

St Paul's United Church, Warkworth, Ontario
COVID Reopening Protocols
November 2021

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Purpose This document describes the reopening plan for St Paul's United Church, Warkworth, following the suspension of worship services and other building uses during the COVID pandemic beginning in March, 2020.

Goals:

This plan is intended to help ensure the life of St Paul's so we can continue to serve our members, the community, and the wider world. We will:

- Manage and minimize risk, as measured by the absence of any outbreaks in the community traced back to St Paul's.
- Establish suitable rules for building use that balance the needs of renters with the safety of renters, church staff, church groups and the congregation, as well as suitable rules for in-person worship, including weddings and funerals.

This document is a detailed follow-up for the decision made this month
concerning the re-opening of our building which stated:

Worship Services do not require attendants to be vaccinated, as noted by the protocols of the Province of Ontario. We will observe all safety protocols regarding: sanitizing, contact tracing lists, social distancing, and wearing masks. (The Province includes 'regular meetings of church committees whose members are also regular worship attendees' in this category).

All other groups will require proof of double vaccination, in the form of a paper receipt or a downloaded vaccine passport. The leader(s) of each group are required to check for this proof, and adhere to all the other safety protocols as outlined below.

We encourage all who come into our building to listen carefully to our local health unit, our medical advisors, and our General Council office when determining the steps they will take in their self-care and the care of each other.

This document addresses three key areas of focus for infection control:

1. Enhanced Cleaning
2. Infection control protocols, such as health screening, masks, sanitizing, and managing the flow of people within the building
3. Training and Communication with staff, visitors and building users (which include staff, visitors, committees, church groups and renters)

Cleaning: All general-access areas, including washrooms, are to be cleaned on an as-needed basis. Adequate levels of supplies will be maintained by the Stewards and Trustees. High-touch surfaces in areas of the building that are in use are to be disinfected once per day:

- Door knobs, handles and opener buttons
- Light switches
- Hand sanitizing stations
- Stair railings
- In meeting rooms: door handles, light switches, tables, chairs
- In the washrooms: door handles, faucets, stall handles, toilet handles, toilet seats and paper towel dispenser handles
- In the Administrator's office: door handles, "public" side of the desk. Additional hand sanitizing stations

will be installed around the church. St Paul's will provide cleaning supplies, signed out on a request basis, to group leaders who wish to do additional cleaning where they gather. These must be returned when the groups leave.

EACH GROUP IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING THEIR SPACE IS CLEAN AT THE END OF ITS USE.

Infection Control Protocols: Health Screening. A health screening form has been created and paper forms have also been made available.

- Everyone must screen each day they enter the church building
- A screening reminder is posted on the front door
- Screening activities include the collection of contact information:
 - This information will be used only for contact tracing
 - For privacy and anonymity reasons, group leaders may instead maintain their own records of contact information for their groups
- The Administrator will retain paper forms for 30 days and then discard them.

Mask Use: Face masks are mandatory:

- Everyone entering the building must wear a face mask
- Masks must fit closely and cover the nose and mouth
- Face masks must remain in place at all times except:
 - When staff members are alone in their own offices
 - During Worship services, a person may remove their mask while speaking at the pulpit.
- During meetings, the chair or speaker may remove their mask while speaking at the “lecture” which is 2 metres from the audience.
- For meals in the Gathering Place, we will go by restaurant rules: masks can be taken off once seated at the table, but must be put back on if you leave your table. Persons should be seated in “cohort groups” of no more than 6 persons, and each “cohort group” should be separated by 2 meters or 6 feet. A “cohort group” is defined as a family, work or friendship group that meets regularly and during that meeting, masks are removed to eat or converse.
- ● Practice good mask etiquette:
 - Wash or hand-sanitize before donning and after removing your mask
 - Choose a mask that is comfortable and does not muffle your words excessively
 - Avoid touching your mask

Building Usage: The following restrictions apply to building usage:

- The number of people in each room is limited to the normal pre-COVID occupancy limits.
- Singing and playing wind instruments are permitted only as follows:
 - During worship, our band can occupy the sound stage, at least 12 feet from everyone else.
 - In renter or church user groups, where a suitable COVID safety plan has been approved by the COVID Reopening Committee
- Church users are to wash their hands and/or hand sanitize regularly, using the provided stations
- Renters and user groups must sign a COVID-specific agreement to follow these rules, and must establish and enforce their own specific protocols within their own groups
- Special arrangements may be put in place, by agreement of the Official Board, that modify these rules for certain building uses, e.g. recording services in the sanctuary or preparing brown bag lunches

