

Grace Mennonite Church Covid Guidelines for Worship Services and Church Events

Manitoba Province wide **CODE RED**

Effective February 12, 2021

Due to Government of Manitoba Public Health Covid restrictions please note the following:

- Sunday morning Worship Services in the sanctuary will comply with capacity restrictions.
- All other in church weekly activities are cancelled.
- You may contact the church at office@gracesteinbach.ca.

1. Seating for Worship Services

- Gathering size limitations as per Manitoba Public Health guidelines will be followed. These guidelines are for faith-based services.

2. Parking Lot

- Attendees are required to maintain social distance on the church parking lot.

3. Preparing Facility

- The congregation can expect that areas used for services will be cleaned and disinfected according to Manitoba Public Health guidelines before they arrive and after they leave.
- After each public event, high touched items will be cleaned and disinfected.
- All non essential items will be removed from the foyer, sanctuary and nursery. (i.e. pillows, chairs, all items in pews including - hymnals, songbooks, offering envelopes)
- There will be floor markers for directional flow and to help congregants maintain their distance from people outside of their household.
- Signage will be posted to encourage social distancing, proper hygiene, coughing/sneezing into elbow, etc.
- Hand sanitizer stations will be placed at the entrances and in various other locations.

4. Preparing the Congregation

- The congregation will receive a Constant Contact preparing them for what to expect when coming to Grace for worship services.

5. Self-Assessment

- Congregants, staff and volunteers are reminded to stay home if they are feeling unwell, even if their symptoms are mild.
- All congregants, staff and volunteers should screen themselves for symptoms of Covid-19 or exposures prior to entering the facility.
- A link to the latest self-assessment tool should be included in the Constant Contacts sent out by the office.
- <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>

6. Entering / Exiting Building

- Maintain a single point of entry into the building to ensure occupancy limits are followed. Several exits are available. At all times congregants should ensure physical distancing is maintained.
- When the weather permits, outside doors will be propped open.
- Ushers will be available to greet and assist in the foyer. Ushers must maintain a physical distance and avoid physical contact with congregants.
- Social distancing should be maintained all the way to your seat in the sanctuary.
- If choosing to come to Grace, we are expecting congregants to maintain a social distance between households.
- People socializing together are asked to physically distance themselves from members outside of their household, except for brief necessary exchanges.
- Traditional greetings such as handshakes should be avoided.
- Following the Worship Service, the ushers will dismiss the congregation row by row. Attendees are asked to exit the building immediately after the service to minimize the time that individuals are together indoors.

7. Seating and Social Distancing in the Sanctuary

- Households must sit together and they are to maintain social distancing between households.
- Ushers may be asked to assist you in finding a seat.
- Ushers will be appointed to dismiss congregants after the service so as to maintain social distancing between households exiting the sanctuary.

8. Stage

- Music worship teams will be limited to 3 or 4 on stage and 1 pianist and 1 organist.
- Seating or standing arrangements should allow for at least 2 metre/6' separation between participants.
- Each household should have their own microphone and music stand. Sheet music or devices with electronic sheet music should not be shared.
- There will be a hand sanitizer station on stage.
- All people involved in the worship service should practise social distancing.
- The front row of benches are reserved for the worship team. When restrictions allow higher capacity numbers, worship team may need to remain on the stage for the duration of the service.

9. Congregational Singing

- At this time, we will not be facilitating congregational singing.

10. Offering

- Offering plates will not be passed for donations during the worship service.
- Consider using one of these donation options
 - mailing your cheque to the church
 - through automatic withdrawal
 - e-transfer at donate@gracesteinbach.ca
 - emailing the office to arrange a time to drop off a donation
 - stationary box to be made available

11. Sound Booth Technicians

- When possible, there should be only one technician in the sound booth unless both are from the same household. If two technicians are from different households they are required to wear a mask.
- Physical distancing between households must be maintained.
- Microphones, music stands, headphones, laptops, desk counter, etc. should be cleaned and disinfected after every event.
- Cleaning and disinfecting supplies will be available.

12. Bulletins

- Paper bulletins can be distributed at worship services. i.e. left on pews or handed out by ushers wearing masks

13. Alternate Service Options

- An additional form of the worship service will be provided. This may be a live streaming service and/or audio service on the website.

14. Nursery

- Nursery will be closed except for parents with infants.

15. Volunteers

- The scheduling of Worship Services will depend on availability of volunteers (i.e. ushers, worship participants, cleaning volunteers, etc.).

16. Library

- The library will be open during office hours – tentatively Tuesday to Friday from 9:30 am to 1:30 pm.
- Hand sanitizer will be available before entering the library which is to be used before handling the books.
- There may not be a librarian on duty.
- Returned books are to be put in the return bin.
- Books may be signed out.
- Library guests are asked to sign the guest book on the library table.

17. Higher-Risk Activities

- Coffee and food will not be served in the foyer following the worship service.
- Children’s Church and Adult Formation will resume following Public Health guidelines.
- Communion and baptism services may take place following Public Health guidelines.
- Group meals will not be facilitated in the church building.
- Social gatherings that occur outside of in-person services should follow all guidelines related to social distancing, group size, cleaning/disinfecting, food/drink and other applicable guidelines.

18. Non essential spaces

- Foyer, sanctuary, nursery and designated washrooms are available for use during the worship services.
- Children’s Church may use classroom areas and basement or middle level washrooms.
- All other areas in the church not being used for Sunday services and Children’s Church will be closed Sunday mornings.

19. Masks

- Masks must be worn in the church building wherever the public normally has access.

20. Washroom Facilities

- Washrooms will be cleaned and disinfected before and after each event.

21. Hand Sanitizer

- Hand sanitizer stations will be located at the entrances and exits and placed in various locations in areas used for worship services.

22. Sanitation Team

- As required, a sanitation team will be appointed to aid with the extra cleaning and disinfecting due to Manitoba Public Health guidelines.

23. Church Events (other than worship services)

- Follow the guidelines in this document that apply to the Church Event.
- See the *Church Events Checklist* created for the event coordinator before planning an event. This document is available from the office.