



In This Together

THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF OTTAWA'S COVID-19 PLAN

Version 1.1—Updated August 25, 2020

This Plan is Subject to All Government and Public Health Requirements

The Diocese of Ottawa spans multiple health units in two provinces, all with rapidly evolving advice and guidelines on COVID-19. As a result, there may be conflicts between guidance from local or provincial authorities and the diocesan plan. If so, the more cautious guideline is to be followed. If you have questions, please send them to C19helpdesk@ottawa.anglican.ca

INTRODUCTION

As a diocese, our response to the COVID-19 pandemic is and will always be driven by the need to preserve life and health. Jesus taught us that our love for God must be expressed by loving one another—to the very best of our abilities. Therefore, as Ontario and Quebec move through phases of their reopening plans, the Diocese of Ottawa has prepared its own plan based on the best scientific evidence and public health advice, consistent with a template followed by all dioceses in the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario, and designed for our communities and the particular risks we face.

So far, the clearest example of how we diverge from the provinces' plans is the shared decision by members of the provincial House of Bishops that Anglican churches will be closed for in-person worship until at least September 2020, despite Quebec and Ontario decisions to permit public worship. We believe our churches need time to develop our own specific plans and prepare to operate safely. There are many details to attend to and a great deal of work involved in reopening our churches safely.

It is important to understand that due to the way in which the pandemic keeps evolving, in-person worship will only begin again when it is safe to do so.

Our goal is to ensure that whenever someone enters an Anglican church, they are able to trust that the staff have made the decisions and taken the actions necessary to maximize safety. The practices we have outlined are either requirements or recommendations. Requirements are mandatory, and words like "must" or "prohibited" are used to make that clear. Recommendations are best practices, which incumbents and churchwardens can use and adapt as necessary.

We drew extensively on the Diocese of New Westminster's plan¹ to prepare ours, and we thank them for their work. We also drew on the good work of the Humanitarian Disaster Institute², guidance from the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario and guidelines published by Ottawa Public Health, Public Health authorities in Ontario and Quebec, and the Public Health Agency of Canada.

¹ <https://www.vancouver.anglican.ca/news/documents-available-phased-re-opening-for-in-person-worship>

² <https://www.wheaton.edu/academics/academic-centers/humanitarian-disaster-institute/covid-19/>

CHURCHES AND COVID-19

There have been COVID-19 outbreaks in churches throughout the world. The “3C model” developed in Japan may help explain this:

Important notice for preventing COVID-19 outbreaks.

Avoid the “Three Cs”!

- 1. Closed spaces** with poor ventilation.
- 2. Crowded places** with many people nearby.
- 3. Close-contact settings** such as close-range conversations.



One of the key measures against COVID-19 is to prevent occurrence of clusters.
Keep these “Three Cs” from overlapping in daily life.



The risk of occurrence of clusters is particularly high when the “Three Cs” overlap!

In addition to the “Three Cs,” **items used by multiple people** should be cleaned with disinfectant.

首相官邸 Prime Minister's Office of Japan | 厚生労働省 Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare | MHLW COVID-19 Search | QR Code

Risk of transmission is elevated in *Closed spaces, Crowded places, and Close contact.*

With each added factor, the risk increases: church gatherings often have all three Cs.

This is what we have to bear in mind as we plan.

SUMMARY OF THE DIOCESE OF OTTAWA'S COVID-19 PLAN

ACTIVITY	Transmission Risk	RED	AMBER	YELLOW	GREEN
Contact Information	N/A	N/A	Collect information from all attendees	Contact information from all attendees	N/A
In-Person Worship Service					
Size	Depends	Not permitted	<50 people or 1/3 capacity whichever is less; face mask required; physical distancing	<100 people or 1/2 capacity whichever is less; face mask required; physical distancing	No limits on size; face mask optional
Greeters	Medium/High	Not permitted	Physically distant and masked, no passing of materials	Same as AMBER	Non-contact greetings
Eucharist	Medium	Not permitted	Bread only, restrictions	Same as AMBER	Both elements with enhanced hygiene†
Offering	High	Online	Online, no passing of plate	Same as AMBER	Passing of plate discouraged
Singing	High	Not permitted	Soloist permitted; congregational singing not permitted	Soloist and small ensembles permitted with distancing; congregational singing permitted with masks	Congregational singing permitted
Choir	High	Not permitted	Not permitted	Not permitted	Permitted with distancing
Coffee hour	Medium/High	Not permitted	Not permitted	Permitted with restrictions†	Permitted with enhanced hygiene
In-Person Gatherings					
Adults and Young Adults	High	Online only	Online only	<20 people, lecture-style seating, physical distancing and face masks	Enhanced hygiene and distancing where possible
Adolescents	High	Online only	Online only	<10 people, lecture-style seating, physical distancing and face masks	Enhanced hygiene and distancing where possible
Sunday School (Elementary)	High	Online only	Online only	<5 people, lecture-style seating, physical distancing and face masks	Enhanced hygiene and distancing where possible
Nursery	High	Not Permitted	Not Permitted	Not Permitted	Permitted with enhanced hygiene

