



# ANGLICAN EAST NL

## Guidelines for Worship and Gathering within the Anglican Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador

*“The old has passed away; behold, the new has come”*

2 Corinthians 5.17 NIV

As the Government continues to lift long-term public health measures surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, our **Many Members, One Body** guidance has now fulfilled its originally intended purpose. With that in mind, this new document will replace **Many Members, One Body** (and its updates) effective August 10, 2021, and will be our guidance document going forward. This new guidance has been devised based upon consultation and direction from Public Health and are subject to change as further restrictions are eased or reinstated.

This new document can't possibly account for every local consideration and circumstance, yet it is intended that Parishes apply the contents of this document as fully as possible within any given situation. The continued use of your Parish Task Force is still necessary as a Facilitator is still required to oversee the implementation, coordination, and adherence to this guidance; a Registrar is still necessary to compile and retain contact tracing lists; a Sexton is still necessary to complete disinfection of our spaces between gatherings; a Greeter is still necessary to communicate these guidelines to those gathered and to provide support to them throughout the gathering.

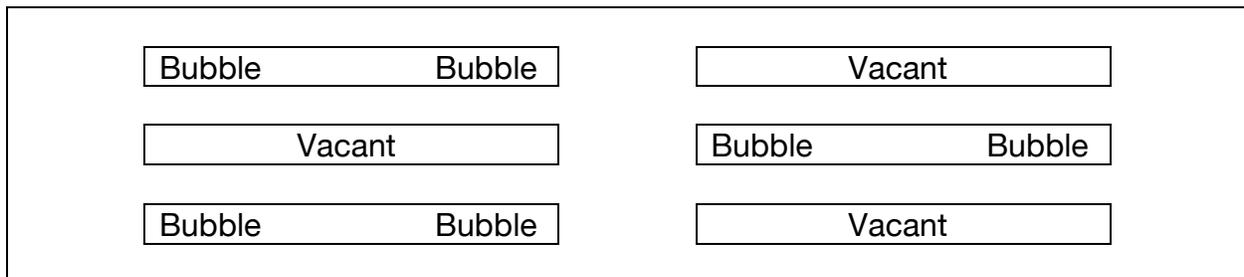
Logistically, you will notice that there are aspects of **Many Members, One Body** not contained within this new guidance. Such omissions indicate that those protocols are no longer necessary as per Public Health direction. Just because such omissions are no longer necessary does not mean that Parishes have to dispense with those particular protocols if the Parish feels it prudent to continue to utilize them due to local circumstance.

In instances where further advice is required, there is question or uncertainty, as well as instances where practical application of aspects of this document are not possible, consultation should be made with Church House. It is best that we all be as sure as possible in what we are doing and insure that our Church buildings remain safe gathering places.

Although public health measures are gradually being relaxed, we must still be cognizant of the fact that the pandemic is by no means over. The virus, especially its variants, still pose a risk to individuals. Even though many people are fully vaccinated, we must continue to be diligent so as to protect those that are unable to be vaccinated, especially children. Further to this is the need to be pastoral and considerate of those who may be apprehensive as restrictions are lifted.

### **Gathering Limits and Physical Distancing**

Indoor Public Worship and Faith Based Activities are limited to 500 people providing physical distancing can be achieved and maintained between household bubbles (a household bubble being defined by Public Health as the people who live in your household). A household bubble can share a pew/seating with their close contacts (a close contact being defined by Public Health as someone you have consistent close contact with) without physical distancing having to be provided within the pew/seating. Within the Nave during Public Worship, Pews can be utilized by more than one household bubble in so far as 6 feet/2metres of distancing can be achieved and maintained between the two bubbles and that each bubble has their own separate entry/exit point from the pew:



Church buildings with their pews against the wall, and only a centre aisle, will only be able to accommodate one bubble per pew as there is only one entry/exit point to enter or exit the pew.

### **Announcements**

Just prior to any gathering, an announcement should be made to inform those gathered as to the guidance that should be adhered to while gathered. Particular mention should be made as to the importance of maintaining physical distancing in as far as possible.

### **Church Organized Social Gatherings – Self Serve, Buffets, Potlucks**

During any Church Organized Social Gathering, the sharing of food or drinks, such as trays of cookies or sandwiches, bowls of chips, pot lucks, or buffet style/self serve snacks, meals, tea and coffee, is not permitted. Food or Drink provided during such gatherings should be individually served by designated servers who are masked.

### **Contact Tracing Records**

Pre-registration and pre-screening to attend Public Worship and Faith Based activities is no longer required, yet recommended. Compilation of a Contact Tracing List for each gathering is mandatory and such lists should be kept on file for a minimum of 14 days following the gathering.

