

Revised: 01 February 2021



ANGLICAN EAST NL

Many Members, One Body (Rom. 12:4-5): Guidelines for Safe Practices in Anglican East NL in the time of COVID-19

Updated: 01 February 2021

Introduction

This document has been drafted in adherence to “Guidance for Faith-Based Organizations” as released by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Chief Medical Officer. This Guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/alert-system/alert-level-2/>. The Diocese has taken this guidance and expanded upon it with further advice from other Health Authorities in Canada and the World Health Organization. Although the understanding of Covid-19 is still evolving, all of these leading health authorities have established scientifically based guidance on the safest and most effective ways to prevent the transmission of this virus in public settings. We want to insure our communities are kept as safe as possible.

We have presented this information in a practical, “step by step” process of implementation. We can’t possibly account for every local consideration and circumstance, yet it is intended that Parishes apply the contents in this document as fully as possible within your circumstances. In instances where there is question or uncertainty, as well as instances where practical application of aspects of this document is not possible, consultation should be made with Synod Office. It is best that we all be as sure as possible in what we are doing and insure that our Church buildings are safe gathering places.

PLEASE NOTE - In Alert Level 2, places of worship may host services and faith-based activities of no more than 100 people, or 50 per cent capacity, whichever is less. This limit includes officiants, staff and volunteers.

This is a “living” document. It will be adjusted and revised as our understanding of this virus evolves, and the increased or diminished threat of it within our jurisdiction is realized. Any and all revisions will be based upon direction and guidance from health authorities. Although many will find the restrictions frustrating and cumbersome, our response to this pandemic cannot be emotionally based. The health and wellbeing, even the very lives of those within our communities, depends on our diligent and knowledge-based approach to how we function and operate in this time. As faith communities, we will need to be informed and diligent, patient and compassionate, creative and imaginative as we journey forward as the Church in our time.

Basic Principles: Distance & Hygiene

The function and operation of our communities must keep two principles foremost in our discernment: Physical distance and Hygiene.

The virus, known as Covid-19, is transmitted through respiratory droplets. Whenever a breath is exhaled by an infected individual, that breath contains droplets of which the virus is present. When another person comes in contact with those droplets, either through close contact with an infected individual, or surfaces of which the droplets have landed, transmission occurs. Thus, keeping our distance and ensuring high standards of cleanliness are paramount to stopping the spread of this virus.

Of particular concern is transmission by asymptomatic individuals. These are people who have the virus, yet do not realize they have it. The virus can be present in the body for days before a person may start feeling ill. There are even cases of people who have contracted the virus and never feel ill.

Thus, to just avoid people who are feeling ill is not enough to protect yourself from Covid-19. The virus could be in your midst regardless.

The basic principles of distance and hygiene, in the context of symptomatic and asymptomatic transmission, are what underlies all aspects of this document and is what should guide the operation of our public spaces going forward.

Is now the right time for our Parish to reopen for public worship?

The first step in this process is to provide a copy of this document to the Parish Leadership. After a careful reading and consideration of its contents, a discussion should be entertained and the question asked: Is now the right time for us to open our Church building? The reopening of the Church building, or buildings, within your Parish may not be prudent or advisable at this time. The discernment will need to address the following:

Are our clergy and other worship leaders (organist, for example) part of the vulnerable population? Are those expected to undertake and oversee the reopening process (Greeters, Sexton, for example) a part of the vulnerable population? Do they feel safe and comfortable participating in public gatherings at this time?

In that many of our parishioners and clergy are vulnerable individuals as defined by the Public Health Agency of Canada, re-opening might not be appropriate for every parish at this time. The Public Health Agency of Canada defines a vulnerable individual as anyone who is an older adult (over the age of 60); at risk due to underlying medical conditions or; at risk due to a compromised immune system from a medical condition or treatment. Further to these physical conditions, socio-economic factors also place certain individuals at higher risk. More detailed information regarding those that are considered a part of the vulnerable population can be found at:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/vulnerable-populations-covid-19.html>.

People within the vulnerable population are not prevented from participating in public gatherings, yet they should understand the increased risk they assume in doing so. Pastoral care, compassion and understanding need to be extended to those who are uncomfortable with being a part of public gatherings at this time. They may be struggling between their sense of comfort and safety versus their “obligation” and commitment to their faith community. We need to assure them that their safety and comfort is what is important. No one should feel pressured to commit to anything that erodes their sense of safety or comfort.

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Does the Parish have access to all the material and human resources necessary to reopen and remain open? Do we have sufficient cleaning materials? Do we have access to supplies of hand sanitation and non-medical masks? Do we have a consistent supplier that will be able to replenish our supplies when needed? Do we have the financial resources to acquire these materials on a regular basis going forward? Do we have the people necessary to implement and maintain this reopening plan?

Another consideration has to be towards if the Parish has the material and human resources available to implement and maintain the directives of this document. Ready and consistent supplies to undertake and maintain a more vigorous cleaning regime may not be available. Such heightened cleaning protocols will also involve greater cost than what would normally be the case. Having hand sanitation and non-medical masks (which will surely be utilized more often than in the past) will present the same challenges as cleaning products in the area of supply and cost. The people required to undertake and sustain the tasks necessary to keep our gatherings safe may not be available.

Are there other local considerations that will impact our ability to implement and maintain the direction provided in this document?

An example of a local consideration would be, especially for smaller church buildings, once physical distancing is accounted for, it may only be able to accommodate very few families. The layout of a smaller church may not allow for proper physical distancing at all. Such considerations will have an impact as to whether or not it is advisable for your Church Building to reopen at this time.

Once proper deliberation has occurred between the Parish leadership, if the decision is made to not reopen the Church Building at this time, please inform Synod Office of this decision and the reasons behind it. If the decision is made to proceed with reopening your Church Building, the application contained within this document will need to be completed and submitted to Synod Office. Once it has been reviewed and considered, the Bishop will grant or deny permission to reopen. **No Church building in this Diocese may reopen for public use until the Parish has received direct permission from the Bishop to proceed.**

Getting Organized

If your Parish has decided to proceed with reopening the Church building for public worship, the next step is to establish a working group to implement and oversee this process and to insure the standards contained within this document are maintained. The group will also make adjustments as necessary according to local conditions (community outbreak), Public Health Guidance and Restrictions, and Diocesan Directives. The working group should consist of the following:

The Rector and Parish Clergy

The Cleric is responsible to prepare and conduct the liturgy following the guidelines set out in this document and making further adjustments pursuant to local conditions, Public Health Guidance and Restrictions, and Diocesan Directives.

Facilitator

Responsible for overseeing and coordinating all aspects of the reopening of Church Buildings. The Facilitator will also coordinate with all responsible task leaders to insure completion of tasks and that the directives in this document are fully adhered to. The Facilitator is also responsible to ensure that people in the building adhere to the guidelines and to diplomatically and sensitively address those who are non-compliant.

Registrar

Responsible for pre-registering attendees to any and all public gatherings within Church Buildings, maintaining a record of all persons attending any public gathering within the Church, and insuring that restrictions as to the number of people present in any given space is in compliance with the Directives in this document as mandated by Public Health Restrictions.

Sexton

Responsible for the cleaning and disinfecting of public use spaces within the Church Buildings according to the Directives within this document as mandated by Public Health Guidelines and insuring a ready supply of appropriate cleaning, disinfecting, protective, and sanitation products.

Greeter

Responsible for Greeting and communicating the guidelines in place during public worship, confirming the list of those in attendance, and to provide support to those in attendance during the time of worship.

Each of these task leaders can be more than one person. In some instances, multiple people may be required to fulfill some of these roles. For instance, the frequency and amount of cleaning that the Church building will need on an ongoing basis will dictate that it is a task of which multiple people will be required. It would simply be too much for one person to handle. Each Parish should discern whether or not each role should be filled by one, or multiple, people to best accommodate the application of the directives in this document. Another consideration is going to centre around what human resources are available to the Parish in this regard.

In recruiting and filling these roles, once again, consideration has to be given towards whether or not such people are members of the vulnerable population. The same consideration must be given as was stated previously. No one should feel pressured to commit to anything that erodes their sense of safety or comfort.

Preparing for Re-Opening

With the task force now in place, the next step is to begin preparing the building for reopening and to prepare the Parish for gathering once more. The task force should gather in the worship space and complete the following:

To the extent practicable, remove and store all non-essential items from public spaces so that there are fewer surfaces to touch. 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. All prayer books, hymn books, Bibles, envelopes, pamphlets and other items are to be removed from pew racks during this time.