Other Building Use					
Office Use	Medium	Essential staff only with physical distancing and masks as required	Essential and some non-essential staff with physical distancing	Essential and non-essential staff with physical distancing	Permitted with enhanced hygiene
Outreach and Service	Depends	Permitted with permission	Permitted with permission	Permitted with restrictions	Permitted with enhanced hygiene
Small self-help groups (should be the same members over time)	Medium	5 people or less depending on provincial guidance*, face masks, physical distancing	Same as stage one except 10 people or less depending on provincial guidance	20 people, face mask optional	No limits to size, follow provincial guidelines
Other Elements					
Facility Cleaning	N/A	Normal Cleaning with enhanced hygiene	Intensive cleaning with enhanced hygiene	Intensive cleaning with enhanced hygiene	Normal cleaning with enhanced hygiene
Pastoral Care	High	Online/Virtual	Permitted with restrictions	Permitted with restrictions	Permitted with enhanced hygiene
Prayers for Healing	High	Online/Virtual	In person with restrictions	In person with restrictions	Permitted with enhanced hygiene

*Provincial guidance—public health requirements or regulations from the provinces of Ontario and Quebec

†Permitted with restrictions

‡Enhanced hygiene—new standards of hygiene may be beyond what was normal practice before the pandemic.

THE DIOCESE OF OTTAWA'S COVID-19 PLAN

PRINCIPLES

1. This plan is for parishes in both the Ontario and Quebec regions of the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa. It is to be implemented collaboratively by clergy and lay leaders in every parish, assisted by a corresponding parish checklist found at <http://www.ottawa.anglican.ca/index.php/covid-19>. All paragraphs from this point onwards have been sequentially numbered for ease of reference.
2. If important new information becomes available, it may be necessary to update the plan. If so, notice of a new version of the plan will be provided in the weekly *COVID Communiqué*.
3. As the pandemic keeps evolving, we are using risk management to guide what we do. That means each decision is approached by identifying and assessing the risks involved, doing our best to contain them, and then mitigating the degree of risk that remains.
4. Our plan proceeds by stages but it is important to remember that at any time a resurgence of the virus could mean we have to move back to earlier, more restricted stages.

MAKING DECISIONS

5. All of us, at every level of our diocese, will face many decisions over the months of the pandemic. Our plan shares responsibility for those decisions—many are left to parish clergy and leaders, who have the best knowledge of their congregations and communities. We are not, however, expecting you to tackle all the challenges of COVID-19 on your own. The place to start, always, is with this plan and the information provided on our diocesan website's COVID-19 page, which is always kept current: <http://www.ottawa.anglican.ca/index.php/covid-19>.
6. We also urge you to ask questions and discuss what is happening, and to share your ideas with one another. To provide clarification and guidance, we have created a special diocesan email address to take your questions: C19helpdesk@ottawa.anglican.ca. Your questions will be passed on to the appropriate person for an answer. Some of them will be published anonymously in the *COVID Communiqué* and on the COVID-19 page on our diocesan website. At the same time, our bishop, senior staff, and COVID-19 advisors will work together and with the broader church to interpret new developments, clarify local and provincial guidelines, and make the decisions about when to move ahead, or back, through the steps of the plan.
7. Our bishop and the senior leadership of our diocese is committed to keeping in close communication with you through the weekly *COVID Communiqué* and other means as necessary. We urge you, in turn, to communicate regularly with your parish as you work through the "new normal" of this plan. This has been a very hard time for people cut off from their churches and will continue to be; you will need acceptance, support and commitment from everyone to make the new way of operating work. Your parish council and leaders of other groups and committees can play important roles introducing the plan.

