

This document was prepared for use at St. Mark's Church in Saint John NB.

Please feel free to use as it is helpful to you in your context.

Stay safe and be well.

COVID 19 Operational Plan

Summary

This report is based upon what we know as of Tuesday, May 19 and was prepared by your COVID 19 Pandemic Committee with the assistance of Marilen and Wayne from our Staff.

As St. Mark's discerns when worship can resume as we recover from the pandemic, our number one priority must be the safety of our followers and always acting in accordance with Provincial Health Guidelines.

Your COVID 19 Pandemic Committee unanimously makes the following recommendations when the province enters Phase 3 of our recovery plan, which could be as early as May 22:

- We resume worship as soon as practical after the date we are allowed to re-open providing all operational requirements are in place
- We either live stream the "live" worship service from the sanctuary so that followers who cannot attend or do not feel comfortable attending can still worship with us or provide a separate streaming service similar to what we have been doing since we closed. Further study of live streaming the actual service from the sanctuary is required to determine costs and operational considerations.
- Sunday School resume in the fall with a plan to be developed at that time based upon protocols in place for kindergartens and schools
- We open the building to our tenants and the public as soon as practical after the date we (they) are allowed to re-open
- Tenants will be expected to be in compliance with our operational plan and provincial guidelines during their program time.
- The Chair – Property be given power to accept or reject one time rentals
- Worship and use of the building be in strict accordance with the overall Operational Plan approved by the Board from time to time.
- Minor tweaks in the plan can be made by the COVID 19 Pandemic Committee based on what we experience providing they are in accordance with Provincial Guidelines and the Board is informed.

In considering this plan, it is very possible that this could be our new normal or an approximate of our new normal until such time as a vaccine is found. That may not be until late in 2021.

Background

On March 18, 2020, the Board decided to cancel all worship services and close the building to the public until further notice as a result of the COVID 19 virus and in accordance with provincial government guidelines.

The residents of New Brunswick have been in Phase 2 (Code Orange) of the Recovery Plan since Friday, May 8. Projections are that Phase 3 (Code Yellow) will occur somewhere between May 22 and June 5. At that time churches will be able to resume worship under the following condition:

“Gatherings with social distancing of 50 or fewer

Public gatherings with social distancing of 50 or fewer are now allowed. This will make it possible for larger religious services, weddings and funerals to take place. The limit on gatherings will be reviewed on a regular basis according to risk based on the evolution of the situation in New Brunswick.”

Under Phase 2, Day Cares were permitted to reopen on Tuesday, May 19 following guidelines established by the Department of Education. The Y has advised us by email that it is their intent to re-open on that date. The West Side Coop Preschool has advised that they will not be re-opening but may want to hold an outdoor “graduation” event under conditions that are compliant with Provincial Guidelines.

The Korean Presbyterian Church plans to resume worship. It is unlikely Guides, Scouts, and Orange Lodge will resume their programming until the fall. Plans of AA and Al Anon not known at this time.

Operational Plan

Any business or organization that plans to re-open needs to develop an operational plan. The operational plan must be kept on file and available for viewing by a government representative upon request.

The purpose of an operational plan is for a business/service/organization to address public health measures during the COVID-19 recovery in New Brunswick. The Operational Plan needs to address the following key Public Health measures, which are applicable in all phases of the recovery plan:

- **Physical distancing (minimum distance of two metres)**
Maintain a minimum distance of two metres between yourself and others at all times, with the exception of members of the same household or “bubble”. People must not congregate in groups; which will impact our daily routines, business operations and recreational activities.
- **Frequent and thorough handwashing**
Practice proper hand hygiene including good handwashing practices. Proper handwashing requires regularly and thoroughly washing your hands with soap and water or minimum 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- **Cleaning surfaces properly**
For households, regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces. Regular household cleaners, disinfectant wipes or a diluted bleach solution can be used according to the label directions.