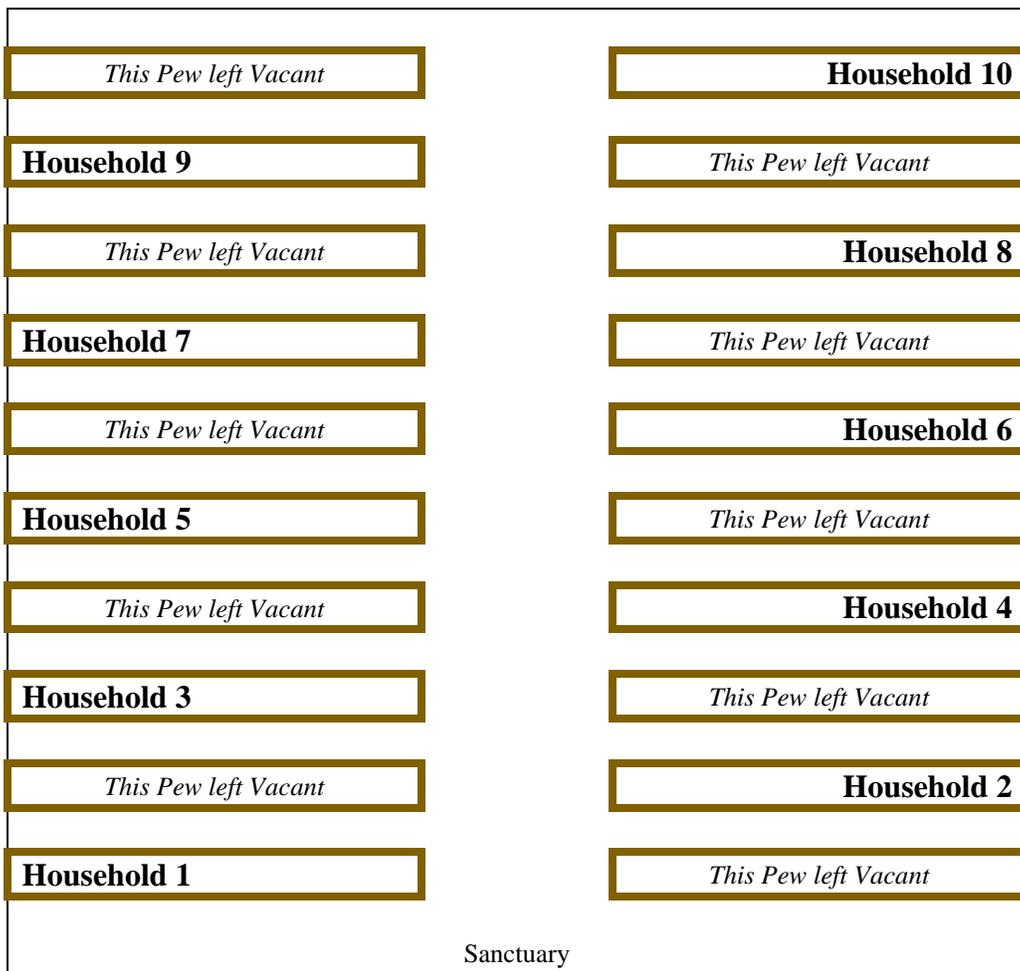
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The more items and objects removed from the gathering space the less that has to be cleaned. The fewer items and objects that people can handle and touch helps reduce the risk of transmission.

Clear markers and spacing for seating to maintain physical distancing must be created. This exercise of marking out the pews will give the Parish the number of households (or “bubbles”) it can accommodate. Physical distance must be created between households – there is no requirement to create physical distance between people of the same household.

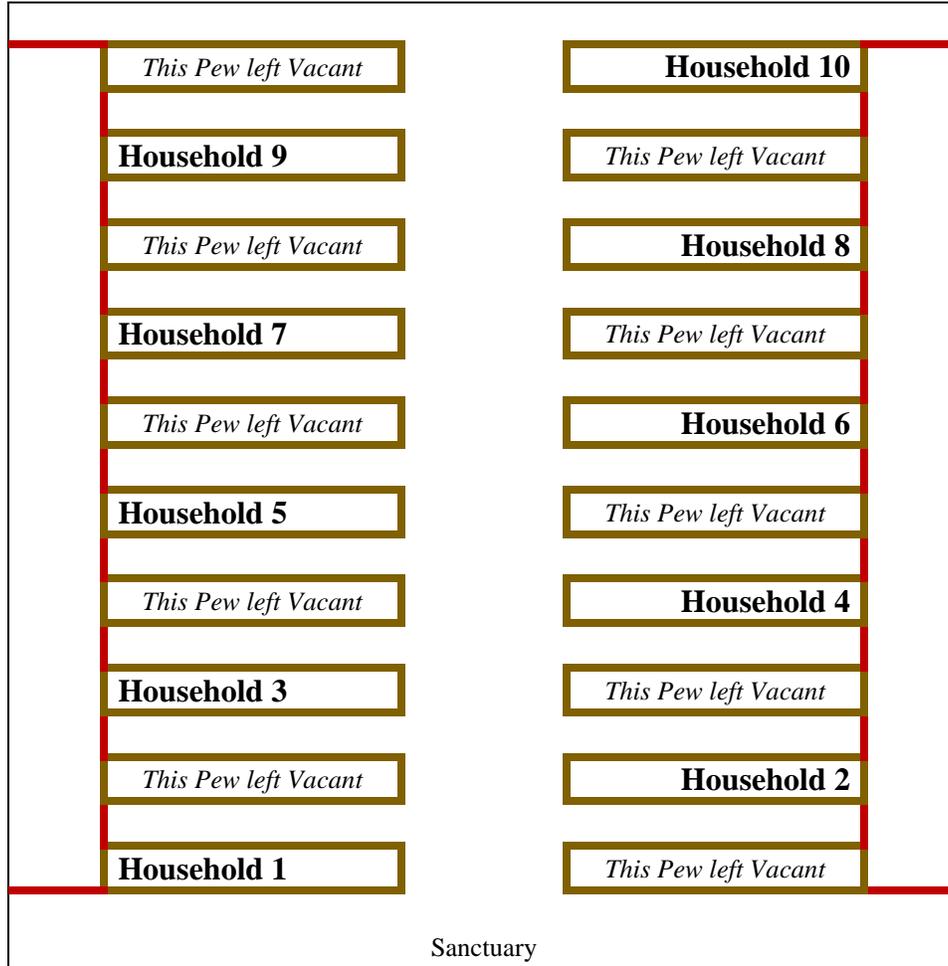
The best way to explain this process is by means of a few examples:

Church with Centre Aisle only:



In this Church Building, we can accommodate up to 10 Households (or “Bubbles”). Households sit tight to the wall leaving as much space as possible between them and the Centre Aisle. As per this example, the task force now realizes that their Church building can accommodate a maximum of 10 households at any given public worship gathering.

Church with Centre and Side Aisles:



In this Church Building, we can also accommodate up to 10 Households (or “Bubbles”). The Side Aisles are closed off using tape and signs to prevent access – do not use physical barriers as, in the event of an emergency, the side aisles can still be utilized for entrance or exit quickly. Households sit tight to the side aisle leaving as much space as possible between them and the Centre Aisle. As per this example, the task force now realizes that their Church building can accommodate a maximum of 10 households at any given public worship gathering.

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Church with four banks of pews:



In this Church Building, we can accommodate up to 20 Households (or “Bubbles”). Households sat in pews along the wall (Households 11 to 15 and 16 to 20) sit tight to the wall leaving as much space as possible between them and the aisle. Those Households sat in the Centre Pews (Households 1 to 10) would sit in the centre of the pew leaving as much space as possible between them and the aisles on either side. As per this example, the task force now realizes that their Church building can accommodate a maximum of 20 households at any given public worship gathering.

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Further to this, the maximum number of people allowed in the building at any gathering must not exceed 100 people. If we allot the Priest and an Assistant to lead the worship, an Organist to provide instrumental music, the Facilitator to oversee the gathering, the Greeter to greet people, then the total number of people constituting all households (or “bubbles”) cannot exceed 95 people.

The Task Force should then take an inventory of cleaning and sanitation supplies. Parishes will need:

- Disinfectant for high touch hard surfaces (Pews, doorknobs, railings, etc.). These are surfaces normally touched primarily by the hand.
- Cleaner for other hard surfaces (floors, etc.). These are surfaces not normally touched by the hand but of which people have come in contact.
- Hand Sanitizer (containing at least 60 per cent alcohol)
- Disposable non-medical masks
- Soap for bathrooms
- Paper towel for bathrooms

The Task Force will also need to ensure that there is a supplier identified that can keep the Parish inventories of these items fully stocked and available as needed.

At the entrance to the building, visible and accessible to those entering, should be placed non-medical masks and hand sanitizer. Another mask and hand sanitizer station(s) should be set up inside the seating area (nave) itself. Another station will need to be set up in the Chancel/Sanctuary area for use by the Priest and Worship Leaders.

All Bathrooms should be fully stocked with soap and paper towel for hand washing. Washrooms without warm running water available for handwashing should be closed. Hand Dryers and Blowers should be disconnected or use thereof disabled. ***Hand Dryers are not effective against Covid-19 and their use is discouraged by the World Health Organization.***

Garbage receptacles should have their covers removed so as the bins can be used without having to touch them.

