



"Trusting in Jesus, Reaching Out, Serving Others."

Hope Lutheran Church

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Guidelines for Hope Lutheran Church re-opening on 01 November, 2020

Guidelines and directives regarding COVID-19 have been set out by the Province of Ontario, Local Municipalities and Public Health authorities, both local, provincial and national. The intension of these guidelines and directives is to be as safe as possible while re-opening our communities.

Hope Lutheran's Council has been working to create guidelines that will respect these authorities. We also recognize the importance of trusting Jesus, stepping out in faith and empowering God's people to take personal responsibility for their health. We will continue to create and maintain a safe welcoming location for our congregation's members who wish to return to worship in-person. Not everyone is going to feel comfortable enough yet to return to these services and please know that, that is okay. Please continue to pray for guidance and comfort.

Although everything is being done to provide a safe place for us to worship, there will always be a certain amount of risk in attending. Therefore, we ask everyone to determine their own personal risk, as we cannot guarantee 100% there will be no spread of COVID-19. Those who consider themselves to be at a higher risk like those over 70, with health concerns or are not yet comfortable returning to in-person services should keep this in mind when deciding to attend in-person church services.

Services will commence on November 1st, 2020, at 10:00 a.m. Due to the government directive of limiting occupancy to 30% we are allowed to seat 90 people in Hope Lutheran Church. With our new precautions HLC will be accommodating 45 members for the in-person Sunday service. Seating will be arranged to accommodate physical distancing of two metres or six feet (2 metre/6 feet). On-line services and other options will remain available. For more information please contact the church's Office Administrator during business hours.

Hope's Council is asking for your cooperation in following these guidelines to make our return to public worship safe, welcoming and comfortable for all. Please review the following if you are considering attending Sunday services:

COVID-19 Screener questions:

Please do not enter the church if:

- If you have any symptoms of COVID-19 or are or have been unwell in the past week,
- If you have come into close contact with a person with symptoms of COVID-19 or who has come into close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19, in the past 14 days.
- If you have travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days.

Face Coverings:

Waterloo Region has a by-law that requires all persons attending a worship service to wear a protective face covering that covers both the mouth and nose. We encourage you to bring your own cloth mask or face covering, however, we do have a limited supply of masks available at the church. (This by-law does have exemptions like children under the age of five, those who are unable to wear a face covering as a result of a medical condition or disability, etc. Please respect one another including those who are not wearing a face covering). The Pastor will not be wearing a face covering when leading a service or his sermon. The Pastor will wear a face covering for Holy Communion, in public areas and going to and leaving the front of the church.

Entering the Church:

It is recommended that you arrive early for church to allow time for the new procedures required on entry and direction for seating. Please be respectful of this so that the service start time is not delayed.

Please maintain a 2 metre/6 feet physical distance from other people other than your family or group you are attending service and seating with.

The door on the right side of the church entrance will be opened for you by a volunteer. The inside door will be propped open. Please refrain from touching the doors or surfaces at the entrance of the church. Please hold on to your children.

Each week as you enter the church, it is requested that you use hand sanitizer that will be available to use or you can use your own. For those with a sensitivity or allergy to hand sanitizer, there is the option of using soap and water available in the main floor washrooms. We are asking for the name and phone number of at least one person in your family or group in the event that contact tracing is required by Public Health. The Office Administrator will be the guardian of this information and the list will be destroyed every thirty days. Several areas of the church have been blocked off and cannot be used. For Sunday service, the sanctuary, narthex and washrooms on the main floor are open. Please respect blocked off areas. There will be posters and postings of requirements and procedures in various locations.

The Nursery will remain closed until further notice.

The Elevator will not be in operation as the downstairs and upstairs will be closed.

The Library will not be open before, during or after Sunday service. Please discuss with Ann Schieckoff of hours of operation.

The Balcony is reserved for the Tech Team, Trustees, the Organist and her family

The Solarium will not be open during Sunday service.

Hand Sanitizer:

Hand sanitizer stations and signage for proper use are available as you enter the church. Other sanitation stations are available throughout the building, including at the front and back of the Sanctuary. Hand hygiene is encouraged when coming in contact with surfaces.