- **Respiratory hygiene**
Practice good respiratory hygiene. When you cough or sneeze, do so into a tissue; dispose of the tissue and wash your hands afterwards. If you do not have a tissue available, cough into your sleeve or elbow.
- **Community face masks**
Wearing a non-medical mask, also referred to as a community face mask, is required when unable to maintain physical distancing in the community (i.e. grocery stores, pharmacies, etc.).

Operational Plan – Worship

The following details of an operational plan for worship from a traffic flow perspective is modeled on what most of us have experienced the last few months at grocery stores and pharmacies. Details as follows:

- Only the lobby entrance will be open
- There will be clearly marked areas 6 feet apart outside the entrance for worshippers to wait or they may choose to wait in their car
- Worshippers will be requested to self-screen before coming to worship and will be provided with the screening criteria (Appendix 1) by email as part of our re-opening notification process
- A Greeter (duty usher or usher) wearing a mask will open the door, greet the worshipper, and ask the worshipper if they have any COVID 19 symptoms. The greeter will have the screening criteria as well
- If none, the usher/duty usher will explain the protocols being used including:
 - Floor signs that are 6 feet apart
 - Use hand sanitizer that is on table in the lobby
 - Coats and hats are to be taken into the sanctuary
 - Location of the bulletins. Attendees will be asked to put their used bulletin in a waste can to be provided or they can take them home.
 - Location of the collection plate. We are accepting only monetary donations for the Food Bank clothing donations are to be dropped off only at Hillcrest Baptist church
 - Go directly to the narthex where an usher (s) will guide you to an available seat. Note that that 1/3 pews are available for seating with each pew holding 3 people. The seating area is marked in each pew.
 - While the number of worshippers must be limited to 50, per government guidelines, our overall capacity is 67. Our capacity in the sanctuary is 42, a total of 6 in both choir area; and 19 in the balcony. People living in the same residence do not need to sit 6 feet apart so that would give us extra capacity. We could also accommodate about 20 in the lobby with individual chairs and they would have sound from the speaker.
 - Hymnals will be removed and all hymns will be printed in the bulletin.
 - All washrooms will be operational but only one person at a time in a washroom to maintain social distancing
 - When the service is over the attendees will be asked to exit pew by pew starting at the back and go directly to the parking lot or their vehicle. Rev. John can greet them from a location in the lobby

- Pam Smith Sproul will organize this function
- There will be no Fellowship Time at this time as serving of food and beverage would add to risk, plus social distancing would be challenging to manage and labor intensive
- Furniture in the lobby cannot be used and will be consolidated in the corner

Regular Worship service details as follows:

- Rev. John and Suzanne will need to coordinate their spacing. If Rev. John is at the pulpit, Suzanne must be at the piano. If Rev. John is on the altar, Suzanne may be at organ.
- UCC guidelines specify that only soloists can sing, appropriately distant from congregants, because singing by congregants can cause droplets to spread farther. If Provincial Guidelines permit singing, Choir members will need to be seated in accordance with guidelines for choirs and as determined by Suzanne. Each member will be assigned each of the three hymnals and a music folder which they must take home between services
- Rev. John will be the only reader and will make all announcements. Wayne will wipe down and sanitize the microphones each week
- We will retain the same sound system schedule and Wayne will wipe down the soundboard each week. Ralph Furness to communicate to operators.
- Pews will be wiped down by Wayne each week
- One teller from each team will do the count on a given Sunday. In the case where two tellers live in the same household, these two tellers can do the count. There will be wipes and gloves for them to count and sanitize all surfaces. Lora Skead, Chief Teller, will organize this function.

Small funerals, weddings, and baptisms may be held within local restrictions about numbers.

- Infant baptism: The parents/guardians of the child should be the only ones to hold them. The officiant will need to sanitize their hands before each baptism.
- Child and adult baptism: Water should come from individual cups or a bottle for each person, not the common font.
- Every effort should be made to live stream if necessitated by the numbers.