Signs should be placed throughout the Building. More specifically:

Entrance

- Signs should be placed informing the public that they must be pre-registered to attend a worship service and that “drop in” visitors are not permitted at this time;
- Signs asking attendees to sanitize their hands upon entering the building;
- Signs informing attendees to wear a mask noting that children under the age of 5 and those who are prevented from wearing a mask due to physical or mental health conditions are not required to wear a mask;
- Signs asking attendees to respect physical distancing and to refrain from physical touching while in the building (hugging, shaking hands, etc.);
- Signs containing the text of Appendix A;
- The following signs as found at

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/business-supports/printable-resources-for-businesses/>



Bathrooms

- The following signs as found at

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/business-supports/printable-resources-for-businesses/>



Seating Area (nave)

- Signs asking people to remain in their pews while in the Building;
- Signs reminding people that Singing is only permitted during the final hymn of the Service;
- Signs to remind people that dismissal will be done in an organized fashion;
- Signs containing the text of Appendix A
- The following signs as found at

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/business-supports/printable-resources-for-businesses/>



Preparing for each Gathering

Once the Task Force has set up the Building for reopening, the remaining guidelines found in this document must occur before each and every gathering of public worship:

Sexton

Before any gathering, all surfaces that could reasonably be touched by the hand, within any area that will be used by the public, will need to be disinfected, if not already done so since the last public gathering. Care must be taken to adequately disinfect high touch surfaces especially, including pews, bathrooms, doorknobs, light switches, and stair railings. The Sexton must insure adherence to the Guidance from the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador with respects to the Cleaning and Disinfection of Public Spaces:

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/files/factsheet-covid-19-environmental-cleaning-NL.pdf>

Commonly used cleaners and disinfectants are effective against COVID-19. Use only disinfectants that have a Drug Identification Number (DIN). A DIN is an 8-digit number given by Health Canada that confirms that this product is approved for use in Canada. Check the expiry date of products you use and always follow manufacturer's instructions.

Please note that, for indoor spaces, routine application of disinfectants to environmental surfaces by spraying or fogging (also known as fumigation or misting) is not recommended nor effective against COVID-19.

Facilitator

Communication regarding your worship schedule and how to register will need to be communicated to the members of the Parish, and the general public where possible. This communication should also stress that “drop in” visitation is not permitted at this time and that those who have travelled outside the province in the last 14 days, or those who have symptoms of Covid-19, are not permitted to attend worship at this time. The Facilitator will need to explore and undertake many ways, recruiting help where possible, to extend this communication as broadly as possible within your community.

Communication and education surrounding Covid-19 and the efforts your Parish are undertaking to keep everyone safe will be key to fostering understanding throughout the community. Many people may have the wrong impression that the Church is reopen and that everything is as it used to be. Others may be feeling apprehensive about returning to public worship. Communication, compassion, and patience will be critical at this initial phase and in the time to come.

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Registrar

The means for households to register to attend a particular service will need to be explored and set up. Registration will need to happen prior to the service – registration at the door is not advised. The suggested means to register would be by telephone, email, and/or an online registration form. When registering, people will need to provide their name, phone number, and the date they wish to attend. They should also indicate who from their household (or “bubble”) will be attending with them. This is so we know how many people will be within a designated seating area. We must insure that we do not exceed the number of households we can accommodate safely nor that we exceed the 100-person limit.

An example of a Registration record would be as follows:

Sunday, October 1, 2020			
10:30am			
			Building Tally (100 Max)
Staff & Volunteers			
Rector	Rev Christopher Fowler	Telephone: 999-9999	1
Lector	Ruby Kocurko	Telephone: 999-9999	2
Facilitator	Susan Haskell	Telephone: 999-9999	3
Greeters	Amelia Fowler &	Telephone: 999-9999	5
	Abigail Sullivan	Telephone: 999-9999	
Sexton	Derrick Gullage	Telephone: 999-9999	6
Organist	Leah Corcoran	Telephone: 999-9999	7
Household 1			
Name:	Robert Fowler	Telephone: 999-9999	9
Names of others attending from same household:	Cynthia Fowler		
Household 2			
Name:	Robert Haskell	Telephone: 999-9999	13
Names of others attending from same household:	Beverly Haskell		
	Denise Haskell		
	Nicholas Haskell		
Household 3			
Name	Jeff Drover	Telephone: 999-9999	16
Names of others attending from same household:	Kim Drover		
	Ellis Drover		
Household 4			
Name	Robert Hart	Telephone: 999-9999	21
Names of others attending from same household:	Lisa Hart		
	Justin Hart		
	Emily Hart		
	Amanda Hart		

In this example, the Church building can only accommodate 4 households. Thus, we reached our maximum capacity because the 4 designated pews have been accounted for on this particular Sunday. Although we haven’t reached the maximum of 100 people, we have reached our

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maximum number of households. In this example, we have acquired the necessary information for our records as to who was present in the building during this service: the names and telephone numbers of each person present in the building.

When receiving registration, the people registering should insure that they, and the members of their household (whether attending or not), have not travelled outside the province in the last 14 days and that no one within the household are feeling sick or displaying symptoms of Covid-19. Symptoms of COVID-19 include loss of speech or movement, chest pain or pressure, difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, unexplained rash on your skin, loss of taste or smell, headache, conjunctivitis, diarrhea, sore throat, aches and pains. It is recommended that anyone planning on attending worship should complete the Covid-19 Self-Assessment found at:

<https://www.811healthline.ca/covid-19-self-assessment/>

People registering should also be cautioned that, if they are over the age of 60 or have an underlying medical condition, they should consider delaying their return to worship.

People registering will need to expressly agree to the text of Appendix A either electronically or verbally depending on whether registration is completed online or by telephone.

This list should then be provided to the Greeter who will then confirm those that attended on that date. The Greeter will then return the list to the Registrar who will keep this list on file for a period of 14 days following the date that those people attended. We have been asked by the Chief Medical Officer to maintain such a record in case a potential exposure occurs and contact tracing is needed. Following the 14-day period, the list should be destroyed (electronic copies deleted and paper copies shredded).

Cleric

Adjustments to how various liturgies are conducted will need to be considered. The liturgy will need to be carefully planned out and discerning thought given as to people involved, movement, physical distance, and hygiene, amongst other things. Preparing and conducting the liturgy, and other more specific liturgical considerations are attached to this document. The Cleric and other worship leaders will need to be informed of this guidance, and clear communication between all involved in worship will be essential to insure the guidance of the Chief Medical Officer, and the direction of the Bishop, is fully adhered to. It is suggested that the Members of the Task Force be well versed in these considerations as well.

During the time of Worship

The time has come for members of the faith community to gather for worship.

Just prior to people arriving, the Facilitator should reduce the number of doors that people must touch to enter the Service by propping, and leaving open, all doorways using doorstops. The Facilitator should also increase, as much as possible while not compromising the comfort of those attending, the amount of ventilation in the gathering space by opening doors and windows.

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The Greeter(s) should place any one time use Bulletins or Orders of Service or Common Use Worship Books (see Page 24) in the designated pews prior to people arriving. If distributing single use items or worship books as people arrive, distribution should be done by one designated individual who is masked. This person should regularly disinfect their hands while distributing items as people arrive. Pre placing the items in the pews is preferred as it eliminates another point of contact.

A collection plate should be placed for people to give their offerings. Passing of the Collection Plate during the Service is not permitted.

Members of the Task Force, if present throughout the time of worship, must wear a mask. As they may come in close contact with others, and may not always be able to maintain physical distancing, the use of a mask is mandatory.

As people arrive, the Greeter(s) should check the names of those attending. The Registrar should have provided a registration list for the service and the Greeter will need to confirm what people on that list actually attended. The Greeter should ask those arriving to sanitize their hands and provide them with a non-medical mask. The Greeter should also point out, and ask people to make themselves aware of, the signage throughout the building. Also offer to answer any questions they may have at this time.

The Facilitator can then seat the members of the household:

Seating should begin in the pew **furthest away** from the point of entry and continuing to the point of entry.

Upon seating the members of the household, the Facilitator should remind them that they should remain in their pew throughout the service, singing is only permitted during the final hymn, that bathrooms are available for use if necessary and that handwashing is required following the use of the bathroom, and that people should remain seated once the Service is over – the Facilitator will inform the household when it is time to leave. If the household should have any questions, or need any assistance during the service, they should raise their hand or signal to one of the volunteers. A volunteer will come to them to offer assistance.

The Greeter and Facilitator should be aware of common spaces where people may congregate. People are to be reminded of physical distancing and redirect people so as to discourage congregating whenever possible.

Just prior to the Service beginning, the Facilitator should announce to those gathered the guidance that all should adhere to while in the building. This should be done using a microphone exclusively set aside for the Facilitator (microphones – be it lapel, stationary, or hand held - are not to be shared and people should not “throw” their voice as it is considered a high-risk activity). If such a microphone is not available, then the person leading the worship should complete the announcement using their own microphone. If it is absolutely necessary for a microphone to be shared between people, the number of people utilizing that microphone should be minimal. The microphone must be stationary (mounted) and the following must be adhered to:

Hand held and/or lapel-headset microphones are not to be shared.

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Stationary, mounted microphones must have the mouthpiece of the microphone covered with a single use plastic covering – such as a small ziplock sandwich bag.

Between users the single use plastic covering must be changed. The person designated to change the covering must do so being careful to keep their hands away from their face, dispose of the used covering appropriately and safely, and sanitize their hands.

