



TWO RIVERS PASTORAL CHARGE
THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
Bayswater-Summerville, Long Reach, Westfield United Churches
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May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be always with you!

Our Two Rivers Pastoral Charge Session met this week to plan for re-opening our church buildings for worship in September. Worship will feel different when we than it did prior to March of this year, so I am writing this letter to help you know ahead of time what to expect when we return to our buildings. These guidelines are current as of this week as per the Government of New Brunswick Covid-19 guidelines; but as we have seen over the past months, these guidelines are always subject to change as the situation in New Brunswick changes and as scientists learn more about this new virus. We will endeavour to keep you informed as our policies and procedures change.

Some Dates to Keep in Mind

Sunday September 13 (and before): 10:30am “livestream only” service

Sunday September 20: Church Picnic at 11am at the Sherwood’s Cottage – details to follow

Sunday September 27: 9:15 Worship at Summerville; 11:15 Worship at Westfield

Sunday October 4: 9:15 Worship at Long Reach; 11:15 Worship at Westfield

Masks

- You are required to wear a mask at all times within the church building. Please bring your own mask (cloth or otherwise) with you to help us keep our operating expenses down, and as we care for creation by minimizing single-use items as much as possible (though we will have some available at the entrance of the church in case you forget to bring your own).

Handwashing

- Hand Sanitizer will be available at all entrances. Please use the hand sanitizer provided, or use your own as you enter the building.

Singing

- At this time, due to the possible risk of singing spreading Covid-19, there can be no choir or congregational singing. Hymnbooks have been removed from the pews. The service will include music, and those worshipping with us online will be able to sing along; however if you are in the church building, I invite you to let the words and the music wash over you rather than singing along with them.

Physical Distancing

- Please be aware of the space around you, and maintain physical distance between you and others at all times, both inside and outside the building.
- The Greeters will instruct you where to sit – seating will generally begin from the front of the sanctuary, and “bubbles” will be seated 1m apart (every 2nd pew, with 1m between “bubbles”). Please bring your coat and any other belongings with you to your seat.
- If at all possible, please arrive at the church along with those who are in your “family and close friends bubble” – you may want to arrange to meet in the parking lot if you are coming from separate households. This will make it much easier for our Greeters to be able to seat bubbles together.
- No hugs, handshakes, or high-fives at this time. I invite you to be creative in greeting your neighbours – a wave, a peace sign, or a bow/curtsey may be the way to go!
- I won’t be greeting at the back of the church due to space limitations – weather permitting, I will be outside (mask on) to greet you after the service.

Screening and Contact Tracing

- The Greeters will ask you some Covid-19 screening questions when you arrive. You will also be asked to provide your name and phone number or e-mail address (one per household), in case there is a case of Covid-19 and Public Health needs to do contact tracing. This information will be kept in a secure place and shredded after 21 days.
- Because it will take longer to get in to the building, you may want to consider arriving a bit earlier than you normally would.

Washrooms

- Our washrooms will be available and cleaned regularly, but please be aware that they can’t be cleaned after each user.

Food

- At this time, we can’t serve food or beverages. This means that there will be no “coffee hour” after our Sunday service, or receptions after weddings or funerals.

Offering Plates

- The offering plates will not be passed from person-to-person. They will be available on a table by the entrance – you are invited to place your offering in the plate when you arrive or when you leave.
- This is a very good time to consider moving your offering to PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance) to minimize the risk to those who count the offering each week.

Online Streaming

- Due to the above restrictions as well as individual health risks, not all members of our congregation will be able to attend services in-person. Because of this, services will continue to be livestreamed from Westfield United Church on the Two Rivers Pastoral Charge Facebook Page. The service streaming time will therefore change from 10:30 to 11:15am as of September 27.
- When attending a service in-person at Westfield United, please be aware that you may appear in this livestream.

Children/Youth Programming

- Gaby is currently working on programming for families, children, and youth (which will also look different this year). Watch for more details coming from her soon.

Jesus told his followers that the greatest commandment was to love God with all our heart, with all our being, and with all our mind; and the second was that we are to love our neighbour as we love ourselves (Matthew 22:36-39). In pre-Covid times, loving our neighbour often involved hugs and handshakes; but in this time of Covid-19, loving our neighbour looks like wearing masks to keep others safe, and maintaining physical distance even when we are longing to give them a hug, a handshake, or a hand on the shoulder. If we all live out our commitment to love our neighbours, we can keep each other safe as a community.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch with me or with any other member of Session if you have any questions about what worship will look like when we re-open our buildings.

And may God continue to bless you and everyone you love, today and always.

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