

COVID-19 Policy Updated June 7, 2021

The Official Board of Grace United has taken steps to minimize the risks associated with the current pandemic. This has included creating a committee that has been carefully studying local health unit, provincial, and our regional council guidelines and helped guide our church in how to resume in-person worship. This committee will continue to monitor current health guidelines, to update policy, and to keep people informed.

Together we strive to love God, love our neighbour as we continue to worship together and protect one another's health.

If you have any questions or concerns about these policies please contact:
Pat Blackmore at 226 434-2134.

In-Person Worship

1. Reserving your place for worship – Due to limited space people must reserve a spot for worship by phoning the office. This helps with contact tracing and prevents the need to turn people away on Sunday morning. Laurel, our office administrator, will assign seats based on group size and people's needs. Please let her know of any needs when booking. Copies of the seating plan and reservation list will be left in the sanctuary for the greeters and ushers. Capacity limits are in accordance to provincial mandate.

2. Physical Space
 - a. Outside and inside 2 meter visible space markers are present.
 - b. Washrooms. On Sunday only the washroom in the basement will be accessible to minimize cleaning.
 - c. During worship only the sanctuary and the washroom in the basement are accessible. Other doors will be closed and signs posted.
 - d. Seating in the sanctuary is designated with a minimum of two meters separation each group of people. Seating is assigned by Laurel, our office administrator, when people reserve their spot. Ushers will lead people to their assigned seats.
 - e. A Cleaning Checklist has been created and given to our custodian to ensure proper cleaning and disinfecting.
 - f. Hand sanitizer stations are present at points of entry and exit, and outside washrooms.
 - g. Disinfectant wipes are available for audio and video equipment at their stations.
 - h. A spot for people to give their offering is set out on the back table and will remain stationary during the service. The offering will be blessed from the front. We continue to encourage people to give through PAR, e-transfer, and cheques when possible.

3. The Service

- a. The service will be adjusted in accordance with local health unit guidelines (ex. length of service, availability of bulletins). In accordance with the local public health unit guidelines there will be no singing, humming, or responses, or live gifts of music that involve wind instruments at this time. Following consultation with our local health unit a soloist singing is possible with singers wearing masks and behind clear barriers in place, and properly distanced from others.
- b. masks must be worn in the building following the guidelines of the local public health unit including during the service. Worship leaders/musicians may remove their mask when leading if they are in their designated area and a barrier is in place.
- c. The minister and musician will enter separately and immediately before the service (or when they begin to play) and will not be socializing with the congregation before or after. People can call the minister to talk if there is a concern outside of the service time.
- d. All high touched surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected regularly as per the cleaning plan.
- e. Only those involved with the service will be at the front of the church and they will maintain proper distance.
- f. Only the minister/worship leader will share the announcements.
- g. Microphones will be designated and not shared. Only those using the microphone will touch or move them. If a microphone, lectern, pulpit, or a music stand is shared it will be sanitized between use.
- h. In accordance with local health guidelines there will be no bulletins or handouts. Items such as printed newsletters will be distributed in other ways.
- i. Special music, not played by the music leader, will continue to be recorded prior to the service.
- j. There is no organized socializing time, no passing of the peace, no coffee after service, and people will be asked not to linger in the building following the service. A reminder will be given near the end of the service.
- k. Services continue to be recorded and aired the following week on TV and on our YouTube page.
- l. Ushers will direct people to their assigned seats. If people need to be moved for any reason the ushers will sanitize the space just vacated.
- m. People will self screen before arrival.

4. Entry and Exit plan

- a. Ushers and greeters will welcome people, check people in with the reservation list, direct people to their assigned seat and help coordinate people leaving. They will be trained in extra safety measure. If people arrive and have not reserved a spot the usher will determine if there is still space available. If there is, they will collect the contact tracing information. If not, they will compassionately direct the person to the at

home worship options. A note of who had to be turned away will be taken so they can be contacted during the week.

- b. The ushers will lead people out of the sanctuary. Exiting will be from the back of sanctuary to the front. Exceptions will be made for those who need physical assistance.
 - c. Elevator: Elevator operators will be trained around extra safety precautions. Masks are to be worn in elevator. Only those in the same bubble will be transported at the same time. Riders will be asked to face the wall while in the elevator. Only the operator will touch the buttons.
 - d. Screening questions will be posted at entry.
 - e. Masks are available for people who have forgotten theirs or need to change their mask during the service.
5. Contact Tracing: The primary means of contact tracing will be the reservation list. The contact tracing list will include a) Name and phone number or email of the people who were in the building (if no phone number, where they can be reached), b) Date and time that the gathering took place, c) Purpose for the gathering.

Staff

1. Masks are to be worn in common spaces
2. Staff will fill out the contact tracing form each time they are in the church. This doubles as the self-screening checklist
3. Doors are to be locked.
4. Only staff are allowed to use workspace. No visitors or guests.
5. Staff will only use space they need for work. If they require other space (ex. friendship room) they are to book it with Laurel and Randy is to be notified of the usage. Places used will be noted on sign-in sheet. Areas used are to be left as used (ex. tables left out) so they can be properly cleaned and disinfected.
6. Shared workspace is to be co-ordinated by staff.
7. Staff will be kept up to date with safety information, training, and will be checked in on regularly by M&P.

Building Usage

- a) Doors are to be locked. People are asked to make an appointment if they have to see a staff member or ring the doorbell.
- b) Non-staff (even those who have keys) who wish to access the building must contact Laurel, our office administrator, to arrange use of space. She will let them know the health and safety requirements. This is to ensure proper cleaning and disinfecting. Outside of regular office hours Paul Cruickshank can be contacted. His number is posted on the door.
- c) Upon entry masks must be worn in common areas.
- d) Upon entry the individual will fill out the contact tracing information on the table outside of the kitchen. This doubles as the self-screening checklist

- e) The kitchens are closed and only those who must enter them and have previously consulted with Paul Cruickshank may enter. Use of the kitchen must be approved by the reopening committee. The kitchenette upstairs is reserved for staff.
- f) During the week only the washrooms outside of the offices are to be used. If another washroom needs to be used please let the office know.
- g) Non-staff are encouraged to phone ahead if they need to talk with people in the office and to ring the doorbell on arrival.

Funerals

- a) Funerals will be able to take place at the church following the return of worship. Ushers will be present to assist.
- b) The practices and policies from Sunday Worship will be implemented.
- c) No food or receptions are to take place at this time.
- d) As with Sunday only the sanctuary and downstairs washrooms are to be used at this time.

Weddings

- a) **Same as funeral plan** and drawing from the plans for in-person worship.

Self Screening For Attending In-Person Worship

We ask that you do not attend in-person worship if:

- You have been in close contact with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19 or has confirmed COVID-19 in the past 14 days.
- You have travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days.
- If you have any of the following symptoms:
 - Fever
 - cough
 - trouble breathing
 - sore throat, trouble swallowing
 - runny nose or red eyes
 - loss of taste or smell
 - not feeling well, tired, sore muscles
 - nausea, vomiting, diarrhea

(Source: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>)

Continuing Worship With Grace United Church At Home

We celebrate that God's Spirit draws us together in worship and community even if we are physically apart. Worshiping at home is not a secondary form of worship but another way to share in celebrating God's presence and share in community. You can join us for worship from home in the following ways:

TV: Wightman TV at 8AM and 3PM
 Eastlink at 5PM every Sunday.

YouTube: Search for Grace United Church Hanover or visit:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC38PQoLtKpnKBxo_IIEw65w