The parts of the microphone not covered by the plastic cover must be disinfected between users.

The top of the Lectern, Pulpit, or Podium, if the microphone is positioned over one, or attached to one, must be disinfected between users. This would be the area of the Lectern, Pulpit, or Podium that would normally be touched by the hands.

A suggested script for the Facilitator is as follows:

“I would like to take this moment to welcome you. As our worship is about to begin, I wish to remind you of the practices now in place to insure everyone’s safety and well-being. We ask that for the duration of the Service that you remain in your seats. Bathrooms are available for use if needed. If necessary to go to the washroom, we ask that you make your way to and from the bathroom being conscious to keep proper physical distancing between yourself and others. A copy of our Liturgy and Bulletin has been placed in your pew for your use and we ask that you take that with you when you leave, along with any masks, to dispose of at home. All worship books (BAS, BCP, Hymnals) should be left on the seat of your pew. No physical touching outside of your household is advised, so we ask that you greet one another with a wave or a nod. There is an offering plate provided at the entry/exit if you wish to make an offering today. Singing is only permitted during the final hymn of the Service. When the service has concluded, we ask that you leave the building directly and not mingle or socialize. We will exit by having the back pew on my left exit first, then the one on my right, and so forth up through the church until everyone has vacated. We thank you for your understanding and adherence to this guidance and in doing your part to keep us all safe and well. Should you have any questions, or need any assistance during the Service, please garner my attention and I will be happy to assist.”

When the Service has concluded the Facilitator should begin dismissing the Congregation, one pew at a time, beginning with the pew closest to the point of exit and continuing away from the point of exit. The Greeter(s) should insure people leave directly and do not stop to socialize.

Once everyone has left the building, the offerings can be counted and processed, being sure to disinfect the hands once that has occurred and to keep the hands away from the face at all times while handling the offerings. It is not certain how long COVID-19 survives on surfaces, but it seems to behave like other coronaviruses. Preliminary information on COVID-19 suggests that the

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virus may persist on surfaces for a few hours or up to several days depending on different conditions.

Single use Bulletins and Orders of Service, as well as anything left behind in the pews, should be removed and discarded. All worship books used will need to be set aside for 24 hours before being used again. The person doing so will need to wash their hands immediately following the tidying up of the pews and be conscious of keeping their hands away from their face while performing this task.

A note should be made with respects to holding multiple services in one day. If multiple gatherings are held on a single day, 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 all surfaces that could reasonably be touched by the hand, within any area that will be used by the public, between gatherings.** If congregational singing has occurred (last hymn), one hour of ventilation prior to reuse of the space must also be accounted for. It is NOT advisable to attempt to hold more than one service in the same building on a Sunday morning. For multi-point Parishes, maybe consider holding one service in each building inviting parishioners to register for a service regardless of the building it is held in. For single point Parishes, it is recommended that services be no closer in frequency than one in the morning, one in the afternoon, and/or one in the evening.

In all instances, all surfaces that could reasonably be touched by the hand, within any area that will be used by the public, MUST be disinfected, between public gatherings. Care must be taken to adequately disinfect high touch surfaces especially, including pews, bathrooms, doorknobs, light switches, and stair railings. This must be done in adherence to the Guidance from the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador with respects to the Cleaning and Disinfection of Public Spaces.

Parish Offices

Staff members must be permitted to work from home, if they wish. While some staff may wish to work from Parish premises, vulnerable individuals should be discouraged from doing so. In-office functions must still be minimal, focusing effort and activity only on essential operations. All meetings should continue to be held online or by telephone whenever possible. Any staff members or volunteers working from church-owned buildings must continue to follow physical distancing and sanitary guidelines.

Building Use by User Groups and Rentals

The rental of Church Buildings for public gatherings or social events remains prohibited. These rentals are defined to be non-commercial, private users (individuals or groups looking to use our space for social gatherings). Commercial Renters are permitted in so far as they are authorized to operate by the Provincial Chief Medical Officer of Health and if being fully compliant with all Public Health Regulations and Guidance. Permission to use our buildings by such Commercial Renters will require approval of the Diocese. Such approval will be subject to assurance that such a commercial use of our space is permitted by the provincial authorities and that the Renter will

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remain compliant with all Public Health Regulations and Guidance while using our properties. A rental agreement will need to be put in place and contain the following clause:

“It is a condition of this agreement 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 this agreement 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.”

All rental agreements already in place, at the time of the release of this document, will need to be amended to include this clause.

Indoor Gatherings to accommodate Church Related Ministries and Activities

Parishes that have received permission from the Bishop to re-open, and desire to resume in-person Faith Formation Activities for Children and/or other in-person gatherings as permitted by the Diocese at this time, may do so no earlier than 28 days following their first Sunday service since re-opening.

This applies to gatherings being held inside our Church Buildings. Outdoor Activities are permitted in so far as Public Health and Diocesan Guidance and Directives are fully adhered to as applicable to any given situation.

For indoor gatherings, following the 28-day waiting period, the following applies:

Resumption of 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.

For parishes that wish to resume Faith Formation Activities for Children, either during Sunday Worship, or as a separate, stand-alone gathering, the gathering should be adherent, in as far as it is applicable, to the Guidance provided by the Government for **Recreation and Sport Based After School Programs**:

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/information-sheets-for-businesses-and-workplaces/recreation-and-sport-based-after-school-programs/>

Remember that, in indoor public settings, masks must be worn by people 5 years of age or older. Children between the ages of 2 and 4 are encouraged to wear a mask, yet, it is not mandatory. Masks should not be worn on children under the age of 2 or by people with physical or mental health exemptions as specified under Government Guidance:

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/non-medical-masks-use-in-public/>

Resumption of Vestry, Parish Council, Committee Meetings and other like gatherings such as ACW and Men’s Service Groups.

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It is recommended, in as far as possible, that these gatherings continue on-line. Should the need arise to conduct any of these gatherings in person, the following guidelines should be adhered to:

Indoor public gatherings are restricted to no more than 100 people in so far as physical distancing can be maintained between people;

Members must be sat with 6 feet of distance between members on all sides;

Increase ventilation within the room as you are meeting;

Members wear masks when they are not seated;

No common use items to be used or food/beverages to be shared - people should bring their own tea/coffee/water bottles, meeting items such as Agendas and notes/pencils should be individual use items placed on their chairs prior to arrival;

Insure that when people arrive they go directly to their seat and remain there, when people leave they leave directly - no congregating;

A hand sanitation station should be provided and used by all members entering and exiting;

A list of names and phone numbers are recorded and maintained for 14 days for purposes of contact tracing;

The meeting area should be properly cleaned and disinfected between users;

If bathrooms are to be used there should be a cleaning and disinfection of the bathroom before and after the gathering;

Members who are feeling unwell, or should be self isolating, are not permitted to attend;

Members of the vulnerable population need to be aware that they are at greater risk of severe outcomes if they contract the virus and need to give careful thought if they should participate in mass gatherings in light of that risk;

If singing should take place within the meeting or gathering, the guidelines as set out by the Diocese with respects to singing must be adhered to.

Fundraising

Parishes that have submitted a re-opening plan, as per this document, and have received permission from the Bishop to re-open for worship, may engage in fundraising activities, subject to the attached guidelines (Appendix B), once they have re-opened.

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Accommodation for Gatherings exceeding 100 people

The Government has made accommodation that large venues with a capacity of 500 people or more that wish to host gatherings of more than 100 people may submit an operating plan for review/approval by a Service NL Environmental Health Officer.

Any application to accommodate a gathering exceeding 100 people within any church owned property can only be initiated by Synod Office following the request of a Parish and the provision, by the Parish, of all necessary information and documentation required to make such an application. Such application will require Executive Committee approval prior to submission to Government Authorities.

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Task Force Checklist

This checklist should not replace a thorough reading and understanding of this document. This checklist is provided for convenience and as a “second check” that necessary tasks are completed.

Prior to the first gathering for public worship:

- Remove and store all non-essential items from public spaces including high touch liturgical items and all items from the pew racks.
- Create clear markers and spacing for seating to maintain physical distancing.
- Take an inventory of cleaning and sanitation supplies and ensure that there is a supplier identified.
- Set up mask and sanitizer stations as outlined in the Guidelines, ensure bathrooms are fully stocked, and remove covers from garbage receptacles.
- Place signs throughout the building as outlined in the Guidelines.
- Communicate to the Parish and General Public regarding your worship schedule and how to register. Communicate and educate about Covid-19 and the efforts your Parish are undertaking to keep everyone safe.

Before each and every Gathering:

- All surfaces that could reasonably be touched by the hand, within any area that will be used by the public, must to be disinfected, if not already done so following the last gathering held.
- Pre-register attendees prior to the Service and provide this list to the Greeter for confirmation as people arrive.
- Plan and organize the liturgy within the Guidelines. Create one time use Bulletins, digital copies, or projections of the liturgy where possible. Place any one time use bulletins and/or worship books in the designated pews prior to people arriving or designate a person to distribute these items as people arrive.

