



## RE-OPENING AT ST. MARK'S

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**DATE: SEPTEMBER 6 @ 11:00 A.M.**

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Dear Members of St. Mark's Church Family,

The Government of Ontario some weeks ago announced that churches will be allowed to reopen to 50 percent building capacity.

The Session of St. Mark's met and decided to make a plan for what reopening at St Mark's might look like. A part of this plan was to delay the physical reopening until September 6 and take the month of August to put things into place for the safe re-opening of our church.

In a joint meeting with the Board of Managers a "Re-opening Committee" was drafted to work on a specific reopening plans that will guide us in a safe manner as we get back together as a church family.

Below is what is planned for 'Opening Up' St. Mark's Presbyterian Church for in person worship.

Keep in mind that this is new for everyone and we should anticipate that changes may be required. Session has approved the following plan to emphasize safety while focusing on God's plan for our Church:

**Worship Services:**

1. Live- Streamed Worship services will continue for members of St Mark's Church Family who estimate that they are not yet ready for in person worship. Live Streaming will be done through YouTube and will continue until COVID-19 cases are effectively eliminated or there is a vaccine.

2. On September 6, we will re-open the worship space at 7366 Darcel Ave, for Worship Service with a maximum 50 persons (the number that can be accommodated with physical distancing requirements and the 50% capacity limitation set by the province.) The following guidelines will be implemented in order to ensure the safety of individuals attending worship.

➤ Wearing a mask is mandatory for all indoor spaces in the Province of Ontario. Individuals and families are encouraged to wear a mask or adequate face covering when attending worship at St. Mark's.

➤ We ask everyone attending worship services to maintain physical distancing (2 meters/6 feet apart) before, during and after the service. Clear markings will be made on floors or furniture to promote physical distancing.

➤ Washroom Access is only available for 1 person at a time. Individuals using washrooms are encouraged to follow the before and after cleaning protocols that will be posted for everyone's safety.

➤ Alcohol based hand sanitizer will be placed at the entrance to the place of worship and every room, and all individuals will be encouraged to perform hand hygiene.

➤ Singing will not be permitted during the service. In order for the worship experience to be fulfilling we will use pre recorded music and musical items rendered by our in-house musicians.

➤ We will suspend the sharing or distributing of worship Sacraments, materials, or objects, which may include but is not limited to: Hymnals, Bibles, communion, microphones etc.

- A box will be placed at the front for each individual to drop their offering.
- In order to manage the flow of individuals and to prevent crowding we ask worshippers to avoid socializing inside the building. **EXIT THE BUILDING IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE SERVICE.** You may socialize in the parking lot while observing physical distancing guidelines.
- No nursery care or Sunday School will be provided at the Church building until COVID-19 cases are effectively eliminated or there is a vaccine. Printed Sunday School material will be made available for families to take up for their children to use during service or at home.

**Screening Activities:**

1. All individuals including children will be screened upon entry to worship. This screening will entail a temperature check done by trained personnel from within our church family.
2. All individuals who intend to attend worship will be asked to RSVP by completing a pre-screening form which will be submitted online to our congregation's email address which is administered by our Minister. The pre-screening form will also include information that will help us with contact tracing if the need arises. (Everyone on our congregation's emailing list will receive the pre-screening form after worship on August 16). (Individuals without an email address will be pre-screened by telephone before each worship service)

**Preparation and maintenance:**

1. As we prepare to re-open, the re-opening committee and volunteers will carry out an extensive cleaning of the premises to ensure that it meets the provincial standards.
2. We will clean and disinfect areas and surfaces that are most likely to become contaminated before and after every worship service. Surfaces most likely to become contaminated include, but are not limited to, doorknobs, railings, light switches, toilet and faucet handles, ceremonial objects, electronic devices, and tabletops.

3. Adequate signage will be posted throughout the building to help individuals maintain safety while worshipping at St. Mark's. Volunteers will also be on hand to give directions should the need arise.

**Other activities:**

Restarting of the other weekly activities that involve usage of the Church building will not begin until COVID-19 cases are effectively eliminated or there is a vaccine.

A Home Church model is currently being worked on to compliment our streamed service and online resources. This will address the need for fellowship, Sunday School, and the growing of our faith through face to face exchanges with others that is missing in an online only setting. More details will be communicated once we have a plan that we can move forward with.

We will be calling Church members periodically to check in to see how things are going. If you have any questions, please contact Rev. Germaine or any member of Session.

**In conclusion**

We realize these are anxious moments for our church family, especially when the COVID-19 pandemic has brought stress and uncertainty to our lives. We encourage everyone to be prayerful, diligent, and mindful of the well-being of every member of our church family and community. Even as we re-open for worship the Elders will re-evaluate the situation to see how we are coping with re-opening and managing safety standards. We are very blessed that we can also continue to worship with the live-streamed service, support one another in various ways, and access online resources like the mid week devotionals. Please log on to the links below for further information on COVID-19 protocols.

**COVID-19 Symptoms:**

[http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019\\_reference\\_doc\\_symptoms.pdf](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_reference_doc_symptoms.pdf)

**Physical Distancing:**

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-guide-physical-distancing.pdf?la=en>

**Hand Hygiene:**

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-hand-hygiene.pdf?la=en>

**COVID-19 Public Resources:**

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/respiratory-diseases/novel-coronavirus/public-resources>