RISK AND REOPENING

8. During this process, we need to keep in mind that people and organizations vary in how much risk they can tolerate. We need to respect those differences without letting subjective judgment drive our decisions. People frequently underestimate risks during disasters and are overconfident about

the control they have. We can likely expect criticism from people who think this plan is too cautious and others who find it too bold, and we must listen carefully to all concerns. If a group feels unsafe despite what we think are our best efforts, we should be open to discussing additional risk mitigation.

9. Once your church reopens, you are bound to find not everything goes as planned. We can instruct and remind people, but it will not be possible to control the behaviour of everyone who walks in the door. People may know they should stay two metres apart, but we all tend to revert to old habits. Be realistic, firm but gentle. There will also be situations that neither you nor this plan have anticipated—we will need to be adaptable as we journey together through these unknown times.

STAGES OF THE PLAN

10. There are four stages to our diocesan plan:
 - a. **RED**: buildings are closed and in-person worship and activities shut down.
 - b. **AMBER**: a first, small step to some forms of worship and other activities.
 - c. **YELLOW**: follows most of the same rules as AMBER; the biggest differences are that more people are allowed to attend services and groups can start meeting in church again.
 - d. **GREEN**: fully open, but with important new practices.
11. The decision of whether to stay at one stage or move backward or forward will be made by our bishop and our senior staff in consultation with our COVID-19 advisors and public health. We will share the evidence those decisions are based on, so all concerned have access to what is shaping our progress.
12. Our diocese will move together as a whole from one stage of the plan to another, and individual parishes will not be left behind if they need help implementing the plan.
13. We know you would like clear statements of what circumstances will determine when we move forward or backwards between stages, but with the way the pandemic keeps changing, that is just not possible now.

**DO NOT participate in or lead a service or gathering if you are feeling sick!
This applies equally to clergy and laity!**

RED: SHUT DOWN

14. During the RED stage of a pandemic, all church buildings are closed, all worship must be online, and all meetings held online or on the phone.
15. There are some very limited exceptions to building closures. For detailed information on these exceptions, please see <http://www.ottawa.anglican.ca/images/COVID-19/categories/COVID-web-Operations-May-8.pdf?type=file>
16. Otherwise, the details of how we all should be operating in RED follow below.

RED – WORSHIP

17. Because in-person worship is prohibited, churches are encouraged to take advantage of the various options for offering online services.
18. FILMING AND LIVE-STREAMING WORSHIP: Within the maximum limit on gatherings, people can do their part and leave so another can come in. Participants may include:
 - a. One clergyperson;
 - b. One layperson;
 - c. A musician or musicians, noting that any singers must stand more than two metres from others and face away from them;
 - d. Technicians to record or live-stream; and
 - e. An altar guild person or sacristan as needed.

RED – OTHER GATHERINGS AND PASTORAL CARE

19. During RED, all gatherings and pastoral care must be online or by telephone.
20. Visits to care homes and hospitals are not permitted.
21. Hospital visits to the dying are permitted if hospital authorities allow, and the clergy person feels safe.

RED – PERMITTED OFF-SITE SERVICES

22. FUNERALS off-site are permitted as specified/restricted by Ontario/Quebec authorities:
 - a. <https://thebao.ca/registrars-directive-changes-to-funeral-and-visitation-attendance/>
 - b. <https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-issues/a-z/2019-coronavirus/gatherings-events-covid19/>

23. WEDDINGS off-site are permitted as specified/restricted by Ontario/Quebec governments, and according to the normal diocesan rules for weddings outside of churches:
- a. <https://www.ontario.ca/page/getting-married>
 - b. <https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-issues/a-z/2019-coronavirus/gatherings-events-covid19/>
 - c. <http://www.ottawa.anglican.ca/images/COVID-19/categories/Weddings-during-Covid.pdf?type=file>
24. BAPTISMS should be conducted off-site only in an emergency. Please notify your archdeacon.