During each and every Gathering:

- Prop open doors and increase ventilation.
- Place the Collection plate in the common area for people's offerings.
- Confirm those attending by indicating the same on the pre-registration list provided by the Registrar.
- Greet and instruct attendees as they arrive.
- Seat attendees by household as outlined in the guidelines.
- Monitor common areas to avoid and discourage congregating.
- Announce to congregation, just prior to the liturgy starting, the expectations to maintain safety and well-being while in the building.
- Monitor and respond to requests for assistance throughout the Service.

At the conclusion of each and every Gathering:

- Dismiss the congregation as outlined in the Guidelines.
- Monitor common areas to avoid and discourage congregating.
- Count and process the offerings in a safe manner.
- Discard single use bulletins and anything left behind in the pews. Set aside any used worship books for 24 hours prior to their next use.
- All surfaces that could reasonably be touched by the hand, within any area that will be used by the public, must to be disinfected prior to the next public gathering.
- Return the Registration list to the Registrar to keep on file for a 14-day period following the date of the Service.

Permission to Reopen a Church Building(s)

Parish: _____

Church Building(s) requesting to be reopened:

Reopening date requested: _____

Please complete the next page with the Names of the Members of your Parish Task Force, their phone numbers and email addresses.

I certify that a copy of "Many Members, One Body (Rom. 12:4-5): Guidelines for Safe Practices in Anglican East NL in the time of COVID-19" have been provided to the Wardens of the Parish and every member of the Parish Task Force. We have read and understood the expectations placed upon us as contained with this document.

Signature of Rector/Priest-in-Charge

Scan and email this page, and the page containing the Names and Contact Information of the Members of your Parish Task Force to the Executive Officer (executiveofficer@anglicanenl.net). Once the Bishop has reviewed and approved for your buildings to reopen, you will be notified by the Executive Officer. **No Church building in this Diocese may reopen for public use until the Parish has received direct permission from the Bishop to proceed.**

Please note: If a Parish has decided NOT to reopen any of its Church Buildings at this time, please contact the Executive Officer by email (executiveofficer@anglicanenl.net) indicating the Name of the Parish and a brief description as to the reasons why the decision was made to not reopen.

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	Cleric(s)	Facilitator(s)	Greeter(s)	Registrar(s)	Sexton(s)
Name					
Phone					
Email					
Name					
Phone					
Email					
Name					
Phone					
Email					
Name					
Phone					
Email					
Name					
Phone					
Email					

Preparing and Conducting the Liturgy

How we prepare and conduct every one of our liturgies has to be examined and, in many instances, aspects of those liturgies will need to be reimagined. This may seem like a daunting task to say the least, yet a worthwhile exercise is to “walk through” each liturgy within your mind making note of those instances where high risk activity would occur (physical touching, compromise of physical spacing, singing, and other noted considerations).

It is impossible to try to address every element of every liturgy covering the varied liturgical practices and nuances of every parish and congregation. It will be up to the Presider to deliberately and carefully think out and plan each liturgy to insure every possible measure is taken to provide for everyone’s safety. Some general guidelines should remain foremost in mind:

Physical distancing, and the maintenance thereof, of all people throughout the time of worship;

Eliminating instances of physical touching between people, especially those of differing households;

Eliminating instances where objects are passed between people, such as offering plates, books, cruets, and such;

Reducing the amount of movement during the liturgy, especially in instances where physical distancing will be compromised between those moving and those stationary;

The sharing of microphones (be it lapel or hand held) is prohibited. Stationary Microphones may be utilized by more than one person if absolutely necessary (see the specific guidelines on page 13) and thus Readers, Intercessors, and others must be minimized. To reduce the amount of movement, such participants should be seated at, near, or with, their microphone prior to the start of the service, and should remain there until the service is concluded;

Singing and playing wind/brass instruments is permitted. The Guidelines surrounding singing, and the use of wind/brass instruments, are detailed on page 25.

Because we know that longer exposure indoors increases the risk of transmitting the virus, consideration must be made towards a more brief worship service. Of further note is that projecting the voice has much the same effect as singing and, as such, people should speak in a “normal” conversational tone. In those instances where people are inclined to project their voice, further physical distance (12 feet) is required.

In this section we will further outline some general guidelines and practicalities and then follow up with considerations with respects to specific liturgies.

General Guidelines

Online worship and formation opportunities for those that will still be unable to join an in-person gathering, either due to risk or sense of safety, should be continued.

Liturgical processions should be minimized or avoided. Processions can easily, and inadvertently compromise physical distancing and is considered a high-risk activity. If a procession is necessary, the number of people processing should be minimal, physical distancing observed between those moving in procession, and physical distancing between those moving and those stationary must be maintained. It is mandatory that those processing use masks.

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Participants in the Liturgy should be kept to a minimum, the number of which should be determined by what is essential to properly conduct the liturgy. A suggestion is to restrict participation in the liturgy to the Presider, a Lector, and the Organist. All participants must maintain physical distancing whether seated in the sanctuary or chancel or nave. Movement throughout the Church during the Liturgy should be minimized. In those times when movement is necessary, care must be taken to maintain physical distancing between the person moving and those who are stationary. Microphones should not be shared between individuals due to the difficulty of cleaning and disinfecting these devices (more specific guidance on the use of microphones is found on page 13).

There is no physical touching during any portion of in-person worship. An offering of The Peace may still be a part of the liturgy, yet should only be exchanged in word or by means of a bow or nod. The Congregation must be instructed and reminded that they are not to move from their pews during worship. Other instances of physical touching, such as in the Sacrament of Marriage or Baptism, will need to be reimagined. Some of those instances are addressed in the specifics that follow.

There is no passing of an offering plate or other objects through the pews. Parishioners may offer financial gifts online or to a stationary plate as they come in or exit. There is to be no procession or presentation of gifts (the Offering Plate should remain where placed for people's offerings and the gifts of bread and wine should be kept at the Credence Table). The Prayer Over the Gifts could still be offered, yet made more general, much as is found in the BCP, using 1 Chronicles 29.10, 11, 14.

The congregation and the officiant are required to refrain from singing when gathered for in-person worship, yet the final hymn of the service may be sung by the people gathered. Singing is among the riskier behaviors when it comes to spreading the virus. Wind or brass instruments may be used in worship. Specific guidelines around singing, and the use of wind or brass instruments, can be found on page 25. "Throwing" the voice (raising the voice above a normal tone so as it can be heard) is also a part of that riskier behavior and should be avoided.

To avoid crowding and bottle necks, there is no receiving line following a service or shaking hands at the doorway. The congregation should disperse as was explained previously in this document.

There are to be no gatherings before, during, or after the Service. The congregation should disperse as was explained previously in this document. Everyone should remain in their pews throughout the Service.

Common use books (BAS, BCP, Hymnals, Bibles) and materials are permitted to be used if set aside for at least 24 hours between uses. Such items are not to be shared among people during the liturgy. As opposed to common use books and materials, it is strongly recommended and encouraged that the liturgy be provided by means of a single use bulletin, by the use of screen and projection, or by sending digital copies for people to access on their personal devices.

Congregational Singing, Church Choirs, and the use of Wind Instruments during gatherings of Public Worship

Singing is classified as a high-risk activity when it comes to the transmission of COVID-19. Singing produces a greater amount of aerosol virus (virus particles that are suspended in the air and can remain suspended for hours) as opposed to droplets which tend to fall to the ground once emitted. This aerosolization makes transmission of the virus more efficient if proper safeguards are not employed.

The only protection against aerosoled virus is ventilation – masks, distancing, nor hand washing can protect you from contracting the virus when it is aerosoled, thus, for any Congregation that wishes to incorporate singing into their worship, ventilation will be paramount to protecting those gathered. Considering the vast majority of our Church Buildings do not have proper mechanical air ventilation systems dictates that singing can only be introduced into our gatherings on a limited basis.

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador released new guidance that allows for singing, choirs, and the use of wind instruments in public gatherings. This guidance is generic across many types of gatherings and is not specifically directed towards the use of singing, choirs, and instruments in public worship. It is intended by the Government that this guidance be the foundation as to the employment of singing, choirs, and instruments in our own setting and purpose. They have advised us that their guidance will have to be adjusted to safely incorporate it into our circumstances. As such, we have consulted with them in this regard.

As with all other aspects of our response to these circumstances, the end result is not ideal and will not be, in some settings, easy to undertake. It is but another step forward and is, certainly, not the last step.

Just because the Government has relaxed restrictions in this regard does not mean that every Parish must incorporate singing, choirs, and wind instruments into their public worship gatherings. Based upon the ability of the Parish to incorporate the following safeguards, and based upon how comfortable and safe the worshipping community feels in participating in this high-risk activity, will determine if a Parish should incorporate these aspects of worship into their liturgy at this time.

When people contact the Registrar(s) of your Parish to register to attend a Service, they must be informed that singing will be a part of the worship and that singing is a high-risk activity when it comes to transmission of the virus. This is essential so as participants have all the information necessary to make an informed decision as to whether or not they should attend public worship at this time.

A congregational hymn can be shared as the final hymn of the service just prior to the conclusion of the worship gathering. Any singing prior to this final hymn should be provided by a soloist or Choir with the congregation humming along if they choose. Such soloists or Choir must be positioned at least 12 feet away from the Congregation.

