

Dear Congregational Members:

As COVID-19 vaccinations are administered throughout the province, we are entering a new phase of the pandemic where we can begin to gather again to share hope, healing, restoration and recovery together. The BC Centre for Disease Control, in close collaboration with faith leaders from across the province, has developed guidelines to ensure that worship services are conducted safely. The Covid Restart Committee has reviewed this guidance document and has developed the following guidelines to ensure your safety, minimize the risk of infection and prevent transmission of the Covid-19 virus during in-person worship and use of the Church building.

The virus that causes Covid-19 spreads in several ways. It can spread in droplets when a person coughs or sneezes. It can also spread if you touch a contaminated surface and then touch your face. Consequently, attendees are reminded to wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Posters have been placed in each washroom. The risk of person-to person transmission increases the closer you come to other people, the more time you spend near them, and the more people you come near. **It is therefore important that we diligently practice social distancing, that we avoid shaking hands/hugging and avoid touching our eyes, nose or mouth.** In order to ensure social distancing, a maximum occupancy limit has been assigned to each room in the church. As well, markings have been placed on the floor and on pews in the Sanctuary to encourage people to social distance. Posters reminding people to social distance have also been posted throughout the church.

It is important that congregational members know the risk factors of the Covid-19 virus. Those who are 65 and older are at a significantly higher risk of serious complications should they contract Covid-19. This risk increases in proportion to age, those with underlying or compromised medical conditions or those with household members with underlying medical conditions, such as those who are undergoing treatment for cancer, or have a compromised immune system. Members must stay home:

- If you have Covid-19 or live with someone with Covid-19
- Are displaying any of the following new or worsening symptoms: fever or chills, cough, loss of sense of smell or taste, difficulty breathing, sore throat, loss of appetite, extreme fatigue or tiredness, headache, body aches, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea
- Have travelled outside of Canada within the last 14 days
- have been identified by Public Health as a close contact of someone with COVID-19
- have been told to self-isolate by Public Health
- are feeling sick

**Those with symptoms of Covid-19 are instructed to dial 811 and follow the advice of the healthcare professional.**

Hand Sanitizer stations will be set up throughout the church. Hymnals have been removed from the pews to prevent spread of the virus. Bulletins will not be handed out, but will be placed on the pews after printing.

Those planning to attend worship will be required to call or email their names prior to the Sunday service that they plan on attending. Currently a maximum of 50 people may attend a worship service. **The committee strongly encourages that all Ushers and Greeters that have not been fully vaccinated are to be under the age of 65 years.** All those attending the service will be **required to wear a face mask.** Signs have been posted with instructions on how to properly put on, wear and remove a face mask. Those arriving at the church will enter through the front doors, which will be propped open by the Ushers. A greeter/usher will be present to check their names off an attendance list. This list is necessary for contact tracing and will be kept in a secure log book for 30 days as per Provincial Health Orders. They will then be escorted by an Usher to their seat. The church will be seated front to back in order to ensure physical distancing. In order to prevent the spread of the virus, there will be no singing during the service. Only instrumental music with/ or without a soloist, as well as pre-recorded music will be played. Luther Hall will be closed and only the washrooms in the hallway and Disability washroom in the Board room will be available for use.

Should Communion be served, worshippers will follow the direction of the ushers, paying attention to social distance from other family groups. Communicants are to sanitize their hands as they proceed to the table. **It is recommended that communicants stand 2 metres away from the Pastor to hear the words, "The body of Christ..." and then step forward to receive the wafer.**

Upon completion of the service, parishioners will exit the Sanctuary via the emergency doors, under the direction of the ushers, into the parking lot.

These procedures are subject to change as local outbreaks/hotspots occur and new regulations are developed.

As all members of the public are now eligible to be vaccinated, the Covid Restart Committee encourages all congregational members to get vaccinated. Getting vaccinated not only protects oneself but will protect family, friends and all those who are unable to be vaccinated due to medical reasons.

Your Covid 19 Restart Committee

Jim Gustafson, Norma Frick, Donna Kneller, David Peter  
Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church