RED – BUILDING USE

25. OFFICE USE:
- a. In RED, staff ought to work from home as much as possible, especially the immunocompromised, parents of children, and those older than 60. Only essential work that cannot be done remotely should be done in church buildings.
 - b. All committee and team meetings must be held online.
26. SERVICE AND OUTREACH:
- a. In-person service or outreach ministries, such as meal programs or food banks, must have diocesan permission to operate during the RED stage.
 - b. Outside groups that use parish buildings for food ministries must agree to follow safety guidelines and have diocesan permission to operate.
27. GROUP USE AND RENTALS:
- a. Church use by groups is not permitted in RED stage.
 - b. Rentals are not permitted.
 - c. Long-term tenants must close with the exception of some essential services, noting that diocesan permission is required. For details see <https://ottawa.anglican.ca/images/COVID-19/categories/COVID-web-Operations-May-8.pdf?type=file>.

Four basic safeguards: masks, hand hygiene, distancing and contact information

Anyone who walks into a church could be infected but not know it, so having everyone wear a mask is an important safeguard to reduce the spread of the virus. Frequent hand sanitizing, conscientious physical distancing, and keeping track of who comes to services and gatherings are equally important. *During the pandemic, all four safeguards must be mandatory for clergy, staff, volunteers, the congregation, and any visitors.*

AMBER: FIRST STEPS

28. Before the church can reopen, the entire building must be thoroughly cleaned. That includes sanitizing pews, bathrooms, door handles, light switches, stair rails, microphones and all other high-touch surfaces. See <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet-covid-19-environmental-cleaning.pdf?la=en>
29. Put away non-essential items—the fewer things there are to touch, the fewer that will need to be cleaned. Consider formally closing off areas of the building not being used as “no-go” zones, so they do not have to be cleaned and sanitized.
30. Communicating regularly with parishioners continues to be essential and being clear about the details and requirements of reopening is an important part of being a safe place for all. Some of the things you should mention:
 - a. People should self-screen for symptoms, and anyone who feels unwell or is in a high-risk group should stay home (for accessible resources to help people to understand this see: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/about-coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>).
 - b. The limits on the size of congregations and your plan for handling them.
 - c. Everyone who attends a service or gathering must provide their names and contact information in case there is an outbreak connected to the church and people who might have been exposed need to be informed. The information collected will be kept strictly private and destroyed 30 days after the date it was collected.
 - d. Details on how social distancing will work in church.
 - e. Details on changes in the service (such as no choirs or singing allowed, no touching allowed before, during or after the service and no sharing the common cup—see details below).
 - f. Everyone must wear a mask.
31. In addition to circulating information beforehand, we recommend posting signs and making announcements during services to remind people not to shake hands or hug and to maintain distance. There are examples of posters at: <https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/public-health-topics/multilingual-resources.aspx>.

AMBER – BUILDING USE: SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

32. People should use one door to enter and a different one to exit (with an exception for people who need the accessible entrance). If that is not possible, use common sense to decide on a solution that works in your church.
33. Hand sanitizer made with at least 60% alcohol must be available at the entrance and exit and throughout the church.
34. All visitors must sanitize their hands upon entry and exit.

35. Anyone who comes into any church building must provide contact information so they can be reached if you later learn there's a risk they might have been exposed to COVID-19 while in the building. Each day's log must be destroyed 30 days after the date it was created. Ottawa Public Health has created an attendance log for services, which can also be used for daily visitors. It's available here: https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/public-health-topics/resources/Documents/COVID-19_Places-of-Worship-Attendance-Log_EN.pdf However, even those who refuse to or who are unable to provide contact information should not be turned away. Often people are afraid to share such information because of privacy concerns or safety issues.
36. Mark or block off seats to ensure physical distancing between individuals who are not members of the same household.
37. Put marks on the floor, if necessary, to show where parishioners, staff and volunteers can stand.
38. Cleaning and disinfecting:
 - a. Develop a schedule for frequent (at least twice a day) cleaning and disinfecting of high-touch surfaces, high-traffic areas, common areas and washrooms.
 - b. Use only disinfectants approved by Health Canada. You can look up specific products here <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/list.html> or use this graphic from the British Columbia Centre for Disease Control to check whether your disinfectant will do the job against COVID-19: http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/CleaningDisinfecting_PublicSettings.pdf
 - c. The sanctuary should be sanitized between services.
 - d. Garbage bins should be lined with plastic bags.

