

August 26, 2020

Dear Christ Church Parishioners,

As you are aware, our church building has been closed for worship for many months. We are now planning our re-opening.

Christ Church council has been working with the councils of the other ACPC churches, and we have decided to be very cautious, bearing in mind that many of us are in the vulnerable category!

In preparation for opening, Council has decided the following:

1. The church will be given a deep cleaning. Once this is done, sanitizing will be performed weekly.
2. Following public health guidelines for two-metre distancing, the maximum capacity for a church service is 20 people. Therefore, we are requiring parishioners to reserve their seat by calling the ACPC office at 902-752-6422. Once a total of 20 attendees is reached, people will be placed on the list for the following Sunday.
3. Our first service will be held on Sunday, September 20. Rev. Darlene will lead worship at Christ Church once every three weeks, and Licensed Lay Ministers will lead worship on the other weeks.
4. Services will start after hosting the Northumbria Region Electoral Synod on September 12. This will act as a test of the seating arrangements. There is not enough time to sanitize the church after the Synod in time to hold a regular service the next morning. Synod is not open to parishioners, but several members of council will be in attendance, including delegates Jason Ferguson and Rev. Darlene.
5. Initially the services will be Morning Prayer or Service of the Word. Celebrating the Eucharist will be evaluated at an ACPC council meeting on October 13.
6. There will be no 8:00 a.m. services until at least October 13. Those who normally attend the early service are welcome to attend the 11:15 a.m. service. It is hoped that the 8:00 a.m. services will resume at some point.
7. Services will continue to be recorded and posted to YouTube and the ACPC website.

**Worship Schedule: September 6-October 11**

**September 20:**

St Bees' with LLMs  
St James' with LLMs  
Christ Church with Rev Darlene

**October 4:**

St Bees' with LLMs  
St James' with Rev Darlene  
Christ Church with LLMs

**September 27:**

St Bees' with Rev Darlene  
St James' with LLMs  
Christ Church with LLMs

**October 11:**

St Bees with LLMs  
St James' with LLMs  
Christ Church with Rev Darlene

Everyone attending services is required to wear a mask, and to maintain social distancing at all times.

We are looking for volunteers to assist with the services:

- Usher to guide people to their seats
- Person to record who is present at the services
- One reader for each service

Following this letter is "A Guide to Safe Re-opening of Christ Church, Stollerton for Gathered Worship," which has been put together by Council as a reference.

David Harrison and Jason Ferguson, Wardens

## A Guide to Safe Re-opening of Christ Church, Stellarton for Gathered Worship

As of August 9, 2020, The Government of NS and the Department of Health and Wellness announced that faith communities could re-open for in-person worship, with a gathering limit of 50% capacity up to 200 people for indoor or 250 for outdoor gatherings, with physical distancing (2 meters/6 feet) being maintained. This gathering limit also applies to weddings and funerals held at the church.

As we plan to reopen our doors, we must adhere to all federal and provincial health and safety requirements, as well as practices, as directed by those authorities. Above all, we must ensure a safe environment for our congregation, employees and volunteers. We must also “keep the communication and conversation open through every step of reopening – policies (and procedures) are made to change with the changing times. Flexibility is required, especially in the instance of a pandemic.” (Covid-19: A Guide to Safely Reopening – Ecclesiastical Insurance Office PLC)

The Parish Council grants to the Rector and Wardens the ability to modify these guidelines according to direction from the Provincial Government and Diocesan authorities, and as our experience of physical gathering for worship may indicate where changes are required, or efficiencies are discerned.

- **Physical Distancing** between individuals/households – 2m in all directions. Seating is marked using alternate pews We can accommodate 20 people.
- **Entering the Church** – All parishioners will need to wait their turn to enter the Church via the main doors or the accessible entrance to the side of the main doors. Physical distancing must be maintained.
- **Non-medical face masks** are mandatory to comply with provincial directives. To ensure the safety of all, Christ Church Council respectfully asks that all parishioners bring their own masks or use the masks available upon entrance to the Church. Parishioners who cannot wear a mask for medical reasons are permitted to attend services.
- **A record of attendance** will be kept to be used if contact tracing ~~should be~~ is needed. A standard set of COVID19 questions will also be asked prior to attendees gaining entrance to the building. An individual will collect this information at the church entrance.
- Hand sanitizer is available ~~at various points in the church including immediately upon entrance~~. One washroom will be available for the public’s use. Anyone using the washroom is asked to sanitize surfaces before leaving using products provided. Avoid touching your face. Do not shake hands or hug. Participants are asked to keep all personal items including hats, coats, etc. with them in their assigned pew.
- **Prayer books and Hymnals** will not be provided. The Audio-Visual Equipment will be used ~~for each worship~~.
- **The Offering plate** will be kept in one central spot and parishioners are asked to deposit their offering into the plate as they are ushered to their seat.
- **Singing** will not be permitted. Christ Church’s organist and a designated will provide musical inspiration.
- When passing the **“Peace,”** use a smile or a wave with no physical touching.
- **Exiting the Church** – There will be no receiving line at the end of worship. Parishioners are discouraged from lingering to chat. The back rows will leave first in order, alternating sides keeping physical distancing requirements enforced.
- **No social gatherings** (i.e. coffee time) will be held for the foreseeable future.
- **Cleaning** – The Church building will be deep cleaned/sanitized by an external company prior to its initial use. Ongoing cleaning/sanitizing will take place after each service or other use, with special attention paid to high touch surfaces.

**References:**

- *Archbishop Ron Cutler's letter June 17, 2020*
- *Proposed Physical Gathering Plan for Worship – St. Stephen's Parish (Archdeacon Ian Wissler), Christ Church Shelburne (Rector Ed Trevors), Parish of Lantz*
- *COVID19: A Guide to Safely Reopening your organization During the Pandemic – Ecclesiastical Insurance Office PLC*
- *Government of NS – Novel Coronavirus (COVID 19) website*