The Sung Eucharist and other Sung liturgies are not permitted at this time, unless otherwise noted in this document.

Congregational Hymn Sings or other such liturgies that involve the singing of numerous hymns collectively are not permitted at this time. A Gospel Concert or other such gathering that does not

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involve congregational singing (or may include a congregational song as the final selection prior to the conclusion) may take place as long as it is no longer than 30 minutes in duration, and the Choir and/or Band is positioned at least 12 feet away from the Congregation.

All people singing must wear a mask while singing.

Singers should not sing facing each other.

Singing must be done with a normal voice at normal or lower volume.

Services involving singing cannot be longer than 60 minutes in duration. Of that 60 minutes, no more than 30 minutes, in total, can be spent singing.

Singing is NOT permitted in non-ventilated spaces. Ventilation must be maximized while singing and maintained for 1 hour following the singing. Within the 1 hour following singing, the space should not be used by anyone for any purposes. Cleaning and disinfecting of the Church should wait until the 1-hour ventilation time is completed.

Churches with a mechanical air ventilation system should increase the percentage of outdoor air to potentially as high as 100%, disable demand-control that reduce air supply based on temperature and occupancy, increase air filtration to as high possible and minimize filter bypass during any gathering that involves singing and should maintain the mechanical air ventilation system at these settings for a minimum of 1-hour following singing.

Churches not equipped with mechanical air ventilation systems, must maximize natural ventilation during any gathering that involves singing and maintain that ventilation for a minimum of 1-hour following singing.

Choir Members and/or Band Members, if not of the same “bubble”, must be physically distanced (6 feet) from each other and be positioned at least 12 feet away from the Congregation when performing as a Choir or performing up as a Band.

These guidelines apply fully to Choir and/or Band practices held outside of any Public Worship Gathering.

Liturgical Considerations

More specific mention should be made with regards to the following:

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 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.

For larger congregations, the use of a second person to administer can be considered. The Presider should serve one side of the building while the second person serves the other. This ensures physical distancing between the two people administering as they move throughout the Church. The Presider, once he or she has received, will don a mask, disinfect their hands, prepare the second vessel for administration, disinfect their hands once more, and leave the second vessel on the Altar. Once the Presider has entered the first pew to administer, the second person may then don a mask, proceed to the Altar, disinfect their hands and proceed to the other side of the Congregation. The second person will need to follow these guidelines as closely as the Presider. Once administration is completed, the Presider should wait for the second person to place their vessel upon the Altar, disinfect their hands, and return to their seat prior to proceeding back to the Altar.

The Celebration of Holy Baptism

In preparing a candidate and their family for Holy Baptism, it is important that interaction with the candidate/families be done as safely as possible. This might mean meeting, at least initially, via video link or talking on the telephone. If face to face meetings are held, ensure that everyone adheres to physical distancing requirements and that numbers are limited, preferably to a minimum. Such meetings should not be held in the house of anyone who is self-isolating or who is in a vulnerable group.

A discussion with the family regarding restrictions on the number of people able to be present should be had. The limitation on numbers might be very difficult to convey sensitively to new parents, but it is important that clergy do not feel pressured into making exceptions. The candidate, his/her parents, godparents and the cleric are all that are required to be present for the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. Some may choose to postpone the Baptism until all their guests can be invited to attend. In many cases, the restrictions on numbers may mean that the Baptism cannot take place during public worship. Consideration could be made for a live stream of the service (if facilities exist) or a recording of the service may be possible and such recording made available to family and friends not present. Family and friends who are a part of the vulnerable population should be cautioned on the risks of attending. People who are feeling unwell, or self-isolating, are not permitted to attend.

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 cleric 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

As with Baptisms, A discussion with the couple regarding restrictions on the number of people able to be present should be had. The limitation on numbers might be very difficult to convey sensitively to couples, but it is important that clergy do not feel pressured into making exceptions. Some may choose to postpone the Wedding until all their guests can be invited to attend. Consideration could be made for a live stream of the service (if facilities exist) or a recording of the service may be possible and such recording made available to family and friends not present. Family and friends who are a part of the vulnerable population should be cautioned on the risks of attending. People who are feeling unwell, or self-isolating, are not permitted to attend. You might wish to suggest that if the wedding goes ahead with restricted numbers, there could be a blessing in the year ahead with all guests present.

In preparing the couple, it is important that interaction be done as safely as possible. This might mean meeting, at least initially, via video link or talking on the telephone. If face to face meetings are held, ensure that everyone adheres to physical distancing requirements and such meetings are restricted to the couple and the cleric only. Such meetings should not be held in the house of anyone who is self-isolating or who is in a vulnerable group.

Couples should be counselled on the numbers constituting the Wedding Party. It is advised to minimize the number of people gathered in the front of the Church and processing/recessing. Physical distance guidelines will have to dictate how this can or cannot be accommodated. The couple and their two witnesses are all that is required to stand at the steps with the remaining members of the Party distanced in the front pews.

All surfaces that could reasonably be touched by the hand, within any area that will be used by the public, will need to be disinfected prior to the rehearsal (if not already done so since the last public gathering) and following the rehearsal.

Participants in the rehearsal should be restricted to those necessary. Family Members and spectators are not permitted to attend unless involved in the ceremony. Physical distancing during the rehearsal will need to be maintained.

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. It is advised that the couple be the only one to process and/or recess, ensuring attendees are seated in a way that they are physically distant from the couple as they process or recess.

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. It should also be reiterated that there are specific guidelines around singing, and the use of wind or brass instruments, which can be found on page 25. These restrictions will have implications for how the liturgy is planned.

The Funeral Liturgy

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

Funerals present one of the most urgent, difficult and often cruelest tensions that exist between the realities of human need and the demands that must be met within the midst of a pandemic. When a loved one dies, our natural human desire is to be surrounded by others in order to experience their comfort and support through presence, touch, prayer and a common acknowledgement of grief and loss. It is also known that during the current outbreak of COVID-19, the very gatherings and contact desired by those who grieve are precisely what must be avoided, or at the very least restricted. This tension may not be readily acknowledged by those suffering from the bewilderment, pain and agony of grief. The challenge for those leading funerals is with gentleness and compassion to enable those who mourn to find ways though the realities of the current situation that acknowledges both their needs as people who grieve and the needs of the whole community to remain safe and well. This poses a phenomenal challenge for those charged with taking funerals. Where possible, the expectations and needs of those who mourn should be satisfied, while at the same time holding in place the good practice needed to enable the safety of the whole community at this time. Coordination between the cleric, the funeral director, and the family is crucial. Any changes to the normal service should be explained by the officiant to the family. Consider whether a memorial service could be held at some point in the future, which is an opportunity for more people to come together once Government guidance permits.

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, and those attending him, the Candidate, his or her Parents and Godparents, will all don a mask. Because movement will be involved, and physical distancing may be compromised, masks will be necessary.

One Candidate at a time, along with their Parents and Godparents, will proceed to the Bishop. Because we must minimize the number of people moving about, 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.

Because there will be movement, at this point in the Liturgy, through the centre aisle, all congregants should be sat as far away from the centre aisle as possible. As an added precaution, all congregants should be asked to don their masks during this part of the service.

Upon approaching the Bishop, the Candidate should 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.

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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 knelt 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. 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 all congregants within their pews may remove their masks.

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 be masked when doing so and sanitize their hands before and after each presentation. 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 NOT permitted at this time.

Pictures:

Congregating for pictures, either prior or following the Service, is not permitted. It is suggested that a person be designated, masked 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 masked and the photo must be completed prior to the Service beginning. Once again, this photo should be done by one designated person (masked) 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.

Liturgical Considerations for Lent, Holy Week, and Easter

Ash Wednesday:

If the Imposition of Ashes is to be a part of the Ash Wednesday liturgy, the protocol would be the same as when administering communion. The person designated to perform the Imposition would don a mask, sanitize the hands, and proceed to the Nave of the Church (people should not come forward for the imposition, yet remain in their pew, don a mask, and stand). The minister would speak the words of imposition in a normal voice and sprinkle the ashes upon the head from arms length. It is suggested that the person receiving the ashes should bow the head for the imposition. The use of single-use implements (such as Q Tips) to apply the ash to the forehead is NOT PERMITTED.

Lenten Study Groups:

Bible Study, Book Study, and/or Devotional Groups should continue to be offered on-line wherever possible. In-person gatherings are permissible, yet limited to 100 people maximum

provided that physical distancing can be maintained. The gathering should only be as large as the space permits allowing six feet of physical distancing, on all sides, between individuals. The protocols as provided under “Resumption of Vestry, Parish Council, Committee Meetings and other like gatherings such as ACW and Men’s Service Groups” (Page 16) should be applied.

Stations of the Cross:

The Stations of the Cross Devotional may be offered in a Parish as follows:

Individual Devotion – The Parish may offer a time of which people may come to the church to undertake the Stations of the Cross as an individual devotion. A schedule should be devised, and communicated, of which people would pre-register and screen for a time slot within that schedule. The individual slots should be spaced in such a way to allow sufficient time so that people may adequately move through the Stations without bottleneaking. No more than one person may be physically at a Station at any one time. People should not touch the Stations. Single use handouts may be provided to guide and direct the devotional. Participants should wear a mask at all times during the Stations and be sure to sanitize the hands upon entering the space and leaving the space.