Building Access: The following rules will govern building access:

- ● All groups meeting in the church or Gathering Place must be booked in advance with the office to ensure:
 - Multiple groups are not entering or exiting at once
 - Building users are aware of the protocols

- Rooms are aired out and cleaned appropriately between uses (vacant for at least half an hour, or in the case of singing or playing wind instruments, for at least 12 hours)
- To open the building, staff or key volunteers will:
 - Fill out the screening form themselves before arriving
 - Let group leader(s) in as they arrive, ensuring they prove vaccination, screen, mask, etc.
- Group leaders will let in their groups as follows:
 - Check that group members are vaccinated, have screened, are masked, hand sanitize, etc.
 - Avoid congestion and otherwise maintain distancing on the way to and in the meeting rooms
- At least one greeter will be on hand for each in-person Sunday Worship service.
- Access by visitors from the general public will be at the discretion of the Administrator or another staff member they may be visiting.
 - In all cases, screening, masks, hand sanitizing, distancing etc. are still required
- Access by contractors or service providers may be coordinated through a church committee so long as it is also booked with the Administrator.
 - In all cases, screening, masks, hand sanitizing, etc. are still required
 - Proof of vaccination is not required
 - Whoever lets the contractor or service provider in must set the expectations

Flow Control: The following flow control measures will be put in place:

1. Closing off areas except for staff access
2. Taped arrows on the floor of the sanctuary to direct people down one aisle and up the other.

Training and Communication:

Communication Plan The St Paul's Official Board will communicate with the following people:

- United Church of Canada, East Central Ontario Regional Council
- Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit
- Staff members
- The St Paul's congregation
- Renters and other user groups
- Church volunteers

Topics of communication will include education and training, monitoring and enforcing compliance and notification of changes.

On-Site Signs: Signs will be installed as follows:

1. At the main entrance of the building:
 - a) Protocols: proof of vaccination, mask use, hand washing/sanitizing, no food or drink
 - b) Screening reminder
 - c) Stay home if sick (with symptoms)
2. Area Closed - on doors and hallways that are closed to general access
3. At hand sanitizing stations
4. Hand-washing instructions - in washrooms

Monitoring: Group leaders are responsible for monitoring COVID protocols within their groups. The Administrator will be the first point of contact for group leaders to voice questions or concerns, or to give feedback to groups as necessary. The Administrator and the Stewards/Trustees will monitor the effectiveness of the plan and give feedback to the Official Board if adjustments are necessary. In case of non-compliance, St Paul's United Church reserves the right to revoke bookings. If necessary, this action will be administered jointly by the Official Board and the Administrator. The Official Board will also monitor the evolution of the pandemic within our area and the changing protocols from the Health Unit and other government entities. If our area returns to lock-down protocols, the church will be closed to renters and in-person Worship.

Response to Infection or Suspected Infection: Church users who have symptoms should call a COVID

assessment centre and self-isolate until test results are available and/or symptoms have abated. They must contact their group leader, or the Administrator, to let them know of suspected or confirmed COVID infections. Group leaders must notify the Administrator of suspected or positive cases of COVID within their group and assist with contact tracing, if there is any possibility that an infected group member was inside St Paul's United Church.

This notification must be within 24 hours of learning of the infection or suspected infection, and the group leader must provide information on when the affected person was last at the church, where they were, and any details known about the timeline of the confirmed or suspected infection. It is not necessary to provide the name of the affected person. The leader of the group with the affected person is responsible to contact their own group. Groups with a positive case must stay out of the church building until those exposed have tested negative or isolated for two weeks.

St Paul's will inform the other groups and individuals that may have been exposed. After this notification, leaders for those groups will be responsible to contact their members. The assessment of who needs to be contacted will be done by the St Paul's Official Board in consultation with the Administrator and/or the Stewards/Trustees. The need for any additional cleaning activities will be jointly decided between the Official Board and the Stewards/Trustees, potentially with input from the local Health Unit.