

## **Communication re. The Reopening of GCC for Public Gatherings**

The elders at GCC have been involved in an effort to carefully and prayerfully research and consider alternatives for moving forward after the COVID-19 pandemic has passed. This document represents a flexible road map developed and approved by the Pastoral Staff, the Council of Elders, the Deacons and by the GCC Board of Governors for the reopening of in person ministries at GCC.

The leadership at GCC has persisted in emphasizing that Romans 13, I Peter 2:11-17, etc. instruct Christians to be subject to their governing authorities. We are specifically told this is God's will [I Pet. 2:15]. Those authorities have a difficult task in managing this pandemic. Since this is God's will, It is our desire [in so far as it is possible] to work cooperatively with them as we navigate through this crisis together. We have given warnings [James 3:13-18] to some who have tried to advocate in favor of civil disobedience in this circumstance. The position we have taken is largely due to the fact of the great complexity of navigating leadership in such circumstances [i.e. the many 'unknowns' about the coronavirus]. These have been unprecedented times, and official guidance on the best way to proceed has been developing and changing rapidly.

While no degree of planning could ever eliminate all risk, the leadership of GCC wanted to ensure that every reasonable step to ensure that a safe worship environment is maintained for our members, regular attendees, and our guests.

### **Steps We are taking at GCC to Insure maximum protection from the spread of the coronavirus:**

The following steps are being taken based upon guidance from the CDC and Wisconsin HHS Department based on the level of Community transmission and impact of the COVID-19 virus in our area. The goal for using these strategies at GCC is to slow the transmission of the virus and to protect our members, regular attendees, and staff from infection.

- Familiarized GCC staff with the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if staff become symptomatic at the worksite
- Deacons reviewed the GCC facility and grounds to ensure that it remains operationally capable of resuming meetings.
- Encouraged staff to practice protective measures (e.g., stay home when sick, handwashing, use sanitizer, clean surfaces, respiratory etiquette)
- Assigned staff to perform additional cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces
- Ensured hand sanitization supplies were readily available
- Added additional signage to restrooms encouraging handwashing
- Implemented social distancing measures with staff (e.g., generally 1-3 staff members on site at any given time distanced by work locations)

- Cancelled in person and onsite gatherings at the GCC facility (GCFs and Learning and Leaning meetings conducted via Zoom)
- Cancelled in -person and onsite gatherings of more than 10 people at the GCC facility.
- Sunday worship services were streamed live via YouTube, and Facebook
- Increased mail and email communication, blog articles, and personal telephone contacts were used to help the membership stay connected
- *Our regular elder assigned groups in the GCC congregation have been used to stay connected with our church family during this pandemic. Every member and Regular attendee's household was called as part of each elder's group to help identify and meet needs for resources and prayer during this time*
- A LifeWay Research advisory poll/Survey was conducted through the internet to gather information on our congregation's thoughts with regard to the resumption of onsite services at GCC

## GCC's Member Expectations

From May 15<sup>th</sup> to May 23<sup>rd</sup> we asked GCC Members and Regular Attenders to complete the LifeWay Reopening Church advisory survey electronically via Google Docs. While official guidelines largely dictate practices, we felt it was also important to see where our own people were on these important issues. **Given GCC's average weekly attendance of about 150 people, and our survey response sample size of 64 people, we can report that these results are representative of our congregation's expectations with an estimated 95% Confidence Level.<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/margin-of-error-calculator/>

1. When our local government lifts its ban or guidance against churches meeting, which best describes your attitude toward returning to a worship service at church? Select one:

64 responses



The results of the survey indicate a willingness to return to our 'in person' worship services as soon as government regulations allow. However, not all are willing to return immediately. Some have personal health conditions and others are in an especially vulnerable age group that cause them to prefer waiting a bit longer before they return. Other responses demonstrate a desire for church leadership to take all reasonable precautions, and we have sought to do this.

We also wish to express our understanding toward those who prefer to wait a while longer before attending an 'in person' worship service or other church activity. In fact, we would encourage those in an especially vulnerable situation to consider waiting until later, when the 'all clear' seems more certain. And finally, if you have any symptoms, we respectfully ask you not to attend until an appropriate period of self-quarantine has been observed.