



ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Dear St. Andrew's Family,

September 2, 2020

In the congregational letter distributed last month we indicated that we would plan, depending on no changes in government restrictions, to resume in-person worship services in the Sanctuary on Sunday, September 13, at 10:30 a.m.

Although many of our congregation, as well as others across the country and beyond, have expressed their appreciation for the online services, we all look forward to being able to worship God together again in the sanctuary of St. Andrew's. As you read through this letter, you will understand that these initial services will be but steps towards the fullness of corporate worship as we have known it, and will not be appropriate for everyone. The online services will continue for those who are not yet ready or able to attend in person, available live at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings or any time thereafter.

The members of the Session carefully studied, The Presbyterian Church in Canada – Session Resource on Re-Opening Church Buildings, and the document, COVID-19 Guidance for Re-Opening Places of Worship, released by Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington Public Health. Following this study a committee was struck to bring to the Session a plan with recommendations, based on the requirements laid out in these documents, regarding procedures and practices which must be in place in order to reopen the Sanctuary. On August 31, at a special meeting of the Session, the plan was presented to and approved by the Elders.

In order to comply with government restrictions the following procedures will be in place when you arrive at church on Sunday mornings.

Before entering the Sanctuary

- Three doors into the church will be open. These will be the two doors facing Clergy Street (the one in the tower and the one by the church office), and the one by the ramp on Princess St. The door into St. Andrew's Hall will not be open and the lift will not be available.
- In order to try to prevent a line up at the doors an usher will be outside to direct you to one of the entrances. If there should be a small line up, cones will be in place to indicate physical distancing spaces.
- Inside each entrance there will be a table at which an usher will be seated. The vestibules are not spacious so, in order to respect physical distancing, please remain just inside the door until you have given your name to the usher to record. This will be used in the event it becomes necessary to contact you if it is discovered someone who attended had contact with a person who had the virus.

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Since you will be wearing a mask, please give your name to the usher who is recording.

- For your convenience hand sanitizer will be available in all three vestibules.
- There will be no temperature checks so please self-examine and if unsure enjoy the service at home online. Included with this letter you will find a self-screening guide.

On Entering the Sanctuary

- An usher will be waiting at each entrance to escort those attending to their pews in order of arrival.
- Physical distancing is to be practised by those being escorted and those waiting to be escorted to pews.
- Offering plates will be placed at the back of the Sanctuary for members of the congregation to contribute offerings at the end of the service on the way out of the Sanctuary.
An offering plate will be placed at the front of the Sanctuary for those entering by the Princess St. entrance.
- Seating will be from the front to the back of the Sanctuary and will begin (physically distanced) from the centre of the pews to the aisles. Family units will be able to sit together without physical distancing. Coats, umbrellas etc. should be brought to your seats with you.
- After being seated, unless there is a washroom emergency or illness, members of the congregation should remain in their seats until the service is dismissed.
- Two washrooms will be available. The washroom at the Princess St. door at front of the Sanctuary and the washroom just inside St. Andrew's Hall. If for any reason a line should form please physically distance while waiting.

The Worship Service

- There will be no choir or congregational singing. Hymn books have been removed as the guidelines indicate there are to be no shared materials.
- There will be no greeting time. Please avoid awkwardness by not attempting to shake hands or hug. A smile or a wave is a good substitute.
- No offering plates will be passed.
- There will be no Sunday School or nursery until restrictions are lifted. Children are welcome to attend and remain in the worship service.

Exiting the Sanctuary

- An usher will be available to assist individuals and families in exiting their pews while observing physical distancing. The members of congregation are asked to remain seated until an usher comes to your pew.
- Exiting the Sanctuary will be from the back to the front.
- The pew should empty from the aisle inward at the direction of the usher and maintaining physical distancing.
- Individuals will exit by the same door they entered.

Outside:

- Please don't stop to chat with people until you exit the building and then do so remembering to physical distance.

All church building gathering spaces will be closed to socialization.

Please note that these precautions in no way guarantee a 'safe' environment because there is always a level of risk in gathering and interacting with other persons. As we know information about this virus and resulting restrictions unfold almost daily. We will continue to monitor government directions and adjust the plan as seems appropriate.

Answers to Anticipated Questions

What cleaning precautions have been taken to prepare the Sanctuary? The Sanctuary has been deep cleaned and all accessible areas have experienced enhanced cleaning. Also, to increase ventilation the doors of the church will be kept open as weather permits.

Will I be able to choose my own seat? No, in order to respect government restrictions and maintain physical distancing of two metres between all persons unless they are members of the same household, certain seats are closed off with a blue cord. Also, since our aisles are narrow and do not allow for appropriate distancing in coming and going, ushers will be seating people in order of their arrival beginning at the front of the Sanctuary to the back.

Why is there no congregational singing or choir? The following information and recommendations have been provided by the health authorities. "Respiratory droplets and aerosols generated during singing, loud speech or use of wind instruments may travel further than 2 metres...No congregational singing and chanting. Spoken responses should be in a low voice. Leaders should use microphones unless the space is very small. No choir. "

What about Communion? The Presbyterian Church in Canada has suggested as an option if there is to be the celebration of Holy Communion in churches that prepackaged Communion cups consisting of a Communion wafer and grape juice in a sanitary all-in-one container be considered. We will continue with the celebration of the Lord's Supper on the first Sunday of each month using the suggested method of providing the elements.

Are masks required during the worship service? The wearing of masks is a government requirement for all indoor services.

Should I have my own mask? Each person in attendance should have his/her own mask that covers nose, mouth and chin.

How many people can attend a service? To ensure physical distancing thirty percent of the capacity of the Sanctuary is the maximum number of participants allowed.

What have we forgotten? If there are things that you think we have forgotten or if you have questions, please let us know by calling or emailing the church office.

Although we know that things will be different, we are very happy to be able to return to worshipping together in person.

COVID-19 self-assessment

Symptoms of COVID-19

Are you experiencing any of the following symptoms?

- Fever (feeling hot to the touch, a temperature of 37.8 degrees Celsius or higher)
- Chills
- Cough that's new or worsening (continuous, more than usual)
- Barking cough, making a whistling noise when breathing (croup)
- Shortness of breath (out of breath, unable to breathe deeply)
- Sore throat
- Difficulty swallowing
- Runny nose (not related to seasonal allergies or other known causes or conditions)
- Stuffy or congested nose (not related to seasonal allergies or other known causes or conditions)
- Lost sense of taste or smell
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis)
- Headache that's unusual or long lasting
- Digestive issues (nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain)
- Muscle aches
- Extreme tiredness that is unusual (fatigue, lack of energy)
- Falling down often

In the last 14 days, have you been in close physical contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19?

Close physical contact means: being less than 2 metres away in the same room, workspace, or area living in the same home

In the last 14 days, have you been in close physical contact with someone who either:

- is currently sick with new COVID-19 symptoms (like a cough, fever, or difficulty breathing)?
- or
- returned from outside of Canada in the last 2 weeks with new COVID-19 symptoms (like a cough, fever, or difficulty breathing)?

Close physical contact means: being less than 2 metres away in the same room, workspace, or area living in the same home

Have you travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days?