



**Sacramento Region
Voluntary Organizations
Active in Disaster**

COOPERATION | COMMUNICATION | COORDINATION | COLLABORATION

VOAD Interfaith subcommittee

Minutes

Thursday, June 4, 2020 | 4:00pm

ZOOM Mtg

Presiding: MaryLynn Perry, Vice President Exec Member Sacramento Region VOAD

Moderator: Bruce Anderson, Interfaith Lead Exec Member Sacramento Region VOAD

ATTENDANCE: 48

WELCOME: MaryLynn Perry, Vice President Exec Member Sac Region VOAD

Purpose of VOAD Interfaith subcommittee

1. Coordinate, Communicate, Collaborate and Cooperate with the Interfaith Houses of Worship with Government agencies during disasters and recovery.
2. Assess talents, skills and assets that Interfaith entities can assist with during disasters and recovery
3. Refer Government resources of training to the Interfaith community during disasters and recovery

GUEST SPEAKER: Dr Kasiyre, Sacramento County Dept of Health Officer

Opening comments from Dr. Kasiyre:

I have understanding of the anxiety that comes with shelter-in place. Raised in Uganda I've experienced the unrest there and the anxiety and impact of trauma for that country. My own children in my home here are experiencing what your homes are experiencing with the shelter-in place order and the isolation and anxiety that comes with staying in. In addition, many can relate to anxiety at work navigating through COVID-19. All of us have anxiety through this experience and we're doing our best. There is resilience in the community during COVID. Shelter-in place is not easy. Isolation and depression and mental wellness issues are on the rise. People are tired of online contacting, Zoom meetings, TV....There is enough evidence now globally, nationally and statewide that social distancing does slow the spread of COVID-19.

County COVID update as of 0604/2020: 1,489 Confirmed cases, 27 new cases, 58 deaths

SUBMITTED QUESTIONS BY ATTENDEES IN ADVANCE

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS: How much do we need to clean and best methods:

- a. Can we submit a re-opening plan to your staff or office to ensure that we are in alignment and not missing anything critical to keeping the congregants safe, risk-free?

YES. I will review any plans you wish to submit so that you know you are covering all critical areas. Send to Holly Brown at brown.holly k@gmail.com Holly will send all submitted for Dr Kasiyre to review.

- b. The Governor indicates Houses of Worship may congregate 25% of our congregation up to 100 people with social distancing. What level do we need to clean the upholstered pews each week? Steam clean pews each week?

Professionally clean all carpets and upholstered pews prior to re-opening. Use a changeable cover on top of the upholstered pews that can be laundered after each use.

- c. May we have multiple sessions during the Sunday Worship of 100 people?
Example: 9am-10am, 100 people. 1pm-2pm, 100 people. 6pm-7pm, 100 people.
All three services in one day with 100 people. This would mean that we would have 300 congregants total for the day of worship indoors

Yes. Multiple sessions permitted only if ample time to disinfect between each session all hard surfaces, door-knobs, chairs, pews and change covers for upholstered chairs/pews. Only 100 people on location at one time.

- d. If we have space outdoors to meet with more than 100 people at a social distance grouped in families, may we congregate up to 250? 500? 650? If we can social distance? **Houses of Worship are limited California state-wide currently to 25% of total membership at one time up to the limit of 100 people with social distancing inside or outside. Mtgs at parks for worship are not permitted at this time. In home worship or other social gatherings in homes are not permitted currently unless with immediate family who reside there.**

CONGREGANTS RETURN

- a. CDC reminds us to have the following:
- 2 identified persons to maintain documentation
 - Train staff and Volunteers
 - Ensure proper cleaning
 - Monitor congregants
- I) Do we need to report to the County if we learn that a congregant has tested Positive? And if yes, who do we contact?
Yes, Please contact the Dept of Health office with this information
- II) What is our role in Contact tracing if someone in our congregation tests positive?

Have a system in place that allows you to contact all of the people who attended a worship service in the event that someone has tested positive within 14 days of attending your House of Worship. A roster with each name and contact will make it possible.

- a. Will we need to take temperatures prior to worshippers entering the facility/sanctuary?

Taking temperatures of all who enter is ideal. If HIPPA is a question of privacy, please train your congregants to take their temps at home prior to arriving at your House of Worship

- b. The AMA and now The WHO have stated that the masks should only be worn by health care and emergency personnel that treat sick people. Does this mean there never was a reason to wear them? Where is the science behind the separation? If the masks work, why the separation? If the separation, why the masks? What is Sacramento's order with masks/separation or both?

Sacramento County order: all people going into public should wear a mask when 6-foot social distancing is not possible. Many businesses will require you to wear a mask and social distance in addition to wearing a mask. A mask is not required while you are driving alone in your car. A mask is not required while you are outside recreating but please keep social distancing in place while you are outside. Wearing a cloth covering or surgical mask helps contain your own coughs, sneeze and helps slow the spread of asymptomatic people.

WORSHIP PLAN: Liturgy & Adoption: What can we do and how will it look:

- a. End of Life: The Pope has urged that last rights for a Catholic are to be performed in person and to administer anointing oil on the soon to be deceased. What extent can "Last Rites" in Sacramento be practiced for Catholics or any other faith that practices final rites with administering anointing oil?

These ordinances are currently performed in the hospital where the minister is completely outfitted in a mask, gloves, face-shield and gown.

COVID-19 VIRUS, IMMUNITIES, DEATHS, etc

- a. Can we assist the County in performing testing at our Houses of Worship?

Yes. St Paul's Baptist Church in Oak Park is a testing site

- b. With what weight should be most prevalent?

- i) The strength of the immune system of the host?

- ii) The possible and potential contagion of the agent, germ or virus?

