

Greetings, everyone,

This coming Sunday, September 13th, we are planning to have our first formal in-person church service since we shut down for COVID-19 last spring. A test service, to help fine-tune our protocols, will be held Thursday, September 10, with a limited attendance.

There will be two in-person church services each week (Sundays at 10 am and Thursdays at 11 am). The Thursday service will also be recorded and available to watch online. If you haven't already done so, and are planning to attend an in-person service, please let Wilma in the church office know which day you will be coming. Once you pick a day (Sunday or Thursday), please continue with that group rather than switching days.

Provincial pandemic protocols require that we maintain social distancing, so we can accommodate only a limited number of people at the church. We'll send out a reminder each week, asking if you're coming. Please let us know whether or not you'll be there so we can plan the seating and get our numbers right.

To minimize the spread of COVID-19 as much as possible, we ask that you follow these rules.

1. Please maintain social distancing at all times.
2. When inside the building, wear a mask. (If you forget yours, one will be provided.)
3. Sanitize hands upon entry.

Also, please remember that we need to look out for one another during this pandemic. Some of our members are elderly, some are frail, and some are immune-compromised.

So, one of the most important requirements is this:

4. If you're not feeling well, PLEASE STAY HOME. If you've recently travelled outside Manitoba and should be self-quarantining or are living with someone who is or should be self-quarantining, PLEASE STAY HOME. Please don't risk the health of our fellow congregants.

The church service will be shorter and may not look exactly like what we're used to, but the basic elements are there. We will pray together. We will listen to the scriptures and hear the sermon. We won't sing (provincial guidelines) but there will be music. And we will be able to worship together with our church community.

Please be patient. Together, we can make this work.

God bless,

Heidi

Detailed protocols are provided below, along with an outline of how the morning will proceed and the COVID-19 screening questions.

NKUC In-Person Worship Service Protocols

1. All provincial health protocols will be followed.
2. Two weekly in-person services will be held: 11 am Thursdays and 10 am Sundays.
3. Thursday services will also be recorded and available online.
4. Members are required to pre-register for their service of choice; a reminder will be sent a few days before the service and members will be asked to confirm if they are coming.

5. The reminder will also include the COVID-19 screening questions (below) and encourage members to stay home if they answer positively to any of the questions.
6. Members are requested to attend only on their preferred day and remain with their cohort.
7. Attendance will be limited to allow for social distancing.
8. Chairs in the sanctuary are arranged 2 m apart.
9. Members are encouraged to arrive a few minutes early, to minimize congestion at the doors.
10. Lines/Dots will be placed in the entrance and in the narthex to indicate a 2-m separation.
11. Masks will be required inside the building for all attendees (including children), except for those officiating (e.g., the minister and the scripture reader, when speaking).
12. Hand sanitizing will be required upon entry.
13. There will be no singing and no physical contact, but will have responsive prayers.
14. No paper handouts will be provided (after the first week) and the service will appear on the screen.
15. A collection plate will be placed at the back of the sanctuary.
16. A brief Children's Time will be offered at the start beginning the week of Sept 20, with children remaining in their seats.
17. Sunday School will be offered beginning the week of September 20, following provincial daycare guidelines.
18. Everyone is encouraged to leave promptly after the service.
19. No coffee or refreshments will be available after the service.

This is what will happen upon arrival:

1. Only the parking lot doors will be open; these will open ½ hour prior to the service. Please arrive a few minutes early to avoid congestion.
2. The minister will be in the parking lot (weather permitting) to welcome arrivals.
3. Two greeters will be marking attendance on a prepared list and asking the COVID-19 screening questions (below).
4. If the answers to any of the COVID-19 screening questions are positive, the member will be asked more detailed questions and, if warranted, advised to not attend this service.
5. Otherwise, the greeter will ask the member to sanitize their hands, put on their mask, and take their coat upstairs with them. Disposable masks will be provided for those who don't have any.
6. The member will then proceed to the sanctuary entrance, where they will be met by an usher who will direct them to their seat.
7. Members are encouraged to visit before the service, but with physical distancing.
8. Sanitizing wipes will be available in the washrooms and a sign posted encouraging members to sanitize surfaces they have touched (e.g., door handles, taps).
9. Following the service, members are encouraged to leave promptly by the exit closest to them.
10. The minister will be in the parking lot (weather permitting) to meet with members after the service.

COVID-19 Screening Questions

1. Have you or anyone in your household travelled to, or had a layover outside Canada or Manitoba in the past 14 days?
2. Have you or anyone in your household had any cold or flu-like symptoms including **fever, cough, sore throat, respiratory illness, difficulty breathing** in the last 14 days?
3. Are you or anyone in your household in self isolation or quarantine?
4. Have you or anyone in your household been in contact with anyone who should be self isolating or in quarantine?