AMBER – WORSHIP

39. Parishes can begin holding in-person worship gatherings of no more than 50 people or 1/3 capacity—whichever is less. That number includes the celebrant, musicians, sidespeople and anyone else assisting at the service.
40. Anyone who comes to a church service must provide contact information so they can be reached if you later learn there's a risk they might have been exposed to COVID-19 while they were at church. Ottawa Public Health has created an attendance log for services, which you can download and print out. It's available here: https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/public-health-topics/resources/Documents/COVID-19_Places-of-Worship-Attendance-Log_EN.pdf You must display the disclaimer in paragraph 122 where people coming to the service can see it.
 - a) There may be people who come to your church who do not have either a cell phone, landline or access to email. In those cases, ask for an address. If they don't have an address, don't turn them away—let them attend.

- b) Some people may be afraid to share their phone number or address. If they are known around the parish, you could note their attendance unofficially. Another option is to let someone use just a first name or an alias to be contacted in case of COVID. However, neither is required—people who are afraid to give contact information should not be turned away.
- 41. No liturgical processions are allowed unless processors can keep two metres between themselves, others in the procession, and the congregation.
- 42. There must be no physical touching during any part of the service or before or afterwards. This includes sharing the Peace (although exchanging the Peace without touching is encouraged).
- 43. Offering plates must not be passed. To limit contact, parishioners should donate online or to a collection plate set out on a table as they come in or during worship. Counters should work in a sanitized space, wear masks, wash their hands, wear gloves and maintain physical distance from each other as they work.
- 44. Households and individuals must keep at least two metres apart in all directions from other households or individuals.
- 45. The congregation and the officiant are not allowed to sing, and wind and brass instruments are prohibited. If a cantor or soloist is to sing, they must do the same health screen as parishioners and maintain physical distance.

AMBER – GATHERING SIZE AND CONTACT

- 46. Services are limited to no more than 50 people or 1/3 the capacity of the church, whichever is less, to ensure there is enough space for two metres of separation on all sides between households or individuals.
- 47. If these rules will not accommodate your average Sunday attendance, consider holding several services to spread out the number of people gathered at once, or moving to a bigger space, such as your parish hall.
- 48. All clergy, volunteers and members of the congregation must wear masks. If possible, have disposable masks available.
- 49. Greeters should be trained to help people understand and comply with masking, screening, registering, distancing and sanitizing protocols.
- 50. To avoid crowding and bottlenecks, there is no receiving line following a service. The congregation should simply leave, maintaining physical distance from others and using the designated exits. Sidespeople should manage people exiting from the church, also ensuring that distancing is observed on walkways and parking areas.
- 51. There is no nursery or Sunday school or coffee hour following a service. Ensure people leave the building and do not mingle.
- 52. All common surfaces must be sanitized before and after worship, including doorknobs, counter tops, pews, bathrooms, and electronics.
- 53. Do not share lavalier or clip-on microphones unless they are sanitized between uses.

54. There should be no water in the font.
55. Remove all the prayer books, hymn books and Bibles and replace them with single-use bulletins. Each person picks up their own or downloads a digital copy in advance to their phone or tablet. Another option is projecting the bulletin on screens.

AMBER – CELEBRATING THE EUCHARIST

56. All spaces, vessels and hands must be sanitized before and after the Eucharist.
57. The celebrant must wear a mask at all times.
58. Just before the Eucharistic Prayer and again before the distribution of communion, celebrants must sanitize their hands.
59. The celebrant should consecrate a priest's host and individual wafers (not baked bread) for those receiving communion.
60. The wafers should be covered and placed on the side of the altar during the Eucharistic Prayer.
61. After the breaking of the bread, the celebrant receives communion in both kinds (from the priest's host and the consecrated wine) and puts on their mask afterwards.
62. The celebrant must then sanitize their hands again and distribute the consecrated wafers to those receiving, making sure not to touch their hands.
63. Communion must be in one kind only: wafers. The celebrant must be the only communion ministrant.
64. People should remove their masks briefly to consume the wafer, and should sanitize their hands afterwards.
65. After all have received communion, the celebrant must sanitize their hands again.
66. Each church must have clear physical distancing guidelines for communion. If that is not possible at the rail, have people stand for communion—what you decide will depend on your church structure. Please choose an approach that maximizes distance and mitigates risk.