Since we have at any given moment 38 trillion plus or minus bacteria and 380 trillion plus or minus viruses in and around our bodies, most of which do no harm, can we shift our thinking and scientific endeavors and restrictions of gatherings to the well-being of the host verses the

fear of the microbe? Both are important. Until we have a vaccine, we know that spreading the virus leads to deaths and practicing social distancing helps slow the spread.

- c. With fear as the driving force to not attend church and other celebrations, will this impact our immune system to the point when we do return to attendance – will be at an endangered immune risk from the trauma and fear and be more at risk of the common flu this fall?

We do not know yet what this fall flu season will look like. Isolation and all of the negative impacts that come with isolation is a strong factor in why I am trying to get our County open as soon as possible. Social distancing is one of our greatest tools to apply to help open the County as quickly as possible. As we open each phase and experience less negative impacts of spread after the 2 weeks of opening that phase, we can re-open more operations. Social distancing has proven to be the key to keeping the COVID spread down as Communities and other Counties are re-opening. We can reach out to each other through less risk channels (online, zoom, letters, calls, texts, social distancing) as we encourage to keep going and doing as well as we are.

Deaths Statistics

Of all the deaths that have occurred that have been claimed to be because of Covid-19, can we get the co-morbidity factors that these individuals had prior to and contributing to their deaths?

Yes. These reports will be made available when the data is formulated and complete.

ISOLATION:

There are a lot of opinions of the effects of isolation and the risk of what isolation does to the immune system. What is your opinion Dr Kasiyre of the risks of all the damage that isolation is creating versus the risk of re-engaging in full time church service and re-opening our community?

Isolation definitely has its own risks and dangers. Especially with mental wellness cases, domestic violence prior to shelter-in, isolation with our elderly, teens and singles. Mental Anxiety does impact the immune system negatively. Church attendance is a positive source for many to buoy and combat anxiety and relief stress, depression and isolation.

Many worshippers are the “at-risk” population. The nature of some faiths increase the risk of spreading COVID. Following activities increase risk for spread: numbers sitting shoulder to shoulder in pews or chairs, Choirs, congregation singing. A donation basket passed, congregants shaking hands, friendship hugging, partaking of sacraments and other ordinances like baptisms and using anointing oil

There is enough proof that the best way to curb and slow the spread of this virus prior to a vaccine is with washing hands for 20 seconds, social distancing and wearing masks. This is a deadly virus far worse than a flu. With all of our precautions (limiting air travel to foreign countries, limiting travel, closure of National Parks, Concerts, Bars, Events, Festivals, etc) and

social distancing in place, wearing masks and staying home from non-essential work-places; we are experiencing low recovery % when patients enter ICU. Especially those who have health risks such as diabetes, cancer, hypertension and heart disease. The numbers are far lower than originally anticipated because of the aggressive “shelter-in place” practices. We know that social distancing works by the result of the Assisted Living facilities that had positive tested cases. Once they practiced appropriate social distancing, hygiene practices with masks, gloves and sanitizing, the numbers dropped in those facilities.

COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS:

Although re-opening up to 100 people is permitted, some Faith-Based Orgs are not anxious to re-open due to putting their elderly congregants at risk and the process to social distance. Some will wait until the Fall and revisit decision to open.

Some Houses of Worship experienced an uptick in attendance, especially from members that have moved to SF or East Bay and lost contact. ZOOM meetings have re-kindled membership that had fallen. There are congregations that will continue ZOOM or online fellowship after COVID due to increase interest with members that physically cannot attend due to disabilities, etc.

Adjourned: 5:15pm

The following are captured from questions during both Interfaith mtgs 5/20/20 and 6/04/20 with Dr Kasiyre:

- 1) Before re-opening facilities, flush water lines for 20 minutes to remove sitting pathogens that have accumulated during the shutdown.
- 2) Run the HVAC for 30 minutes and clean out all ducts to remove pathogens. Wear a mask during process
- 3) Disinfect (saturate and let air dry) all door handles, light switches, tabletops, restrooms, and easily handheld items with bleach or Pinesol between meetings.
- 4) Have removable covers for upholstery so they can be changed & laundered between congregant meetings
- 5) Ask congregants to leave their personal scriptures/hymns books or have them clean them with disinfectant wipes upon entering
- 6) Choirs are not permitted yet and only minimal congregational singing (with a 6-foot radius between families.)
- 7) No hugging permitted other than immediate family, no holding hands with neighbors that are not immediate family.
- 8) Do not distribute opened edible sacraments or administer opened edible sacraments
- 9) All older members and individuals with co-morbidities (diseases that stress the body such as diabetes, cancer, hypertension, and obesity) should stay home.
- 10) Supply hand sanitizer at all entrances and fully stocked soap and paper towels in the bathroom.
- 11) Encourage individuals to avoid using the restrooms if possible and thoroughly disinfect after each use.
- 12) Close nurseries.

- 13) Register names who enter to worship for 'Contact Tracing" notifications.
- 14) All home scripture study needs to continue on-line for now. None can take place at homes yet.
- 15) Take temperatures before congregants enter the building. They can take their own temperatures at home prior to arriving to the building.
- 16) Conduct meetings outside as much as possible while social distancing under 100 people.
- 17) Professionally steam clean or professionally shampoo carpets and upholstered pews cleaned prior to re-opening

In addition:

1. Document training of staff & volunteers of procedures for opening and ability to email out to those who attended the worship service. Document cleaning of buildings
2. Ensure disinfectants are CDC approved and used appropriately
3. Ensure congregants are practicing social distancing,
4. Have a point person for identification of COVID-19 positive congregants that can follow up with a notification to congregants who may have been exposed
5. Report COVID positive congregants (in the event that a member of your congregation is tested positive and has attended worship in your building within 14 days of testing positive) to the State Health Dept.