Social distancing must be maintained between family units. Snacks for children may be provided by the family but may not be shared with others.
- j) **Communion:** Until further notice, we will be using prepackaged individual Communion elements. They will be consecrated during the service and handed out to worshippers in their pews or as they enter or leave the building. Elements may then be consumed in the pews or after they leave the building. On-line worshippers will continue to provide their own elements which also will be consecrated in the service.
- k) **Food:** There will be no communal food/fellowship during or after worship. No food or drink except water is allowed in the sanctuary. If snacks are provided, they will be prepackaged and be handed out by the usher(s) as worshippers leave the building. They can then be consumed in the car or when the worshipper is home.

Section 2. Other Church Use

Any other use of the building, whether church-related events such as Youth Group, meetings, or any special events, must comply with the requirements of this Plan.

- a) Capacity of the room used will be limited to maintaining a distance of at least 6 feet between persons not of the same household or social bubble.
- b) Participants must meet all social distancing requirements and must wear masks except for actual eating or drinking. If food or beverages are offered, pre-packaged or single-serve portions may be used. In case of food prepared to be served, servings must be pre-plated and may not be served buffet-style. Food must be served by a person wearing a mask and gloves.
- c) All other applicable conditions applying to in-person worship will be applied to other building uses in other spaces.
- d) A small group of adults or youth (no more than 20) may meet without masks if all indicate that they are vaccinated and are comfortable meeting without masks. This applies primarily to groups that meet regularly and have a key contact identified who will communicate the church policy in a way that does not require anyone to disclose vaccination status publicly and will ensure that if anyone is uncomfortable, all will wear masks. Anyone may continue to wear masks at their own discretion. Summer lunch preparers **MUST** continue to wear masks for the rest of the 2021 summer lunch program.
- e) Small ensemble singing groups (no more than 20) may meet for practice or recording without masks if all are vaccinated and maintain social distance of at least 6 feet.

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Section 3. Other Building Users

Any group that wishes to use the building must make a request in writing in which the following topics are addressed:

- a) An addendum will be attached to the Building Use Agreement that specifies how the user will comply with this BE SAFE Plan.
- b) The Building Use Agreement and/or Addendum must include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - i. Proposed dates and times and description of activity;
 - ii. Description of the space in the building proposed to be used (i.e., Skuse Room, Fellowship Hall), which entrance will be used, and whether the elevator will be needed;
 - iii. Name and title of who will be responsible for the use, including
 - assuring compliance with the NLUC BE SAFE Plan and the Building Use Agreement and Addendum;
 - notifying the NLUC BE SAFE Plan Coordinator of incidents in which a user experienced symptoms while in the building or received a positive result from a COVID-19 test within 3 days of being in the building; and
 - the plan for satisfying requirement for keeping track of everyone who comes into the building and maintenance of a contact tracing list that is available to NLUC for at least two weeks.
- c) Requests for building use will be reviewed by the chair of the Worship & Building Use Task Force to ensure compliance with this Plan. The chair will recommend to the Pastor to either approve the use as requested, to request revisions to the plan, or to deny the request if not compliant with the provisions of this Plan.

Section 4. Universal Safety Requirements

- a) No one may enter the Church building without additional clearance if they:
 - have had a fever within the past 72 hours;
 - have been confirmed with COVID-19;
 - are currently experiencing or have recently experienced, any acute respiratory illness symptoms such as fever, dry cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, or new loss of taste or smell; or
 - have been in close contact within the previous 14 days with anyone who has been confirmed positive for COVID-19 or has been ill with symptoms of COVID-19.
- b) Everyone entering the building must:
 - sign in each time they enter the building indicating agreement (both for themselves and for any children for whom they are responsible) with the above and following requirements, and
 - use hand sanitizer or wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after signing in.