AMBER – OTHER WORSHIP SERVICES

67. Weddings, funerals and baptisms can resume in church buildings under all the same restrictions as worship services.
68. A separate bowl of water should be used for each candidate during baptisms.

AMBER – THINGS TO CONSIDER FOR WORSHIP

69. People will need to use washrooms. Consider providing sanitizing wipes and asking them to wipe down the flush handle and sink. Ensure there is enough room for line ups to maintain social distancing.
70. Keep offering online worship for those who cannot get a spot in church, do not feel it is safe to attend yet, or are in a high-risk group for COVID-19.
71. Develop a plan for giving everyone access to an in-person service. Consider giving priority to those who cannot worship online.
72. Well-ventilated spaces are safer—open all the doors and windows you can.
73. Train as many people as possible, especially group leaders, in these guidelines, and ask them to take an active role in helping people to follow them.
74. Have health information posters on display.
75. Holding services outside is an option, noting that all rules and restrictions still apply.

AMBER – SERVICE AND OUTREACH

76. Food programs follow processes and guidelines already developed and must have diocesan permission to operate.
77. Outside organizations using church kitchens for food programs must read and sign a waiver form, provided by the diocese.
78. Other in-person service and outreach programs may not operate unless they have diocesan approval.

AMBER – OTHER CHURCH ACTIVITIES

79. During AMBER, education, fellowship and fund-raising should remain online as much as possible. When such activities are done in person, meetings and events must follow size limits, and participants should maintain social distancing and wear masks.

AMBER – PASTORAL CARE

80. Where possible, pastoral care should be done over the phone or online, but if it is done in person, sanitize hands, wear masks and keep distancing, bearing in mind pastoral care often involves those most vulnerable to COVID-19.

AMBER – OFFICE OPERATIONS

81. As in RED, it is best if staff members work from home when possible. Online or telephone meetings should be encouraged but in-person meetings are permitted provided you follow public health guidelines for sizes of gatherings, noting that those may be different than the numbers allowed at services.
82. For high-traffic areas, such as reception desks, consider installing Plexiglass.

83. Any staff members or volunteers working from church-owned buildings must sign in, wear masks, observe physical distancing, and sanitize hands frequently.

AMBER – GROUPS AND RENTALS

84. Groups and rentals, including 12-step programs, can resume with up to 10 participants or 1/3 room capacity, whichever is less. We recommend you only open to groups that can provide a written declaration stating they will safely maintain masking, sanitizing, registering and physical distancing protocols.
85. Licensed child-care centres are considered essential services by provincial health authorities. If a child-care centre using church property wishes to open, the diocese recommends they sign a form confirming that their activities are not prohibited; that they are making their own informed decision to operate and that they will not hold the diocese or the parish liable for any loss or damage arising as a result of COVID-19. If you have questions, write a note to C19helpdesk@ottawa.anglican.ca.

AMBER – OTHER POINTS TO CONSIDER

86. Put up posters listing COVID-19's symptoms and urging people to stay home or seek medical attention if they have symptoms or feel unsafe.
87. Keep stocks of hand sanitizer, disposable masks, tissues, soap and paper towels.
88. Anyone who comes into any church building must provide contact information so they can be reached if you later learn there's a risk they might have been exposed to COVID-19 while in the building. Each day's log must be destroyed 30 days after the date it was created. Ottawa Public Health has created an attendance log for services, which can be used for daily visitors. It's available here: https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/public-health-topics/resources/Documents/COVID-19_Places-of-Worship-Attendance-Log_EN.pdf
However, even those who refuse or who are unable to provide contact information should not be turned away. Often people are afraid to share such information because of privacy concerns or safety issues.

YELLOW: EXPANDING

YELLOW – PREPARING FOR WIDER USE OF THE BUILDING

89. Before resuming wider use of the church, add areas that you are going to start using again to the regular cleaning and sanitization schedule.

YELLOW – WORSHIP

90. All the requirements for AMBER still apply.
91. Neither choir practice nor choir lead singing are permitted during YELLOW.

92. People in the congregation may sing if they are wearing masks and are at least two metres from anyone else (other than their own household). We recommend quiet music because the higher the volume the higher the volume of droplets expelled.
93. Sunday school and nursery are permitted only if physical distancing measures can be maintained, which might require adding more helpers. Adults and children must wear masks.