### **Multiple Gatherings**

If multiple gatherings are held on a single day in a particular space, the start and end times must allow for attendees who are exiting one gathering to avoid contact with those

arriving for the next gathering. There must also be sufficient time for disinfection of high touch surfaces between the gatherings. If singing has taken place in a gathering, one hour of ventilation time must occur before the space can be utilized again.

### **Face Mask and Hand Sanitation Stations**

Although the use of Face Masks are no longer mandatory within indoor public gatherings, there are many that will still wish to utilize Face Masks and Public Health continues to recommend their use while gathered in indoor public spaces. The need to practice frequent hand hygiene is still paramount. Thus Churches should continue to offer Face Mask and Hand Sanitation Stations at the entry/exit point of any gathering.

### **Disinfection of High Touch Surfaces**

High Touch Surfaces within any gathering space must be disinfected using Health Canada approved disinfectant, applied according to manufacturer's instructions, between gatherings.

Reduce the number of doors that people must touch to enter any gathering by propping, and leaving open, all doorways using doorstops.

### **Washrooms**

Washrooms should be stocked with liquid soap and paper towels, with warm running water available. In instances where warm running water is not available, hand sanitizer should be provided. Contactless garbage bins should also be made available.

### **Physical Contact**

Handshaking, hugging, touching or passing objects between people, or other forms of physical contact are not permitted.

Sharing of the Peace through physical contact is not permitted.

The passing of the collection plate is not permitted – online donations or a depository to accept offerings should be provided.

No water should be left in the Font or in any Holy Water stoop. Votives and other public use, high touch liturgical items should be removed or use thereof prohibited.

Liturgical actions requiring physical contact will need to be adjusted to maintain physical distancing. In instances where physical distancing may be compromised it is recommended, yet not mandatory, that masks be utilized. Further considerations are addressed under "Liturgical Guidelines".

### **Use of Books and Hymnals**

Common use items such as books and hymnals may be used if set aside for at least 24 hours between uses. However, projecting materials or distribution of single-use materials should be considered, and congregants encouraged to bring their own items. Discard of printed materials after the service is complete.

Bulletins, Orders of Service, and/or Common Use Worship Books should be placed in the pews prior to people arriving. If distributing such items as people arrive, distribution should be done by designated individuals who should regularly disinfect their hands while distributing items. It is recommended, yet not mandatory, that those distributing

materials, as well as those who are greeting, directing, or coming in regular contact with those in attendance, should wear a mask when physical distancing may be compromised.

### **Sharing of Microphones**

Handheld or stationary microphones should not be shared, unless they are disinfected between uses. Limit the number of people providing readings or other activities that need a microphone.

### **Congregational Singing**

Any space of which Congregational/Group Singing is performed must be ventilated through the opening of doors and windows as much as possible while not compromising the comfort of those attending.

Gatherings of which Congregational/Group Singing is performed cannot exceed 60 minutes in duration, of which only 30 minutes may be spent singing.

For gatherings of which Congregational/Group Singing is performed, a minimum of one hour of ventilation time must be provided for once the gathering is concluded before the space may be utilized again.

Masks are recommended, yet not mandatory, to be worn when singing.

### **Sunday School, Godly Play, Confirmation Groups, and other Faith Formation**

#### **Gatherings for Children**

Offering of infant and child minding, is not recommended at this time. Preschool aged children should stay with their families for the duration of the service. Leaders should consider the guidance provided for After School Programs and Day Camps

(<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/schools-children/child-care/after-school-programs/>)

when offering Faith Formation Gatherings for Children. Leaders are encouraged to hold classes outdoors when possible, and physical distancing should be supported for all participants who are not part of the same household bubble.

#### **Use of Church Property for indoor Personal (not run by a recognized business or organization) Social Gatherings**

Parishes are permitted to rent out our facilities for private social gatherings such as Birthday Parties, Anniversaries, Showers, etc. The following protocols are to be adhered to with respects to any such rental or use of our buildings in addition to the other terms of the rental:

Renters are to be advised that any such indoor gathering is restricted to the number of people the space can accommodate provided for physical distancing. This can be calculated by dividing the square footage of the space by 36;

Renters are to provide a contact tracing list to the Parish of the names and phone numbers of those in attendance to the gathering. The Parish will need to retain this list on file for a minimum of 14 days following the date of the event;

Renters are required to sign a document containing the following statement prior to the event. The statement should be kept on file, along with the contact tracing list for the event, for a minimum of 14 days following the date of the event:

“It is a condition of this rental that the Tenant at all times during its tenancy operate in strict compliance with all applicable statutes, regulations , rules, Special Measures Orders , directives and/or guidance related to COVID-19 made and/or issued by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador from time to time ; including , but not limited to those issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health for the Province under the authority granted to her by law . The parties agree that notwithstanding anything else in this agreement, that if there is a breach of this condition by the Tenant, then the rental may be terminated forthwith without notice by the Landlord. Further, any costs incurred by the Landlord associated with mitigating such a breach shall be a debt payable by the Tenant to the Landlord.”

