



**Coronavirus
SARS-CoV-2
COVID-19**

Pandemic Response Plan

New Dimensions Church | Coronavirus Task Force |
November 1, 2020

**“...Whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.”
Proverbs 29:25b**



COVID-19 Response Guidelines

This document summarizes New Dimensions Church's Pandemic Task Force guidelines to support the health and safety of our members, our visitors, and the community during COVID-19 (coronavirus disease). The guidelines will include health promotion, health education, how the members will conduct themselves in the church, and how New Dimensions will carry out its operations during the pandemic.

What is COVID-19?

On February 11, 2020 the World Health Organization announced an official name for the disease that is causing the 2019 novel coronavirus outbreak, first identified in Wuhan, China. The new name of this disease is coronavirus disease 2019, abbreviated as COVID-19. In COVID-19, "CO" stands for "corona," "VI" stands for "virus," and "D" stands for disease. COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are known to cause illness from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS).

Purpose of Task Force

The Coronavirus Task Force was established from a diversity of ministries at New Dimensions Church. Representatives includes the Pastor, Elders, Deacon, Board of Trustee, Greeter, Health Professionals, Usher, Children's Church, and cleaning staff. The purpose of the Task Force is to establish pandemic guidelines for New Dimensions in accordance with recommendations from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). These guidelines will assist members in staying safe at church, at home, and in the community. The Task Force will endeavor to disseminate reliable and credible information to members regarding the pandemic.

The Role of Leadership during the Pandemic

The role of church leadership does not change during a pandemic. Due to increased anxiety and fear during a pandemic, the members depend on the church leadership for comfort and support during this uncertain time. It is the role of those in leadership to pray and encourage the members and lead worship services to reduce fear and increase faith

in God. The leadership will consult, where and when necessary, with mental health professionals and ~~to~~ will refer members that need professional counseling.

The Role of New Dimensions Health Professionals

The New Dimensions Church health professionals are Registered Nurses (RNs) who volunteer their training and expertise. These nurses are governed by the Maryland Board of Nursing, which regulates the Nurse Practice Act for Maryland. Their role at New Dimensions is to assist members to integrate their faith and healing. They will provide health education, health promotion, disease prevention, and health counseling to members. They will serve as advocates to members who need assistance navigating the healthcare system. These nurses will collaborate with community partners to bring health and wellness to members. They will be available to pray with members, and they can provide virtual care visits when necessary.

Changes in New Dimensions Worship Services

New Dimensions has moved to virtual services until further notice. Christian Education, Sunday Morning Service, and Bible Study are being conducted via Zoom. Prayer Services are continuing via conference call and Zoom on designated days, nights, and times. Youth, Women, and Men are meeting via conference call or Zoom on designated days, nights, and times. All future events will be rescheduled.

How to Keep Members Connected

The *New Dimensions Church Directory* informs the membership how to contact Pastor Savoy, ministerial staff, health professionals, and other members. Those members who are considered high risk will be identified and checked on regularly. Current contact information, such as telephone and email for the membership, will be periodically updated.

Communication to the Membership

The membership will receive accurate information from reliable sources via weekly and monthly updates from health professionals. A copy of the Response Plan will be available to each member. Members will have an opportunity to participate in a survey prior to

New Dimensions re-opening to voice their concerns and provide their input. Health professionals will hold sessions via Zoom to educate members on the pandemic. The New Dimensions leadership will communicate regularly with the members concerning specific actions that are being taken to protect their health.

When will New Dimensions Re-open?

Currently, there has not been a specific date provided as to when New Dimensions will re-open. However, Pastor Savoy informed the membership that church services would be conducted virtually until further notice. The local and national numbers of cases, deaths, and hospitalizations are increasing at this point. In fact, Lanham, Maryland continues to have the second highest rate of infections in Prince Georges County. The Task Force's recommendation is not to have in-person services and activities in the church until the membership can be safe. However, re-opening of New Dimensions for in-person services will be dictated by state and local directives and the nation's efforts to complete the vaccination of individuals and communities.

Preparing to Re-open

All carpeted areas throughout New Dimensions have been professionally cleaned and disinfected. All chairs in the building have been cleaned and sanitized. The Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning system (HVAC) has been serviced, and the water is turned on weekly to flush out the pipes.