Seating:

Entrance into the sanctuary will be through the right-side door and is marked by green arrows. It will be propped open before the service starts. The sanctuary pews have been sectioned off to provide a required 2 metre/6 feet physical distancing. Ushers will be directing seating so please follow their directions. We would ask that households sit together as much as possible and ensure that a 2 metre/6

feet physical distance is maintained from other persons or groups. Please note that you may not be sitting in your regular pew for service during this time. If you are a family or group that would like to sit together, it is recommended that you wait for your entire group in the parking lot until all of your group has arrived and enter the church together.

Announcements:

At the beginning of each service, a church Trustee or Elder may give any additional facility procedures required that day. The Pastor may also announce any additional service instructions before service begins or at the end of service.

Hymnals and Singing:

The pews have been cleared of all Hymnals and Bibles. Regional Authority has recommended singing is to be adapted or suspended to reduce the chance of spreading droplets. HLC Council has recommended that we hum along to the hymns as the organist will still be playing them. If able, hymns may be projected onto the wall and the words can be read so you can follow along as you hum. This will be re-evaluated as current COVID-19 guidelines/restrictions change, or as the Congregation, together, elects to make a gradual return to singing. Liturgy and prayers can be recited and we encourage you to continue.

Length of Service:

The length of the service will be kept to approximately 40-45 minutes. This will reduce the need for washroom usage. Liturgy and readings may be displayed at the front for the Congregation to follow along. Hymns may also be projected at the front for the service. Weekly Bulletins will be present in the pews for each service. Please discard your Bulletin into the recycle bins at the back of the church, or take them home with you. They are not to be left in the pews. Holy Communion will continue on Fridays with Pastor Derek Mathers. We will gradually work towards reinstating Holy Communion into the Sunday services in time.

Washrooms:

The washrooms on the main level of the church will be the only ones available for use. All others are closed. We encourage the main level washrooms be used in an emergency. Use of the washrooms will be limited to one person in at a time, and only one stall in each washroom is available for use. Children are to be accompanied by an adult. Please be respectful. Hands must be washed after using the washroom. Please follow the best practice handwashing directions posted in the washrooms.

Collection of Tithes and Offerings:

The normal passing of the collection plate will not be done at this time. The collection plate will be placed at the back of the church where you can place your tithes and offerings. Other options for making your tithes and offerings are available. If you are able, it is encouraged that you use one of those alternate ways to make your contribution like e-transfers, PAR, online giving, mobile app, text-to-give, offering envelopes; or visit the website at <http://hopelc.ca/giving.html>

Dismissal:

Once service has dismissed the Congregation and the Pastor has left the front, leaving of the service will be directed by the Ushers starting at the back of the church and moving to the front. Please remain seated in your pew until the usher directs you to depart. Please exit the Sanctuary using the door on the right marked by green directional arrows. The Pastor will be there at a safe physical distance to verbally greet you. There will be no gathering in the lobby of the church so please go directly outside into the parking lot. Gatherings outside in the parking lot must be away from the entrance of the church and the carport so others can feel safe to leave the church

Cleaning of the church:

Extra attention has been given to high traffic, high use areas. The Ministry of Health has given guidelines on a list of products to be used for disinfecting these areas which are being used. The church will be cleaned prior to and after each service on Sunday. For groups coming to the church outside of service, they will be responsible for using proper COVID-19 cleaning protocols for the area that they use.

Counting of Tithes and offering:

The Offering Plate or Collection Box will be placed at the back of the church for members to place/deposit their gifts. The Financial Secretary or designate will collect the tithes and offerings and together with that week's volunteers (two members) count for deposit. The Financial Secretary will set the procedures the tithes and offerings.

All counters and handlers shall ensure they wash their hands or use sanitizer before and after handling the envelopes and money. These persons shall also use a face covering while working in close proximity to others. The Financial Secretary shall ensure the counting team follows the guidelines for use of personal protection.

Volunteer:

Approximately four (4) volunteers are required to assist with the new service procedures and two volunteers to assist with the counting each week. Please help your church.

Use of HLC by outside groups:

All people or groups must contact the Office Administrator prior to coming to the church.

Church office hours are: Monday – 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Tuesday – 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Wednesday – 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Thursday – closed
Friday – 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

We must do our best to follow COVID -19 bylaws and HLC guidelines as set out above.

When using the church, only one area is to be used as per instructions from the Office Administrator.

When the person or group is finished using the area, they must use COVID-19 cleaning protocols and disinfecting products to clean chairs, tables, and any high touch areas that a member of the group may have come in contact with.

Lifting all up to the Glory of God and the Love of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,

Hope Lutheran's Council