Consideration will have to be given as to the logistics of such rentals, especially cleaning and disinfecting prior to and following such a rental.

### **Use of Church Property for indoor Parish run Social Gatherings**

Parishes are permitted to hold indoor social gatherings, such as fundraising events. The above noted protocols are to be adhered to with respects to any such gathering in so far as they are applicable to the specific gathering.

## **Liturgical Guidelines**

### **Processions/Recessions**

Physical distancing must be observed between those moving in procession/recession, and physical distancing between those moving and those stationary must be maintained. Participants in the Liturgy must maintain physical distancing when seated or moving about the sanctuary or chancel or nave. In instances where physical distancing may be compromised it is recommended, yet not mandatory, that masks be utilized.

### **Receiving Lines**

To avoid crowding and bottle necks, there is no receiving line following a service or shaking hands at the doorway.

### **Celebrations of the Eucharist**

Sharing of the Common Cup, either for consuming or touching, is NOT permitted at this time. Communion can only be administered in one-kind.

**When preparing the gifts, and consecrating them, a mask must be worn by the Presider.** The hands must be sanitized immediately prior to preparing the gifts.

All gifts necessary for the preparation of the Eucharist should be at the Credence Table. The Presider should prepare for the Eucharist at the Credence Table without the assistance of a Server or Eucharistic Assistant. To do so would compromise physical distancing as well as the touching of common objects.

At the time of Administration of the Eucharist, the Presider should, after receiving, **don a mask**, disinfect their hands and administer the host as per one of the following methods (Parishes cannot employ more than one method during a particular gathering):

**With Communicants remaining in their pew** – The Priest will proceed to the nearest designated pew. Those wishing to receive should hold out their hands and the host should be placed upon the hand **WITHOUT MAKING CONTACT** between the Presider’s hand and the Communicant’s hand. If contact occurs, the Presider will need to disinfect their hands once more before proceeding further with the Administration. For those who do not wish to receive, they should fold their arms across their chest at which the Presider may bless them by either holding their hand over the head (without touching) or making the sign of the cross over them (without touching). Placing the host within a communicant’s mouth is **NOT** permitted. The Presider will proceed through the pews until all have received. Upon returning to the Altar, the Presider will disinfect their hands once more and then remove their mask. The Host and Chalice may be Abluted by the Presider alone at this time or veiled to be Abluted following the liturgy.

**With Communicants receiving at a station** – The Priest will proceed to the station designated. Communicants will proceed to the station, one bubble at a time. Once a bubble has received and returned to their pew, or the way to the station is made clear, the next bubble may proceed to the station to receive. The use of sidespersons to control the movement of people will be necessary so as physical distancing between bubbles is maintained at all times. It is recommended that sidespersons wear masks while directing movement during the Administration. The administration of the host would be done the same as above. People receiving at a station must remain standing.

**With Communicants receiving at the Altar Rail** - Communicants will proceed to the Altar Rail, one bubble at a time. Once a bubble has received and returned to their pew, or the way to the station is made clear, the next bubble may proceed to the Altar Rail to receive. The use of sidespersons to control the movement of people will be necessary so as physical distancing between bubbles is maintained at all times. It is recommended that sidespersons wear masks while directing movement during the Administration. The administration of the host would be done the same as above. People receiving at the Altar Rail must remain standing.

### **The Celebration of Holy Baptism**

During the Service, the cleric should not hold the baby, but ask a parent to do so for the duration of the service. Only the clergy and parents should be at the Font while godparents maintain physical distance. When blessing the water, the cleric should not make contact with the water. While one parent holds the infant, the other parent can pour the water over the infant’s forehead and make the sign of the cross at the appropriate times with the cleric speaking the words “We baptize you...” and “We sign you with the cross...”. The parent should also be the one to wipe the forehead of the baptized with a single use cloth or paper towel which should be kept by the parent using it and disposed of once they get home. If a candle is lit as part of the ceremony, this

should be done by one of the Godparents without any intermediary. The cleric would still be the one to speak the words “Receive the light of Christ...”.

