

Countryside SDA Church Guidelines For Reopening

The Church Board chose a committee to come up with guidelines for reopening the Countryside SDA Church. The Committee consists of Pastor Kevin McDaniel, Leo Richey, Jim Hendricks, Kathy Bartholomew and John Brownlee. We considered the Adventist Risk Management Guidelines, State of Washington Guidelines, Centers for Disease Control Guidelines and a very recent Web MD article on *How Long Does the Coronavirus Live on Surfaces?*

Many of the above mentioned guidelines were for churches that had employees onsite 5 to 6 days per week or addresses other situations that we do not have at Countryside SDA church. After discussion we settled upon basing our reopening primarily on the CDC Guidelines (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/faith-based.html>?)

CDC AA refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fphp%2Ffaith-based.html) and the Web MD article mentioned above. (<https://www.webmd.com/lung/how-long-covid-19-lives-on-surfaces>).

Our areas of concern were as follows:

1. Protecting those over 65 who have underlying conditions that place them at a higher risk for catching Covid-19,
2. Establishing limits on how many members can attend church under the State of Washington Guidelines of no more than 50 attendees or 25% of church capacity which ever is smaller,
3. Finding a scientifically reasonable rational for cleaning the church in between weekly Sabbath Services,
- 4, Protecting members from potential contact with Covid-19 while attending church and
5. Continuing Church services via Zoom and phone dial-in for those who can't or do not feel like they can attend until the virus situation has settled down.

As to numbers 1 and 2 above, Leo and Carolyn Richey spent time measuring the church pews and other critical distances to determine how many could be accommodated without violating the State mandated 6 feet social distancing. By closing off every other row of pews, using a 2 foot space for each person and the measured pew length of 11'8" there can be 1 adult on one end of every other pew and 2 adults on the other end of every other pew or one family of more than 3 on every other pew. Thus some 30 adults, or a little more if a family of 4 or more, can be seated in the sanctuary while maintaining social distancing.

Additionally the same number per pew could occupy the pew in the lobby and a couple of mom's and children in the Mother's room. There can be a maximum of 3 people on the platform as long as one is at the pulpit and one on the far end, from the pulpit, of each short pew on the platform.

The Greeter and members are forbidden, by State Guidelines, from shaking hands, hugging each other and handing out bulletins. The front door, by guidelines, should be propped open to prevent the chance of passage of the virus by many hands opening or closing the door.

Once inside the sanctuary members are asked to remain in their pews until dismissed, by pew, which may be from the rear instead of from the front and are to maintain the 6 foot social distance, mandated by State Guidelines, as they go directly to their cars and leave after the service is completed.

For number 3 above, we utilized the Web MD article on the life of the virus on various surfaces. Briefly the article said the following: The virus lives for up to

- 5 days on doorknobs and silverware,
- 2-3 days on Stainless steel,
- 4 hours on copper teakettles and cookware,
- 2-8 hours on Aluminum,
- 4 days on wood such as furniture and decks,
- 2-3 days on plastics such as seat covers, detergent bottles & backpacks,
- 24 hours on cardboard,
- Up to 5 days on Glass such as mirrors, windows and drinking glasses,
- 5 days on Ceramics such as mugs and dishes,
- Up to 5 days on paper,
- On Fabrics such as pew covers "probably not as long as on hard surfaces,"

Based on this article we have recommended that the only meetings held in the church building until this virus situation resolves be Sabbath morning services. Mid-week Prayer meeting should still be held via Zoom and dial-in phones. Other meetings like Vacation Bible School should await the virus situation resolving or doing virtual Vacation bible School via Zoom.

Based upon the latest scientific information in the Web MD article, if we limit church usage for now to just Sabbath morning Services the routine weekly cleaning of the church should be sufficient since the virus does not live for more than 5 days on surfaces. Contact with those who clean the church was made and they said cleaning the church on Friday was their usual day to clean it before Sabbath services and doing so was no problem.

In accordance with number 4 above, and CDC guidelines it is “encouraged that masks be worn by members.” Note that the CDC does not require masks be worn, but just “encourages” that masks be worn. We recommend that those members who want to attend church services either purchase their own mask, make their own mask or use some type of face covering that they bring with them. There are literally dozens of web sites with directions on making your own masks. Just query “How to Make Masks” in a search engine.

For guests who might come and not have a mask with them but want to wear one, the church has purchased a box of masks for guests who come but may not have one with them. Also the church has purchased gloves for the deacons to use when counting the offering.

Washington State Guidelines have a limit of only 2 people in a church bathroom at one time unless all persons are of the same immediate family. It is recommended that you wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after using the bathroom and that no one opens the door to leave the bathroom unless they have washed their hands or used hand sanitizer.

It is further recommended that the bathroom be sanitized after each use. In order to do this, Lysol Spray will be available in each bathroom and it is requested that each person using the bathroom spray the toilet seat with Lysol after using it.

A sign will be posted in each bathroom about hand washing for 20 seconds with soap and water or the use of hand sanitizer. A log book will be kept for each Sabbath listing the names of those attending in case someone comes down with the Covid-19 illness. Then we have a record of those the sick person might have come in contact with at church.

Singing in church is permitted as long as those singing wear a mask-State Guidelines. Since the corona virus does not live for more than 5 days on surfaces such as hymnals, as well as the Bibles in the pews, may be used as long as not shared with non-family members.

Washington State Guidelines forbid anyone with a temperature above 100.4 degrees farenheit from attending church services in person. Also those with the following Covid-19 symptoms are forbidden to attend by State guidelines:

Fever, cough, headache, sorethroat, runny nose or congestion,
muscle or body aches and new loss of taste or smell.

A non-touch thermometer will be available in case someone's temperature needs to be taken or they appear to be sick. If you do not feel well or have a temperature, we request that you stay at home instead of coming to church.

As mentioned in number 5 above, Church Services will continue to be available on Zoom or by dial-in for those who do not feel or are not able to attend.

We are required to post certain notices and safety information at the doors and in the bathrooms of the church.

Adult Sabbath School class will only be held in the sanctuary until we are out of Phase 4 of the State Guidelines. Children's Sabbath School Classes will meet either in their classroom, the fellowship hall or outside at the teacher's discretion according to the number of children present and the weather.

As we reopen our church it is our prayer that each of you will realize even more the benefits of "assembling ourselves together" and will have a renewed commitment to not only look forward too, but to join in a great worship service together, one day, in heaven.

God Bless each one of you,

The Reopening Committee