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- maintain physical/social distancing of at least 6 feet at all times unless they are members of the same household or social bubble.
 - wear a mask at all times unless under the age of 2 years or a health care provider has determined the person has a medical condition that precludes safely wearing a mask.
- c) Only persons from the same household or social bubble may be in the elevator at a time.
- d) Signs will be posted
- i. at each entrance:
 - reminding users about the need to sign in, wash or sanitize hands, wear a mask, and maintain social distancing; and
 - identifying who to contact in case of questions or issues.
 - ii. in each bathroom and by the handwashing sink in the kitchen describing recommended protocols for effective handwashing.
- e) Compliance with the BE SAFE Plan is important to assuring everyone’s safety. When safety requirements of this Plan are not being followed, a person responsible for compliance will (1) ask politely for compliance; (2) provide a reminder that continued participation or presence in the church building is dependent on compliance; (3) escort the individual from the building if compliance is not forthcoming; and (4) terminate the activity if compliance cannot be achieved.
- f) Incident reporting is critical to assuring prompt response. A report shall be made, as soon as possible, to the person responsible for the activity or the BE SAFE Plan Coordinator, if a person experiences symptoms of COVID-19 while in the building or receives a positive result for a COVID-19 test taken within 3 days of being in the building.
- g) If a person experiences symptoms of COVID-19 while in the building steps will be taken to respond to the person with the symptoms (and others in the same household or social bubble) and to assure the safety of others in the building.
- i. The person
 - will be asked to leave the building and given assistance, as needed (including calling 911, if it appears immediate medical attention is necessary);
 - will be asked to obtain a COVID-19 test and offered assistance to ensure they can;
 - will be encouraged to self-quarantine while waiting for test results and to follow advice of their health care provider or the Alaska Department of Health & Social Services while waiting; and
 - will be asked to notify the BE SAFE Plan Coordinator of the outcome of the COVID-19 test.
 - ii. Anyone in close contact with the person during the response to the symptoms will be asked to wash their hands immediately and leave the building and encouraged to self-quarantine and consult with their health care provider or the Alaska Department of Health & Social Services.

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- iii. The person responsible for the event will decide whether the activity may continue or should be immediately terminated. The factors to consider are the extent and length of contact by the person with symptoms with others in the building. Breaches of the requirements of mask wearing and social distancing would justify terminating the activity. The BE SAFE Plan Coordinator may be consulted and shall be informed of the decisions.

- h) If a person became ill with symptoms of COVID-19 while in the building or received a positive result from a COVID-19 test taken within 3 days of being in the building, the areas of the building where the person was should be kept vacant for 24 hours, then cleaned and sanitized or disinfected thoroughly following the procedures in Section 5.

- i) The BE SAFE Plan Coordinator or other designee of NLUC will inform the Northwest Coast Presbytery Executive Presbyter and the Alaska United Methodist Conference Superintendent of confirmed incidents associated with COVID-19 and how they were addressed.

Section 5. Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting

The NLUC custodian is largely responsible for cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting at NLUC. However, everyone who uses the building should be familiar with the standards and do their part to ensure the building is safe, as well as meeting any requirements in a Special Use Addendum.

- a) Any food contact surfaces must be sanitized with a bleach solution of 100 ppm before use. This is ½ teaspoon per quart. **Any more bleach than that may cause unsafe levels of chlorine to remain on the food.** This includes the kitchen sinks, counters, refrigerator/freezers. According to Centers for Disease Controls (CDC), “currently, there is no evidence to suggest that handling food or consuming food is associated with COVID-19.”
- b) On all other surfaces, sanitizing requires use of a bleach solution of 1/3 cup per gallon (or 4 teaspoons per quart). These surfaces include bathroom fixtures, door handles, railings, light switches, floors, tables and chairs, pews, and anywhere else a person might have touched. The NLUC custodian is principally responsible for disinfecting these other surfaces at the NLUC site. The custodian will clean and disinfect ideally on Monday morning and Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday afternoons, or other schedule subject to adjustments made by the pastor based on building use.
- c) All bleach solution must be replaced within 24 hours of being mixed. Spray bottles marked for food surfaces and for all other surfaces are available in the kitchen. The date and time bleach solution is mixed will be recorded for each container in which the solution is present.
- d) Everyone who engages in cleaning, sanitizing, or disinfecting must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before and afterwards, even if gloves were worn. Handwashing instructions will be in each restroom and at the handwashing sink and must be followed.

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Section 6. Responsibilities, Contacts, and Questions

- a) All employees and persons entering the building must agree to abide by the requirements in this BE SAFE Plan. All are responsible for compliance with this BE SAFE Plan.
- b) The Church Administrator will be responsible for:
 - i. making copies of this Plan available to all users and anyone who asks about access to the Church building;
 - ii. keeping a sign-in sheet and pens on the table outside the main office;
 - iii. when Summer Lunch is not using the kitchen, keeping a sign-in sheet and pens on the table outside the kitchen door;
 - iv. filing completed sign-in sheets where they are readily available if follow-up with a user or contact tracing is required;
 - v. ensuring that signage is present as described in Section 4.d.
- c) The current BE SAFE Coordinator for NLUC is Myra Munson, myra.munson@outlook.com, 206-795-2972. She should be informed of any questions, concerns, or COVID-19 risk or exposure concerns.
- d) General Questions. Email or call the Northern Light United Church at nluc@ak.net or 907-586-3131.