Hand sanitizers have been placed at both entrances and exits. Gloves have been placed in bathrooms, the sound room, the administration area, and the sanctuary. Masks are available. Disinfectant wipes have been placed in all the bathrooms, in the sound room, in the administration area, and in the sanctuary. **Toilet seat covers and holders have been purchased for each bathroom.**

Signs have been placed at entry doors that state the following: masks must be worn; health screening required; you must stay at home if sick; social distancing required; sanitizer must be used upon entry and exit; one way traffic required; entrance only from the lobby; exit only from behind the pulpit

Signs have been placed in the bathrooms that state the following: proper handwashing required with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; disinfectant of at least 60% alcohol

to clean surfaces, light switches, and doorknobs required. The required sanitation and disinfecting of bathrooms after the use by children under the age of 12 years old will be the responsibility of their parents or guardians.

Signs have been placed on the sanctuary door that state the following: social distancing required; masks required; no physical contact allowed, such as hugging or handshaking; mouths must be covered when sneezing or coughing.

Based on CDC requirements, the sanctuary is arranged to accommodate 17 individuals seated 6 feet apart on the main floor and 4 individuals seated in the choir area. This arrangement would change to accommodate families. The above arrangements include musicians and sound room engineers.

Plans and procedures are in place to regularly clean and disinfect the building.

Preventive Measures

The best way to prevent illness from COVID-19 is to avoid being exposed to the virus. We will follow CDC recommendations by adhering to the requirements below.

- All members and visitors are encouraged to stay home if they are ill, have been in contact with someone who is ill, or who have any symptoms.
- Any member or visitor will be denied entrance if that person is exhibiting any symptoms of coronavirus.
- All members or visitors are always required to wear a face mask in the building.
- All members or visitors are to use hand sanitizer upon entering and exiting the building.
- Members or visitors are to refrain from any physical contact and maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet apart.
- Members or visitors are expected to use disinfectant wipes that are provided throughout the church to disinfect light switches, doorknobs, microphones, or any frequently touched surfaces.
- Members or visitors will enter and exit the building at separate designated doors; they will enter through the lobby; they will exit behind the pulpit.
- Infrared touchless forehead thermometers will be posted at both entry doors. Members will take their own temperature. Alarm will be set to indicate low grade fever.
- Seating will be addressed according to the local authorities' maximum number of people allowed inside the building and our total occupancy capacity while maintaining social distancing.

- Chairs will be removed or taped off accordingly. However, members from the same family may sit together.
- If a member or visitor becomes ill during services, that person will be separated into an isolation room (The Conference Room) and safely transported home or to a healthcare facility as soon as possible.
- The Conference Room will not be used until after it has been cleaned and disinfected.

New Protocols

Communion

- Communion is currently being conducted virtually at the 10 a.m. Sunday Worship Service.
- When Communion is served in-person, the clergy will use hand sanitizer or **gloves** instead of a missionary bringing a bowl of water.
- Individually pre-packaged juice and wafer will be used for the Communion Service.

Offering

- Members and visitors will no longer walk to the front to place their offering in the basket.
- Members are encouraged to continue giving online or mailing their offering to the church.
- Offering Counters will wear gloves to handle envelopes and cash.
- The Offering Plate or Basket will be available at the rear of the church for members and visitors who choose to leave their offerings there.

Shared items

- Envelopes have been removed from the backs of all the chairs.
- Members who bring their tambourines will be prohibited from sharing.
- There will be no sharing of Bibles or books.

Children's Church

- Children's Church will be postponed until further notice.

Food Service

- There will be no food served at New Dimensions until further notice.

How the Disease Spreads (CDC)

- The virus that causes COVID-19 most commonly spreads between people who are in close contact with one another (within 6 feet, or 2 arm lengths).
- It spreads through respiratory droplets or small particles, such as those in aerosols, produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, sings, talks, or breathes.
 - These particles can be inhaled into the nose, mouth, airways, and lungs and cause infection. This is thought to be the main way the virus spreads.
 - Droplets can also land on surfaces and objects and be transferred by touch. A person may get COVID-19 by touching the surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes. Spread from touching surfaces is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.
- It is possible that COVID-19 may spread through the droplets as airborne particles that are formed when a person who is infected coughs, sneezes, sings, talks, or breathes. There is growing evidence that droplets and airborne particles can remain suspended in the air and be breathed in by others, and travel distances beyond 6 feet (for example, during choir practice, in restaurants, or in fitness classes). In general, indoor environments without good ventilation increases this risk.

COVID-19 seems to be spreading easily and sustainably in the community (“community spread”) in many areas. Community spread means people have been infected with the virus in an area, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected.

There is growing evidence of transmission risk from infected people without symptoms (asymptomatic) or before the onset of recognized symptoms (pre-symptomatic).