Corporate Devotion – The Parish may consider offering the Stations as a corporate devotion in the form of a Church Service. The protocols for Sunday Worship would apply in this instance. As opposed to moving from Station to Station, the congregation would remain in their designated pew and pictures of the Stations could be printed within the single use worship bulletin, projected if facilities exist, or enlarged and physically displayed in front of the congregation.

Online provision of the Stations of the Cross is the safest means of offering and should be utilized if possible.

Singing of the Passion Narrative:

Due to the length of the Passion Narrative, it is strongly advised that the Narrative be spoken, as opposed to sung. If singing of the Narrative is preferred, it may be done so by no more than 3 designated individuals. They must be masked when doing so (or at least 12 feet of separation on all sides from other people), ventilation must be provided while doing so, and microphones (if utilized) must not be shared. Remember that any service of worship should be no more than 60 minutes in duration, of which no more than 30 minutes may be spent singing.

Palm Sunday Crosses and Processions:

The Procession of Palms is not permitted under pandemic restrictions. The number of people moving, and the amount of movement, must be minimized during a worship gathering.

Palms and/or Palm Crosses may be distributed. These should be left untouched for a minimum of 24 hours prior to the distribution and one person designated to distribute the same. This person must sanitize their hands before and after the distribution, avoid physically touching anyone else when distributing, and must wear a mask at all times during the distribution.

Maundy Thursday:

Distribution of Oils – The oils, once blessed by the Bishop, should be distributed by placing oil soaked cotton in individual sealed bags. These bags would be distributed to the ministers requiring oils by one designated person who has sanitized their hands and have donned a mask. The receiving ministers would then replace the cotton within their individual containers once back in their parish and dispose of the old cotton as is appropriate under church rubrics.

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Washing of Feet – If washing of feet is incorporated into the Maundy Thursday Liturgy, this should be done by one designated minister unassisted. One person representing the community of faithful should be pre-selected for this. At the time of washing, that person will don a mask and proceed to the front of the Church. This person should be seated in the pew nearest the Chancel (front pew). The designated minister will don a mask, sanitize the hands, and proceed to the candidate. The candidate should already be seated and have any foot coverings removed. The designated minister should pour water over the foot into a basin and refrain from physically touching the foot or the individual candidate. The minister may then lay a towel over the foot (without touching the foot or candidate) and remove the basin. The candidate would dry their own foot taking the towel with them upon returning to the pew to either wash and retain at home or, if disposable, discard once they return home. The minister would sanitize their hands once more before proceeding further with the Liturgy.

Good Friday:

Traditional Three Hour Service – As worship gatherings should not exceed 60 minutes in duration, the traditional three hour service will not be permitted at this time.

Veneration of the Cross – Any veneration should not involve people coming forward (congregants must remain in their pews) and must not involve any physical touching of the cross communally. If the cross is processed as a part of the liturgy, this must be done by the designated minister only. The minister must wear a mask, the procession should be by the shortest route possible, and those sat in the pews must don a mask and be seated with maximum space allowed between them and the procession.

Distribution of Reserve Sacrament – If distribution of the Reserve Sacrament is performed on Good Friday, the distribution must be done in accordance with the guidelines set out for the distribution of Communion.

Easter Vigil:

Kindling of the New Fire – Although the gathering of the Congregation outside for the Kindling of the New Fire can be achieved safely with physical distancing and masks, it is the movement of the Congregation into the Church en masse that will present numerous problems. Thus, the gathering of the Congregation outside for the Kindling of the New Fire will not be permitted. Instead, the Congregation should arrive and be seated as per usual protocols and remain in their pews throughout the Liturgy. The Kindling of the New Fire can be performed outside with the Priest and assisting Deacon and two assistants, all of whom should be wearing masks and remain physically distant from each other whenever possible. The Kindling could be broadcast to the Congregation through audio or video where facilities are present.

The procession of the Paschal Candle can be completed utilizing the Priest, Deacon, and two assistants only, wearing masks and physically distant. If congregational candles are to be utilized, they should have been distributed when people arrived. These, as with other single use materials to be distributed, should have been pre-placed in the pews or distributed by one designated person, wearing a mask, and hands sanitized regularly during distribution. Care must be taken not to make physical contact when distributing items. At the point in the Liturgy when the congregational candles are to be lit, the two assistants would light their candles from the Paschal Candle and then proceed on either side of the Centre Aisle, lighting the candle of the person in the pew closest to them. That person would then share the light with others in their pew. The Assistants should not

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cross over from one side to the other and should attempt to maintain physical distant with others in so far as is possible.

The Exsultet may be sung by one designated individual masked (or positioned 12 feet away from anyone else in all directions). Remember that microphones may not be shared. Ventilation must also be utilized.

If the Renewal of Baptismal Vows is to be performed, the Priest is reminded that the Water of Baptism may not be shared communally.

It is impossible to try to address every element of liturgy covering the varied liturgical practices and nuances of every parish and congregation. It will be up to the Presider to deliberately and carefully think out and plan all aspects to insure every possible measure is taken to provide for everyone's safety. All aspects of this document will need to be referenced and applied. Should there be any question or uncertainty surrounding the safety of a liturgical action or practice specific to your Parish, please seek out direction and advice by contacting the Reverend Christopher Fowler by email at reverendchristopher@icloud.com or phone at (709) 699 2481.

Note that it is the responsibility of the Incumbent and the Parish leadership to insure the liturgy is conducted safely and in adherence to Government and Diocesan Guidelines and Directives.

Although these considerations will impact the look of any liturgy, the safety of all involved must be of paramount importance. Creative thinking around the liturgy will be necessary. There will no doubt be complaints about the ways we will need to do things. People will want to do what they have always done. They will pine for the way things were. Yet now we are given a rare opportunity to revisit our long tradition—the centuries of ways we have worshipped and prayed—and receive from the vast array of gifts of the Spirit among us here and now.

Pastoral Care Considerations during Covid-19

Visitation and Home Communion with people in their private residence is permitted. While doing so, Clergy must remain compliant to the following:

Clergy should wear a mask while in the person's home and maintain physical distance as much as possible;

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

Clergy should not conduct home visits or communions with people who are self-isolating. Also Clergy are not permitted to conduct home visits or communions if they are feeling unwell, have travelled outside the province in the last 14 days, or have come in close contact with a known case of COVID-19.

Clergy are permitted to visit Acute Care Facilities, Long Term Care Facilities and Personal Care Homes if requested to do so, yet are not permitted to go visiting room to room for "routine visits".

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Clergy can visit for end-of-life support and for residents where lack of access to this service is causing hardship. “Hardship” is further defined by Eastern Health to be:

Residents who have little to no family in the province who can visit them;

Residents who require bereavement support;

Resident has been diagnosed or is struggling to cope with a chronic or life limiting illness;

Resident is struggling with relocation adjustment (is new to a facility and not coping well);

Resident requires loneliness reduction support.

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.

Other Resources

The following listing contains useful resources for consideration as we re-open our church buildings. There are also useful resources as we work towards reimagining and adapting our liturgy and worship. Other resources provide information on Covid-19 as well as tools for applying best practices. *In instances where these resource materials disagree or conflict with the contents of this document, this document will take precedence.*

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/>

The hub of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador with respects to the response to Covid-19.

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/business-supports/printable-resources-for-businesses/>

This site contains printable versions of the posters mentioned previously.

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/files/Physical-Distancing-for-Businesses.pdf>

This is a Guidance Document provided by the Government to Business with respects to Physical Distancing.

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/files/factsheet-covid-19-environmental-cleaning-NL.pdf>

This is a Guidance Document provided by the Government with respects to Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Settings.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/covid19-industry/disinfectant-sanitizers-cleaners-soaps.html>

More information, from Health Canada, regarding disinfectants, sanitizers, cleaners, and soaps effective against Covid-19.

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/files/Guidance-on-Cloth-Masks-Non-Medical-Masks.pdf>

This is a Guidance Document provided by the Government with respects to Cloth (Non-Medical) Masks.

<https://www.811healthline.ca/covid-19-self-assessment/>

This is a self-assessment tool for use by the general public to determine if you should be tested for Covid-19.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>

This is the hub for the Government of Canada with respects to Covid-19.

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

This is the hub for the World Health Organization with respects to Covid-19.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches>

A site of the Church of England providing some resources and guidance surrounding Covid-19.

<https://www.reopeningthechurch.com>

A site released by the Humanitarian Disaster Institute and National Association of Evangelicals with some useful resources and considerations surrounding the re-opening of Church Buildings.

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Church Attendance Rules

Vulnerable persons (over the age of 60 or at risk due to an underlying medical condition), are at greater risk to their health and life if they contract COVID 19. If you are a vulnerable person, carefully consider if you should attend an in-person worship service.

You must register prior to attendance and by so doing accept and agree to abide by these rules and other directions given to you by parish authorities.

