



Houses of Worship are Considered “Essential” Activities

By Dan Derenski, Council President

Let me assure you NLC is not closed: However, worship services have not resumed. This is primarily to ensure the congregation is safe from exposure to the Covid-19 virus. With this in mind the following efforts are underway:

- Validating the disinfectant, process, training and oversight documentation for large areas.
- The mapping of the sanctuary for maximum occupancy with social distancing calculations, using NLC demographics to determine seating has been completed. Marking the pews is the next step.
- Continuing to monitor and research guidelines as they apply to NLC.

The NLC policy regarding the Covid-19 virus is based on Federal, State, County and ELCA guidelines.

Phase 1 - NLC's office and the administration building are open and being used by groups of no more than 10 with social distancing. This does require reservations to be made through our administrative assistant, Linda. To protect Linda, unscheduled visits to the office building are discouraged.

Phase 2 - As I disclosed in my prior letter, this phase's guidelines call for social distancing with gatherings of no more than 50. Like phase 1 it requires making a reservation to reserve space. Occupancy for Winemiller Hall is 30, Al Lien is 15, the Library and Youth Room are 4 each.

Phase 3 - Vulnerable individuals should continue practicing social distancing and minimize exposure to gatherings. Some guidelines set a gathering limit of 100.

This is where it gets tricky regarding Phases 2 and 3. It is being reported that forty percent (40%) of the population infected with the virus are asymptomatic. This is problematic when eighty-eight percent (88%) of our congregation is 60 and older. As many have health issues, the question is: Should NLC provide our members with the security of social distancing in our sanctuary? If your answer is yes, this will require a reservation system with assigned seating be developed, staffed and implemented. This is only one of many items that need to be addressed. Other requirements are: Communicating the afore mentioned, signage, marking the church pews, disinfecting between services, etc. All of these items are being evaluated.

I want you to know that Council is reviewing all the relevant information and looking for alternatives to meet the health and spiritual needs of our congregation on an on going basis. Please contact Council with any questions, comments or suggestion at Council@nlcww.org or NLC, Attn: Council , 6363 Commercial Way, Weeki Wachee Fl. 34613.

I can do all this through Him who gives me strength.

Philippians 4:13