Signs and Symptoms of the Disease (CDC)

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported--ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches

- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Anyone can have mild to severe symptoms. Older adults and people who have severe underlying medical conditions like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19 illness.

CDC Guidelines for Cleaning and Disinfecting

Cleaning

- Wear disposable gloves to clean and disinfect.
- Clean surfaces using soap and water, then use disinfectant. Cleaning with soap and water reduces the number of germs, dirt, and impurities on the surface. Disinfecting kills germs on surfaces.
- Practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces.
 - More frequent cleaning and disinfecting may be required based on level of use.
 - Surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected before each use.
- High touch surfaces include:
 - Tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, sinks, etc.

Disinfecting

- Disinfect with a household disinfectant that is used against the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Follow the instructions on the label to ensure safe and effective use of the product.
- Take precautions to wear gloves and make sure there is good ventilation during use of the product.

Soft surfaces

- Clean carpet, rugs, and drapes using soap and water or with cleaners appropriate for use on these surfaces.

- Launder items according to the manufacturer’s instruction. Use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely.
- OR
- Disinfect with a household disinfectant on the list for use against SARv-CoV-2.
- Vacuum as usual.

Electronics

- Consider putting a wipeable cover on electronics such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards, and remote controls.
- Follow manufacturer’s instruction for cleaning and disinfecting.

If no guidance, use alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 7% alcohol. Dry surface thoroughly.

What to do if you are exposed to COVID-19 (CDC)

- Since we don’t know yet if you will develop COVID-19, you will need to self-quarantine for 14 days from the day you were exposed to the virus. The best way to protect yourself and others is to [stay home for 14 days if you think you’ve been exposed to someone who has COVID-19](#). You should not go to work or out into the community to run errands or attend events. Ideally, you should stay in a separate part of the house from others who live with you, preferably in a bedroom by yourself, and use your own bathroom that no one else uses during this time. Specific instructions for quarantine are available on the [CDC website](#). The amount of time that you will be on self-quarantine is 14 days from the last day of exposure to COVID-19. Public health workers and your health care provider will be talking with you to make sure that you have the testing or approval necessary to be released from self-quarantine.
- Being on quarantine means that you will not be able to go to work or the grocery store or other places around town.
- You will need to limit your interactions with people in your household, staying 6 feet (2 meters) away from them.
- When interacting with others in your household, you should wear a cloth face covering over your nose and mouth [to help protect others in case you’re infected but don’t have symptoms](#). Your caregiver may also wear a cloth face covering when caring for you. Children under age 2, or anyone who has trouble breathing, should **not** wear a mask.

- If at all possible, you should avoid contact with [people at higher risk for severe illness](#) (unless they live in the same home and had same exposure as you), regularly wash your hands and following other measures outlined in the CDC guidance. If at all possible, stay in your room and have food, other necessities and recreational items left outside the door, to minimize your contact with others.
- There are a number of preventive measures that you can put in place to protect your family and other household members, such as: wiping down shared spaces with appropriate cleaning products, keeping a separate set of dishes, silverware and glasses available for your use. I will send you information on how to clean and disinfect your home (for those sharing space with others).
- It will be important to identify other people to assist you with daily life activities during self-quarantine. You will need to stay at home and therefore you will need others to support you in grocery shopping, picking up medications and caring for children and other family members during this time.
- If you have [pets](#), you should remain separate from them during self-quarantine, just [as you would with other household members](#), and avoid direct contact, including petting, snuggling, being kissed or licked, sleeping in the same location, and sharing food or bedding. If possible, another person in your household should take care of the pets and should follow standard handwashing practices before and after interacting with the household animal. If you must care for your pet or be around animals while you are sick, wear a cloth face covering and wash your hands before and after you interact with them.

Task Force Members

Pastor John Savoy

Elder Gregory Robinson

Elder Verna Robinson

Elder Jennifer Coke

Missionary Felicia Lanford, RN

Sister Marsha Wright, RN

Missionary Sharon Young

Sister Yolanda Queen

Missionary Mary Mickey, RN

Resources

World Health Organization (will add web addresses) <https://www.who.int>

Center for Disease Control <https://www.cdc.gov>

Maryland Health Department www.maryland.gov

Prince Georges County Health Department <http://health.mypgc.us/coronavirus>

Office of Governor Larry Hogan <https://governor.maryland.gov>

United States Department of Health and Human Services Center for Faith and Opportunity Initiative <https://www.hhs.gov>