Sample communication plan for COVID-19

**Communication Team**

Permanent Team: Rector, Communications Director (or chairperson), Sr. Warden, and other staff or congregational leaders as needed. **Designate only one spokesperson.**

Expanded Diocesan Team might include as needed: Chancellor, Missioner for Communications, legal representative, representative from a public relations firm, other support personnel as required.

**The Rector/Priest/Lay person in charge**

- After receiving word that someone has tested positive for COVID-19 after being in the church building or at a church sponsored activity, this person sets the plan in motion.
- Verify with the person that the county is doing contact tracing. Let them know that you will keep their name confidential and that you will need to notify all the people who they may have come in contact with, as well as the bishop. Determine when they were present and what parts of the building they were in.
- Contact the bishop.
- Contact the senior warden and the vestry.
- Notify ALL people who have been in your building with that person, or within 72 hours after that person, about their potential exposure and encourage them to visit [https://www.testiowa.com](https://www.testiowa.com)

Do NOT reveal the person’s name, but give helpful information about the date and time that they were present and the places in the building where they went.

- The people to notify about potential exposure:
  - People who attended worship with the person.
  - Outside groups or small groups that used your building within 72 hours after the person had been there.
  - People who cleaned the building within 72 hours after the person was there.
- Encourage all people who may have been physically present with the person to self-quarantine for 14 days.
- Work with the team to determine who will be the official spokesperson. Only one person should talk to the press.
- Consider whether you will suspend worship for 14 days, especially if the person had been present at a worship service.

**The Communications Director/Chairperson**

- Along with the rector/priest/person in charge, help craft and manage the church’s clear, concise, constructive and credible message.
- Could be the primary spokesperson to the media with input from the whole team, anticipates and meets the needs of the media.
- Corrects inaccurate or misleading reporting immediately.

**The Senior Warden**

- Keeps in touch with parish members (along with other vestry members).
- May serve as alternate spokesperson.

**Chancellor/Legal Counsel**

- Reviews all statements and news releases for legal implications.
- Understands that a loss in the court of public opinion can be more devastating than a loss in a court of law. During a crisis, a legally correct decision may not be the best solution to the problem.