

COVID-19 PROTOCOL

UPDATED FEBRUARY 16, 2021

To minimize the risk of the spread of the COVID-19 virus, for the safety of our members and surrounding community, Council has adopted the following protocols. These protocols are effective immediately and will remain in place until further notice.

CORPORATE WORSHIP

- In-person corporate worship services will be limited to a maximum of 130 people per service. Members and guests who are more vulnerable to the COVID-19 virus or who have been feeling unwell during the week prior are advised to not attend in-person worship. An invitation will be sent via Church Social to two Wards per service. Members and guests are requested to respond to the invitation so we can track our number of attendees. In-person worship attendees must follow these protocols:
 - *All attendees must wear a face covering unless they qualify for an exemption as our provincial face coverings legislation (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/face-coverings-and-face-masks>)*
 - *The preacher and musician are excluded from having to wear face coverings as they will be within an area designated for them and not for public access*
 - *Members are asked to enter through the parking lot entrance doors (or the elevator entrance, if required). The front doors (closest to Stone Church Road) will be closed prior to the services.*
 - *Door greeters will be the only ones to touch the door handles*
 - *Members will be encouraged to maintain social distancing and sanitize their hands as they enter the foyer*
 - *Only designated pews will be available for seating to ensure safe distancing*
 - *Ushers will show members where they may sit in order to optimize the limited space*
 - *Attendees who live in the same household may sit side-by-side, but all others are to maintain a distance of 2m from others*
 - *There will be no childcare until further notice*
 - *Members are asked to use washrooms sparingly in order to reduce traffic downstairs*
 - *There will be no coffee socials until further notice*
 - *The kitchen and nurseries will be off limits until further notice*
 - *The elevator will be used by only one person at a time.*
 - *Members and guests will leave the auditorium by the three doors in single file and by adhering to social distancing regulations*

- Between each service, special attention will be given by the caretakers to the cleaning and sanitation of the pews (backs and ends), door handles, the pulpit, sound booth, projection equipment, hand railings, washrooms. The music committee will be responsible for the cleaning of the musical instruments.
- To maintain social distancing, deaconry collections will be conducted through e-transfer for both in-person and virtual attendees during the regular offering time. Boxes will also be located at the auditorium entrances for in-person attendees who wish to donate by cash or cheque as they enter or exit the auditorium. Members are reminded to make it clear as to what their donation is for (if the donation is not for the deaconry)
- E-transfers can be sent to cornerstonecanrctreasurer@gmail.com and must be specified for the deaconry (no password required). Please note that donation receipts cannot be issued for deaconry funds
- Donation boxes (for church, school, CRWRF etc.) will remain in use
- For members of Wards not scheduled for in-person worship, livestream services will be available as usual on Sundays at 9:30 am and 3:00 pm
 - *For those who have had trouble with the live stream, we encourage you to view the archived version which will be available on Livestream shortly after the service*
- Attestations will be processed and announced as usual
- Baptisms will be performed as usual. Members are requested to limit their outside family and guests attending to four people. Special requests for more guests can be made with their Ward Elders.
- Weekly church bulletins will be distributed via Church Social

OPERATION OF COUNCIL AND CONSISTORY

- All in-person meetings involving more than 10 people will be held virtually (online video conference)
- An Emergency Response Team has been formed consisting of Council executive, the chair of the deaconry, and br. Steve Mans, who works in the healthcare field
- The Emergency Response team will review this protocol document on a weekly basis and make and communicate adjustments as the situation evolves

CATECHISM AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL CLASSES

- All instructional classes will be conducted in accordance with the current protocols in place for our local schools.

FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

- All fellowship groups are to limit in-person meetings to no greater than the maximum number of people allowed as per the current local by-law and are encouraged to maintain phone and virtual communication to encourage each other, especially seniors and other members who may be more isolated and vulnerable at this time

PASTORAL CARE

- Elders and deacons must ensure all senior members and others who may be vulnerable have access to the support they require
- Elders and deacons must ensure all communications are delivered to members who do not receive Church Social messages
- All in-person visits from elders and deacons must adhere to the maximum number of people allowed as per the current local by-law and are to be conducted only where all parties are comfortable with meeting in-person and social distancing is maintained

BUILDING USAGE

- All groups meeting at the church must inform the custodians first to avoid double booking and ensure sanitization
- All groups meeting at the church will be responsible for wiping their tables and chairs after their meeting. A spray bottle of disinfectant will be placed in each meeting room for this purpose.
- All groups meeting at the church must adhere to the maximum number of people allowed as per the current local by-law
- All meetings held within the church building require all attendees to maintain social distancing

COMMUNICATION

- On-going communication about our COVID-19 protocols will be communicated via:
 - Church Social
 - Website
 - Social Media
 - Phone Calls (for members without access to the above methods)

If you have any questions or concerns about these protocols, please email the Emergency Response Team at clerk@cornerstonehamilton.ca