

Parkminster's Return to In-Person Worship Safety Plan



Your Parkminster United Church faith community leaders have created a return to in-person worship safety plan that takes seriously our responsibility for preventing the risk of COVID-19 infection as we look forward to being in community together and returning to in-person worship on Sunday mornings.

You also have responsibility to keep yourself, your family and others healthy and safe by following all protocols outlined in this safety plan. We ask that you be mindful of physical distancing, especially before entering the building.

As we look forward to this return with excitement it's important to understand that the experience of Sunday morning worship will be quite different from what we've previously known. It's important that we let go of any expectation that we'll be going back to the way things were pre-COVID. This will help us appreciate the new experience of Sunday morning for what it is and also keep us from slipping into routine church behaviours that could put you or someone else at risk. With that said, we look forward to being in community together.

This Safety Plan will be updated as COVID-19 circumstances evolve.

Please arrive at least 15-20 minutes early and be prepared to wait in line to go through the sign-in and screening procedures as you enter the building.

Here is a summary list of what is new for now:

- Double-vaccination needed to enter
- Pre-screening and checking-in
- Mask wearing
- No hugging, hand-shaking, gathering in groups to chat, coffee-hour in the church (there will be social time after the service, seated in the sanctuary with folks on Zoom)
- No congregational singing, paper bulletins, hymnals, pew Bibles, passed offering plate
- Our ministry team will be leading worship for both in-sanctuary and at home participants
- Soloists will be behind screens
- You may be filmed as our service will be broadcast on Zoom, Facebook and videotaped for our website.

Here is a summary list of what is the same:

- Your ministry team
- The sanctuary with its beautiful stained-glass window
- The opportunity to worship in community

Pre-Screening at Home

All those who register must conduct COVID-19 pre-screening at home using the Ontario government COVID-19 self-assessment: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>. When you check-in please let our greeter know that you have completed this assessment and have been cleared.

Proof of Vaccination

Because many of our members are highly vulnerable and we need to protect them, we are requiring individuals who enter our church to be fully vaccinated. If you are not fully vaccinated for at least a 2-week period prior to the service, we strongly encourage you to do so or remain at home and enjoy the service virtually.

You must bring evidence of your vaccination status (a paper or online copy of your Ministry of Health receipt). We will accept double vaccinations of Pfizer, Moderna, AstraZeneca or combinations thereof or a single vaccination of Johnson and Johnson vaccine.

If you are new to Parkminster, in addition to proof of vaccination, you must also submit photo identification (e.g., drivers' license, OHIP Card, or other photo ID).

If you have not been vaccinated for medical reasons, you must submit a note from your physician or Nurse Practitioner which must include:

- Name and contact information of the physician or registered nurse
- Logo or letterhead identifying the physician or registered nurse
- Statement that there is a medical reason for the individual's exemption from being fully vaccinated against COVID-19; and
- Any effective time-period for the medical reason which includes the date you are seeking access.

Children not eligible for vaccines are not required to have medical documentation but their parent/guardian will be asked if the COVID-19 screening is negative.

We will not keep copies of any of the above documentation for reasons of privacy. Everyone must bring their documentation to every occasion that they are attending.

General Information

Masks must be worn while in the building. Exemptions will not be accepted. Masks are mandatory with the exception of children under the age of three.

Bow or nod instead of using the traditional hand shake or hugs.

Cough or sneeze into your elbow or use a tissue when necessary to limit possible contamination of surfaces.

Some areas of the church will be out of bounds. These areas will be clearly marked. Use the designated washrooms and sanitize your hands before entering and upon exiting the washroom.



Parkminster has a cleaning plan in place for reducing contamination of the building and after each use, high-touch surfaces will be cleaned with a disinfectant.

Worship services will continue to be offered over the internet via ZOOM and Facebook.

If you have any of these symptoms: new or worsening cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, temperature equal to or over 38°C, feeling feverish, chills, fatigue or weakness, muscle or body aches, new loss of smell or taste, headache, gastrointestinal symptoms (abdominal pain, diarrhea, vomiting), feeling very unwell, please stay at home, self-isolate, and get tested for COVID-19.

Arrive early enough (~15-20 minutes) to allow yourself to go through the sign-in and screening procedures as you enter the building.

Upon Arrival and Before Worship

Please use the designated entrance doors. The doors will be propped open to reduce contact.

Hand sanitizer will be available at the entrance. Please sanitize as you enter the building.

Under the Ontario face covering regulation, everyone must wear a face covering at all times. A small supply of disposable masks will be available at the entrance (if you've forgotten).

When entering the church, there will be a system in place for contact tracing. Public Health requires the name, phone number and email of people who were in the building. This information will be kept for 30 days and if not needed, it will be shredded.

When entering the church, you will be required to answer screening questions.

Be aware of physically distancing from people outside your family social circle/household. Two meters is the required space between individuals. This physical distancing space must be adhered to in the parking lot and in all areas of the building.

Please bow or nod instead of using the traditional hand shake or hugs.

Take all coats etc. with you to the Sanctuary as the coat racks will be out of bounds.

Only one family group at a time will be allowed in the elevator.

Ushers will direct people to their seats. People will be seated from the front of the sanctuary to the back to reduce walking past other people. It is likely you will be seated somewhere other than your regular spot (if you have one).

Children will sit with their family social circle/household. There will be no in-person Christian Education at this time. The family worship space will be closed.



During Worship

There will be no communion unless it is organized in such a way where there is no distribution of elements.

There will be no congregational singing, group responses, passing of the peace, offering plate or microphone at this time as they are high-risk activities.

All items will be removed from the pews (hymn books, pew bibles etc.) as these items are difficult to disinfect.

There will be no bulletins or handouts to distribute. Information will be projected on the screen.



Send email or voicemail of any joys and concerns to either Minister prior to the service.

There will be no candlelighter and lay reader contributions will be pre-taped.

The ministers will be on the chancel using their headset microphones. The ministers will be unmasked while on the chancel and while using their headsets.

Soloists will be on the chancel, and while not singing, will be masked and seated physically distanced from the ministers. When singing they will move to the front of the chancel and the ministers will move to the back of the chancel.

Microphones will not be shared and will be cleaned and disinfected after each use.

Each minister will have their own place from which to speak set two metres apart.

Musical solos may be offered from behind a moveable plexiglass screen.

There will be no live choral or congregational singing at this time.

An offering plate will be placed at the back of the sanctuary. You are asked to put your donation in the basket as you enter or exit the sanctuary.

The overhead fans will not be turned on and windows will be open during good weather.

After Worship



Social time will be offered and in-sanctuary participants are invited to remain in their seats during this time.

Only one family/household group at a time will be allowed in the elevator.

You are asked to exit the building after the service concludes. Our ministers will not be shaking hands.

There will not be a coffee time in the gym.

If you wish to visit with other congregation members after the service, please do so in the parking lot following Public Health Guidelines regarding masks.

Please use the designated exit doors. The doors will be propped open to reduce contact.

Appropriate cleaning and disinfecting will be performed.