



# The United Church of Canada L'Église Unie du Canada

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Regional Council 15  
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November 30, 2020

Dear Members of Regional Council 15,

I would like to provide you all with the following update. In conversation with Dr. Strang today, some of our questions have been answered, as follows.

## **1. If you, as clergy, are sick with symptoms what do you do:**

- a) If you have two or more symptoms, as with the general population please stay home and call 811, they will give you advice about testing.
- b) If you have been tested because you have symptoms and you have a negative test, you are free from COVID. You then must realize that you have another illness that can be spread. So, you can return to work when your acute symptoms have been gone for 24 hours (ex. fever, cough)
- c) If you test positive, public health will advise you about the next steps.
- d) If you have to be tested because you have been contacted by public health about being in the presence of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, public health will advise you about the regulations.
- e) In the case of any of the above, please be in touch with your M&P Committee as well as your Regional Minister.

## **2. When should we as a congregation shut down completely? Are there guidelines to know when?**

The public health authorities, Dr. Strang, and the government will advise when there is a need to shut down completely. Otherwise we are free to follow the gathering number and limits that are set. If there is a need to completely shut down in an area we will be advised to do so. If the governing body of a community of faith wishes to take extra precautions when in an outbreak area, that is completely up to the governing body to do what you feel is right for your congregation. However, you must follow the restriction that are in place, please do not look for ways to get around the restrictions.

## **3. Microphones:**

It is recommended that we not share microphones. If you have to share because you do not have enough mics for all of those taking part in the service, it is recommended that you not hold the microphone in your hands, and that you have your mouth back from the mic. Wipe the mic after use with a certified sanitization wipe. If that is not possible, and you have to hold the mic in your hands, you must sanitize your hands before and after handling the microphones. The microphones should then be wiped with a certified sanitizing wipe before the next person uses it.

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**4. Will there be a possibility of an extension of the Restriction for the HRM area:**

Currently the restrictions are in place until December 10, 2020. Dr. Strang feels that the restrictions that are in place for the HRM area (5 people inside and 5 people outside) and the limits on gathering for those other places in the province (50% capacity up to 100 people inside and 150 people outside) will remain in place for a week to two weeks after December 10 (current two week period). The opening up, once it is deemed appropriate to do so, will be in small increments, rather than being all at once. We will need to check the website for the updates as they come.

**5. Have the screening questions changed:**

No, if you are sick stay home and take the online screening test.

**6. What about once a week programs like Sunday school:**

Dr. Strang said these programs are considered faith-based gatherings, and have the same regulations for gathering limits.

**7. Congregational singing and Choirs:**

Are still not recommended. If there are small groups or soloists who are leading singing for the worship service, they should remain masked while doing so, and be physically distanced. If you decide that you are going to have congregational singing, then all people in the church must be masked for the full service.

**8. Take out Fundraisers:**

Take out dinners are permitted. You need to follow the government guidelines for food handling as well as have the appropriate license for the temporary event. You would have to make sure that you have a plan to keep those who are preparing the meal safe with COVID protocols, limiting the numbers preparing the meal and distancing, masking, sanitizing etc. are in place. When people come to pick up the meals you will again need to make sure they are masked and that they come to the door or the window of the church with a mask on. If you have people enter the building to pick up the dinners, have the dinners laid on a table and only have one person at a time picking up a meal. Sanitizing the table after each pick up. Make sure those who are giving out the meals are masked and sanitize their hands as well after each pick up.

**9. It is still very important to have a list of those who are entering your building with the date and the contact information so if the need arises contract tracing can be done quickly and efficiently.**

**10. The Choral Federation and Dr. Strang's office are still working on a document for the Choral Community, which will also be of use for congregations.** As this is a busy time for Dr. Strang, they will get that to us as soon as it is possible.

The next conversation with Dr. Strang will be on December 14, 2020 at 10:00am (Atlantic) If you have any questions for me to ask at that time please send them to my email at [fmaccuish@united-church.ca](mailto:fmaccuish@united-church.ca) .

*Faith*

Faith March-MacCuish  
Executive Minister