Communion can take place as prior to the closing we purchased about 500 individually wrapped elements. When we have communion these elements will be available for pick up in the lobby prior to the service with the bulletins. Music and Worship will need to decide if we have communion in June.

The above rules and procedures will also apply to services in the Chapel and will be reviewed with the Korean pastor. Chapel capacity under the distancing rules is limited to 13, more if there are folks from the same household attending.

Operational Plan – Building (General)

Likewise the operational plan for the building will be similar to what each of us has experienced the last few months at retail locations. Details as follows:

- Outside doors will be locked at all times
- There will be clearly marked areas 6 feet apart outside the office entrance for worshippers to wait or they may choose to wait in their car

- Rev. John will screen staff and self-screen each day. If he is not on site, Marilen will screen staff and self-screen
- Marilen will screen visitors for symptoms before admitting them and wear a mask at her option
- Marilen will ask people to stand outside her door behind the yellow caution tape on the floor outside her door or she may invite them to enter her office
- Those invited to meet with Marilen in her office will be directed to sit in a chair across from her
- Those wanting to meet with Rev. John will enter his office via his lobby door
- Rev. John will enter and exit his office by his lobby door
- Access to the lower level of the building will be restricted to the Y, Wayne, and Marilen. The Y will need to be in agreement that we allow access to anyone who needs to perform a repair such as a member of the Tuesday Morning Work Crew. The stairwell barriers will be closed and signed saying “No Admittance Beyond This Point”
- The Tuesday Morning Work Crew (TMWC) may work on discretionary projects at their pleasure
- Wayne will ensure all surfaces and washrooms are serviced a minimum of twice per day using either broad spectrum Betco Daily Disinfectant DIN# 02451263 or bleach mixed on the basis of 1 part bleach and 9 parts water. He will complete the posted log. He will be provided with a mask to be used in accordance with community guidelines.
- Hand sanitizing stations have been placed inside all 5 entrances
- COVID 19 and Handwashing signs will be placed on both entrance doors, in each washroom, and all bulletin boards
- All tools used by the custodian, summer students, and TMWC must be sanitized after each time they are used

The following adjustments will need to be made to accommodate the special circumstances required by the Y:

- The Y will need to provide all their programs on the lower level.
- The Rumpus Room will be used in lieu of the Fellowship Hall for indoor activities
- Y will be requested to service the lower washrooms as required in the afternoon until a summer student is on staff
- If AA resumes their meetings we will need to dialogue with the Y about the use of washrooms. AA may need to use the washrooms in the back hallway on the main level.

Next Steps

The following needs to be completed to implement this plan:

1. Board Approval on May 20
2. Recruitment, Training, and Equipping our Greeters and Ushers (Pam Smith Sproul)
3. Informing, Training, and Equipping Tellers (Lora Skead)
4. Signage, Roping off Pews, Removal of Hymnals, Floor Markings, Cleaning Supply Inventory review, Cleaning Logs. Training Staff (Ralph Furness)
5. Once Phase 3 is approved by the government
 - a. Determine Re-Opening date (Grace, Rev. John)
 - b. Communication of Plan to Congregation (Grace, Rev. John)
 - c. Communication to Tenants (Ralph Furness)

- d. Communication to Staff (Grace, Rev. John)
- e. Communication to Tuesday Morning work Crew (Ralph Furness)

Grace Sheppard
Joyce Miller
Bonnie White
Pam Smith Sproul
Alan Colwell
Ralph Furness

May 19, 2020

Appendix 1

Public Health says symptoms shown by people with COVID-19 have included:

- a fever above 38 C
- a new cough or worsening chronic cough
- sore throat
- runny nose
- Headache
- new onset of fatigue
- new onset of muscle pain
- Diarrhea
- loss of sense of taste or smell
- difficulty breathing
- In children, symptoms have also included purple markings on the fingers and toes.

People with two of those symptoms are asked to stay at home and call Tele-Care 811 or their doctor.