Attendance is at your own risk.

Maintain physical distancing of 6 feet or more with all outside your household.

Use hand sanitizers provided before taking your seat.

Sit only in spaces designated by the parish.

Masks are mandatory except for those under the age of 5 and those with physical or mental conditions that prevent the wearing of a mask. Masks may be removed while you are seated or when receiving Communion.

Singing is only permitted during the final hymn of the Service.

No physical touching with other attendees other than those in your household.

Fundraising Guidelines

The Diocese recognizes the economic strain that parishes have been under since the advent of Covid-19 and the desire to engage in traditional fundraising activities once again. Obviously, the health and wellbeing of staff, volunteers and customers is the prime consideration when considering events and activities. Please note that the following guidelines apply to the province's current Alert Level 2. Should the alert level return to Level 3, or even 4, in the future, diocesan guidelines will change to reflect that.

Please note that only those parishes that have submitted a re-opening plan, received the Bishop's permission to re-open for worship, and have in fact re-opened, will be permitted to engage in fundraising activities.

Fellowship:

In keeping with the Dept. of Health and Community Services (DHCS) *Guidance for Faith-based Organizations*, parish social gatherings, such as coffee hours and communal dinners and lunches, should still be avoided.

Fundraising:

When churches re-open in September the following fundraising guidelines will apply:

Ticket Sales:

Ticket sales, in accordance with ServiceNL regulations, are permissible, provided there are no sales tables set up in public spaces. Tickets for selling may be dropped off to sellers' homes for sales to family and friends in their extended bubbles. Monies collected should ideally be remitted to the parish via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). If it is necessary to remit cash, people should wash their hands after handling the cash and avoid touching their face until they have washed their hands, as cash is known to carry a lot of bacteria and viruses. Tickets could also be ordered via email or phone, paid for by EFT or credit card, and the tickets delivered to purchasers' mailboxes.

Parish Fairs/Craft Sales:

Like Coffee Hours and Parish Luncheons, in-person fundraising events with or without food service will not be permitted at this time.

Parishes may consider online auctions or sales of handiwork and baked goods. A small group can collect items from donors' doorsteps and prepare them for sale or auction. Items that can be disinfected safely should be disinfected and those handling the items should avoid touching their face while handling the items and immediately wash their hands after handling. Items would be paid for via EFT or credit card payment to the parish, after which **curbside pick-up** could be arranged at staggered intervals. Parishes should not deliver goods to customers. Names and contact information of all volunteers, staff **and customers** must be recorded and maintained for contact tracing purposes.

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Guidelines:

- Volunteers to maintain physical distancing while preparing goods for sale;
- Volunteers attest that they are not symptomatic, have not travelled outside the province in the last 14 days and have not been in contact with anyone with Covid-19;
- Volunteers practice proper hygiene (wash hands, cover coughs and sneezes);
- Volunteers wear masks;
- Equipment that must be shared is sanitized between users;
- Doorknobs, handles, countertops and light switches are cleaned frequently;
- Make available to volunteers/staff masks, tissues, no-touch trash receptacles, hand soap, alcohol-based hand sanitizers, disinfectants and paper towels;
- Ensure washrooms have liquid soap and paper towels for volunteers/staff;
- Clean kitchen and other preparation areas and bathrooms before volunteers/staff arrive and after they leave.

Fundraising Take-out Meals:

Take-out fundraising meals are permitted, provided the following conditions are met:

- Meals to be prepared on site in a kitchen approved by the DHCS and following DHCS food preparation guidelines;
- Volunteer cooks/preparation staff can maintain physical distancing while preparing meals;
- Volunteers attest that they are not symptomatic, have not travelled outside the province in the last 14 days and have not been in contact with anyone with Covid-19;
- Volunteers practice proper hygiene (wash hands, cover coughs and sneezes);
- Volunteers wear masks;
- Volunteers handling food directly and anyone with open cuts or sores on their hands, wear gloves;
- Equipment that must be shared is **sanitized** between users, using a mild bleach and water solution;
- Doorknobs, handles, countertops and light switches are cleaned frequently;
- Clearly identify disinfectants separately from sanitizing solutions, as disinfectants must not be used on food contact surfaces. **Do not use a disinfectant on anything that comes in contact with food.**
- Make available to volunteers/staff gloves, masks, tissues, no-touch trash receptacles, hand soap, alcohol-based hand sanitizers, disinfectants and paper towels;
- Ensure washrooms have liquid soap and paper towels for volunteers/staff;
- Clean kitchen and other preparation areas and bathrooms before volunteers/staff arrive and after they leave.
- Meals to be ordered by phone or email;
- Meals to be paid for by EMT or telephone credit card payment;
- Meals to be collected via **curbside pickup** at pre-arranged, staggered times. Parishes should not deliver meals to customers.
- Names and contact information of all volunteers, staff **and customers** is recorded and maintained for contact tracing purposes;

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Parishes will undoubtedly conceive of other creative fundraising ideas. These should be approved by Synod Office before proceeding.

Appendix C
Parish Screening Questionnaire

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To be completed as part of the Registration process to attend a service of public worship

Question 1:

Are you self-isolating, or should be self-isolating, as per the directives of the Chief Medical Officer of Newfoundland and Labrador?

If the answer is YES, then this person is NOT permitted to attend worship at this time.

If the answer is NO, then proceed to Question 2.

If the answer is UNKNOWN, then direct the person to complete the Self-Assessment tool as found at 811healthline.ca (“COVID-19 Self-Assessment Click Here” at the top of the website). If this tool is not accessible to the person registering, they can ask someone with access to complete it for them, or, if they are comfortable doing so, the Registrar can complete the self-assessment verbally with them (attached). Once completed, if the person is not required to self-isolate as per the self-assessment, proceed to Question 2. If the person is required to self-isolate as per the self-assessment, they are NOT permitted to attend worship at this time.

Question 2:

Are you over the age of 60 or do you have a known underlying medical condition?

If the answer is YES, then it is advised that this person be cautioned of the risks of attending worship at this time. They are permitted to attend, yet it is advised, by the Chief Medical Officer of Health, that they not do so. These people are at higher risk of developing complications, some fatal, if they contract COVID-19. If they still insist on attending, proceed to Question 3.

If the answer is NO, then this person may attend worship. Proceed to Question 3.

Question 3:

Do you accept and agree that, by registering and attending any gathering of public worship, that your attendance is at your own risk, and that you will adhere to public health directives and the directions given to you by Parish Authorities while attending worship?

If the answer is YES, then proceed to register the person by recording their first and last name and phone number.

If the answer is NO, then this person may NOT attend worship at this time.

**Appendix D
Provincial COVID-19 Self-Assessment Questionnaire**

Question 1:

Are you experiencing any of the following:

- Severe difficulty breathing (e.g. struggling to breathe or speaking in single words)
- Severe chest pain
- Having a very hard time waking up
- Feeling confused
- Losing consciousness

If the answer is YES, then this person should call 9-1-1 or go directly to their nearest emergency department

If the answer is NO, then proceed to Question 2.

Question 2:

Are you experiencing any of the following:

- Fever (including chills/sweats)
- Cough (new or worsening)
- Small red or purple spots on hands and/or feet in a child/young adult less than 20 years of age
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Runny, stuffy or congested nose (not related to seasonal allergies or other known causes/conditions)
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- Headache
- Acute loss of smell or taste
- Unusual fatigue, lack of energy
- New onset of muscle aches
- Loss of appetite
- Vomiting or diarrhea for more than 24 hours

If the answer is YES, then this person should self-isolate and contact 8-1-1. This person is NOT permitted to attend worship at this time.

If the answer is NO, then proceed to Question 3.

Question 3:

In the last 14 days, have you been in close contact with a known case of COVID-19?

If the answer is YES, then this person should self-isolate and contact 8-1-1. This person is NOT permitted to attend worship at this time.

If the answer is NO, then proceed to Question 4.

Question 4:

Have you received a notification from the COVID Alert app that you may have been exposed to COVID-19?

If the answer is YES, then this person should self-isolate and contact 8-1-1. This person is NOT permitted to attend worship at this time.

If the answer is NO, then proceed to Question 5.

Question 5:

Were you outside of Newfoundland and Labrador in the last 14 days? This excludes the communities along the Labrador-Quebec border including Labrador City, Wabush, Fermont, the Labrador Straits area and Blanc Sablon.

If the answer is YES, then this person should self-isolate and contact 8-1-1. This person is NOT permitted to attend worship at this time.

If the answer is NO, then proceed to Question 6.

Question 6:

In the last 14 days, did you have close contact with an ill person who travelled outside of Newfoundland and Labrador?

If the answer is YES, then this person should self-isolate and contact 8-1-1. This person is NOT permitted to attend worship at this time.

If the answer is NO, then proceed to Question 7.

Question 7:

In the last 14 days, did you work at or visit a place with a COVID-19 outbreak?

If the answer is YES, then this person should self-isolate and contact 8-1-1. This person is NOT permitted to attend worship at this time.

If the answer is NO, then this person is NOT required to self-isolate at this time and may attend worship if they so choose.

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