

Grand Rapids East Covid-19 Response Team

Here are the members of the Team in alphabetical order by last name.

Len Blauwkamp – A volunteer Regional Manager for World Renew and member at First CRC

Pastor Nate DeJong-McCarron – Lead Pastor at Fuller Ave CRC

Chris Gibson – Groups Program Manager, Disaster Response Services at World Renew

Pastor James Jones – Pastor of Congregational Life and Outreach, Oakdale Park CRC

Pastor Artie Lindsay – Teaching Pastor at Tabernacle Community Church and Advisor to Classis GR East's Ministry Team

Bill Paxton – President Emeritus for Exalta Health and Council Chair at First CRC

Andrew Ryskamp – Consultant to CRCNA Diaconal Initiative, member at Madison Church, Square Campus and acting as Team Chair

Paula Seales - Ordained Pastor at Madison Church and leader of Madison's Evangelism Team

Rachel VerWys – Co-Creator and Executive Director for Solutions to End Exploitation and member at Madison Church-Ford Campus

Team Purpose and Mandate

Team Purpose:

To provide leadership, coordination, and support to Classis Grand Rapids East and its member churches in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on ministry to our churches and communities.

Team Mandate:

1. Encourage each church to establish a Covid-19 Response Coordinator person or team to deal with the church's response to Covid-19 and its impact on the congregation and community (This is in place).
2. Identify resources and/or refer to existing best practices for churches to draw from, relying on already established sources and tracking best practices coming from within the Classis.
3. Encourage networking and collaboration among member churches where appropriate, as well as with neighboring churches in the same parish area.
4. Network broadly with community and government entities so that coordination and use of resources are maximized and the churches of Classis are vital partners in the Covid-19 response.
5. Coordinate with national CRC and RCA responses.
6. Develop plans for varying future scenarios as the consequences of Covid-19 and the closing of non-essential businesses and services plays out.