

**This plan was shared with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance by Rev. Ken Page, pastor of Orangewood Presbyterian Church in Phoenix, AZ. Rev. Page is a member of the PDA Advisory Committee. We are sharing this as a sample, please modify as needed to fit your needs.**

Pandemic Plan  
Orangewood Presbyterian Church

*Orangewood believes in God's care and providence for God's people. We believe in the power of the church, as God's community of believers and servants. We have a responsibility in a time of pandemic to protect our members by limiting in-person contact, but we will be creative and proactive in using technology in continuing the ministry of Jesus Christ in a time when people will need it the most.*

1. Pandemic Definition: A Pandemic is a worldwide spread of a new disease.
2. Pre-Pandemic Plan
  - a. As it seems likely that a pandemic is coming, or if a pandemic has been declared but has not yet reached our community, OPC will take the following actions:
    - i. People will be encouraged to stay home if they are sick.
    - ii. Worshippers will be instructed to use the "elbow bump" rather than shaking hands with fellow worshippers.
    - iii. Communion will not be done by intinction.
    - iv. Extra attention will be paid to the sanitizing of surfaces in kitchen, bathrooms, changing tables, etc.
    - v. Children in church programs will be instructed and led in regular handwashing and in coughing into their elbow, not hands nor into the air.
    - vi. Children who exhibit symptoms will be returned to their parents.
    - vii. OPC will make sure that multiple bottles of hand sanitizer are available at all public gatherings.
  - b. In preparation for a pandemic in our community, during the pre-pandemic stage, OPC will take the following actions:
    - i. Staff will be instructed to prepare to work at home. This might include actions such as regularly taking their laptop home, making sure needed documents are stored in the cloud, making sure they have a church-directory so that they can conduct ministry by phone, making sure that they have a few key resources (books) at home, etc.
    - ii. Deacons will begin to make a plan to make regular check-ins with their cluster by phone and to disseminate information gathered this way to the deacon executive team, the prayer chain, and to the pastor. Such phone ministry should include prayer with members.
    - iii. The Youth Ministry Director and the Children's Ministry Director will make a plan to make regular phone check-ins and to pray with children, youth and their families. The Youth Ministry Director will explore ways to continue Youth Group meetings electronically (Skype, Zoom, Facebook Group, etc).
    - iv. The Pastor will form a Pandemic Email Group consisting of the staff, Elders, Deacons and any other church leaders deemed appropriate. This group will enable members to check in with each other, and to notify each other if members get sick, hence, necessitating others picking up the slack.
    - v. The Pastor will contact the local emergency preparedness office, seeking ways that the church can be useful in the emergency response.

- vi. The Pastor will train staff and Deacons in Spiritual Care in Times of Disaster, perhaps using the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance resource *Light Our Way*.
  - vii. The Church Administrator will instruct strategic people on the use of our All Church Emails, so they can still be sent out even if key people are sick.
  - viii. The Pastor and music staff will make a plan to provide “worship” over the internet in the event that public gatherings are shut down.
3. Early Pandemic Plan – When there is illness in our city, but it is not widespread and authorities have not encouraged people to stay away from public gatherings, OPC will add the following actions:
- a. Worshippers will be instructed to sit in alternating rows, maintaining the recommended 3 feet of social distance.
  - b. Plush toys (stuffed animals, etc.) will be removed from young children’s ministry areas and cleanable toys will be cleaned with 10% bleach solution before each Sunday.
  - c. Water fountains will be turned off and marked “Do Not Use.”
  - d. A meeting will be held with our janitorial contractor about cleaning procedures. We should seek a plan for extra cleaning of door handles, changing tables, counters, etc. This plan will likely involve a coordination of janitorial, staff and volunteer cleaning.
  - e. A meeting will be held with African Leadership to coordinate plans with the Orangewood African Fellowship.
  - f. Signs will be placed in strategic locations reminding people to wash their hands frequently.
  - g. A bulletin insert will be created reminding people to keep social distance, not to shake hands or hug, and not to be offended by others who don’t.
  - h. Visits to the sick will follow all recommended protocol, including, but not limited to, masks, gowns, gloves. If authorities restrict visiting we will cease in-person visits, but attempt to make contact by telephone.
4. Full-On Pandemic Plan – When/if our community is fully involved in a pandemic, OPC will institute the following actions.
- a. If authorities advise or mandate the canceling of public gatherings, OPC will not meet for public worship, classes, meetings, etc.
  - b. The congregation will be advised of public event cancellations by all-church email.
  - c. Necessary meeting business can be transacted via email.
  - d. All-Church emails will instruct OPC members how to “worship” via internet.
  - e. The pastor, deacons and staff will engage in pastoral visits and other ministry via telephone and or internet as able.
  - f. Ministry will be coordinated via the Pandemic Email Group, including covering for those who are currently sick.
  - g. Staff will be encouraged to work from home as advised by authorities. Staff will be encouraged to cover for staff members who are sick.
  - h. Staff members and volunteers who have gotten sick and recovered may be very valuable in ministry due to their presumed immunity and ability to be out in the community.
  - i. The staff, building and volunteers of OPC shall be made available to participate in emergency response as requested by authorities, exercising proper precautions.