Baptism liturgies with multiple candidates are prohibited at this time for the fact that the water of Baptism cannot be used upon more than one person. Once a baptism is complete, the water must be disposed of and not used for other baptisms or other purposes.

### **The Celebration and Blessing of Marriage**

Careful consideration must be made regarding processions and positioning of wedding parties so as physical distancing can be adhered to at all times, not only between those moving but also between those moving and those stationary.

Apart from the couple, physical distance should be observed as far as possible. Please note that the priest does not have to touch the rings to bless them, nor does he or she have to touch the couple’s hands as part of a prayer or blessing (the tying of the knot). The rings can be placed upon the cleric’s book by the person in possession of the rings, blessed without touching them, and then the couple can retrieve them from the book.

All those signing the register should sanitize their hands before signing, complete all the signatures necessary for them and then sanitize them again. Apart from the couple, all those signing should maintain physical distancing if practicable and individual pens for each signatory should be used.

No receiving lines are permitted.

### **The Funeral Liturgy**

There is not anything more to add aside from what already has been outlined elsewhere.

### **The Sacrament of Confirmation**

Laying on of Hands:

At the time in the liturgy when the Candidate is to come forward for the Laying on of Hands by the Bishop, the Bishop will don a mask. One Candidate at a time, along with their Parents and Godparents, will proceed to the Bishop. Only the Candidate, Parents, and Godparents will come forward. All other family members and friends will remain in the pew, yet should stand in support of the Candidate.

Upon approaching the Bishop, the Candidate will kneel, with his or her Parents placing their hands upon his or her shoulders. Godparents should not physically touch the Candidate, the Parents, or other Godparents, yet remain stood behind the Parents and Candidate.

The Bishop will sanitize his hands before placing them upon the Candidates head. The Bishop should speak with a normal voice while the Candidate is before him.

Once the Laying on of Hands for the Candidate is complete, the Candidate, Parents, and Godparents will return to their pews. The next Candidate, Parents, and Godparents will not proceed to the Bishop until the previous Candidate, Parents, and Godparents have all returned to their pews or the way to the Bishop is made clear.

The use of sidespersons to control the movement of people will be necessary so as physical distancing between bubbles is maintained at all times. It is recommended

that sidespersons wear masks while directing movement during the Laying on of Hands. This process continues until all Candidates are Confirmed. Once the Laying on of Hands is completed for all Candidates, the Bishop will sanitize his hands once more and may remove his mask.

**Presentations:**

Should the Parish present Candidates with gifts, such as Certificates and Bibles and such, these items should be laid out and remain untouched for 24 hours prior to the presentation. Only one person should present the gifts to the Candidates. This person should sanitize their hands before and after each presentation and should don a mask while presenting. So as to avoid further unnecessary movement, if the presentation is made as part of the Liturgy, the presentation should be done at the time of the Laying on of Hands as the Candidate is returning to their pew.

**Receptions:**

Parishes are reminded that Receptions and Social Gatherings hosted by the Parish, or held within a Parish Building, that normally follow a Service of Confirmation, are permitted with adherence to the protocols within this document that are applicable to such a gathering.

**Pictures:**

Congregating for pictures, either prior or following the Service, is not permitted. It is suggested that a person be designated, and positioned, to be able to, discreetly, photograph the Bishop and Candidate, Parents, and Godparents while the Laying on of Hands is being performed. This person may then share the photograph(s) with the Candidates digitally.

A group photo of all Candidates with the Bishop is permitted, if desired, yet everyone must be physically distanced and the photo must be completed prior to the Service beginning. Once again, this photo should be done by one designated person and shared digitally.

Time spent in close proximity to each other must be minimized. Time spent in the worship space following worship must also be minimized.

## **Pastoral Care Guidelines**

Visitation and Home Communion with people in their private residence is permitted.

While doing so, Clergy must remain compliant to the following:

Clergy should maintain physical distance as much as possible;

The use of a mask is recommended, yet not mandatory;

Sanitize your hands properly prior to entering the home and upon exiting;

Avoid touching your face;

Practice proper cough and sneeze etiquette;

Providing or sharing food and beverages are not permitted while conducting home visits. Sharing food, beverages, and utensils may increase the risk of transmission of the virus if it is present;

Home Communion is to be in one kind only and administered by placing it on the recipient's hand without physically coming in contact with the hand. The use and sharing of a common cup is not permitted at this time;

Clergy are permitted to visit Acute Care Facilities, Long Term Care Facilities and Personal Care Homes if requested to do so. Clergy will be required to follow any appropriate infection prevention and control measures, pass screening requirements, wear a mask (and/or other personal protective equipment if required), and perform proper hand hygiene.