YELLOW – GATHERING SIZE AND CONTACT

94. Most rules and recommendations around worship are the same as AMBER. There are two important changes:
 - a. Permitted size of church services increases to 100 people or ½ capacity, whichever is less.
 - b. Fellowship events, including coffee hours and dinners can be re-introduced, as long as no more than ½ the capacity of the room being used are admitted and there is adequate space to avoid crowding.
 - c. Food and drink can only be served by people wearing gloves and masks. Buffets and self-serve food and drink are not permitted.

YELLOW – OTHER WORSHIP SERVICES

95. Baptisms, weddings, and funerals may continue but must be limited to fewer than ½ the capacity of the church, or 100 people, whichever is less.

YELLOW – PASTORAL CARE

96. Some pastoral care may be done in one-on-one meetings in the church building as long as social distancing is adhered to. Home visits require permission from the archdeacon.

YELLOW – SERVICE AND OUTREACH

97. Unchanged from AMBER.

YELLOW – OFFICE OPERATIONS

98. Regular office operations are permitted, provided the staff follow safety protocols for washing their hands regularly and maintaining physical distance.
99. It may be wise to be flexible if staff who are immunocompromised, over 60 or have children want to keep working from home.
100. Frequent cleaning and sanitizing continue with careful attention to every area.

YELLOW – GROUPS AND RENTALS

101. Groups and rentals can meet in groups of 20 or less, not to exceed ½ of the room's capacity.

102. It is recommended that you only open to groups that can provide a written declaration stating they will safely maintain masking, sanitizing, registering and physical distancing protocols.
103. Licensed child-care providers can operate within provincial guidelines.

RED, AMBER, YELLOW, GREEN
Proceeding with caution: safety first and always

Whenever people are in church buildings, the guidelines for the number of people allowed to gather, collecting contact information, hand-sanitizing, social distancing and use of masks must always be followed. As well, sanitization must be thorough, such as regular disinfection of common surfaces including doorknobs, countertops, bathrooms, light switches and office electronics.

GREEN: A NEW APPROACH TO THE OLD WAYS

GREEN – ACTIVITIES IN PERSON

104. All in-person activities of any size are allowed, but we encourage you to put into practice lessons from the earlier phases. Those lessons could include:
 - a. Carefully washing and sanitizing spaces, with extra attention to busy areas and high-touch surfaces.
 - b. Supporting key health habits for everyone involved in worship, such as no dipping wafers in wine, and frequent hand sanitizing by those administering and those receiving communion.
 - c. Live-streaming Sunday worship to reach people who cannot be there in person.
 - d. Holding some meetings and formation events online.
 - e. Enable some members to join meetings digitally.
 - f. Increasing pastoral care through phone calls.
 - g. Encouraging and offering materials for home worship and other self-directed devotion.

GREEN – WORSHIP

105. Eucharist with the common cup is permissible but intinction (dipping bread in wine) is not.
106. People concerned about health can be encouraged to receive bread only. This should be stated during the liturgy or in the bulletin.
107. There is no numerical limit on the size of gatherings but avoid over-crowding where possible.
108. Hymn and prayer books can be used.
109. The congregation, choirs, clergy and other leaders are all permitted to sing again.
110. Depending on the local situation people at higher risk may choose to continue wearing masks.

111. Choirs can practice and sing—hand sanitizing and distancing are recommended.
112. People who are ill should be encouraged to stay home.
113. Physical contact during worship is optional.

GREEN – SERVICE AND OUTREACH

114. All service and outreach programs can open again, subject to public health guidelines.

GREEN – PASTORAL CARE

115. All forms of pastoral care can resume. If you are visiting someone at home or in a care home or hospital, wash and sanitize any vessels and your hands both before and after.

GREEN – OTHER CHURCH ACTIVITIES

116. In-person formation, fellowship and fund-raising events of any size are permitted.
117. All children’s programs can operate with no size restrictions.

GREEN – OFFICE OPERATIONS

118. Regular office operations can resume. Consider whether you can continue to offer flexibility for staff working at home.

GREEN – GROUPS AND RENTALS

119. All the pandemic restrictions on hosting groups or renting facilities are lifted.

LEGAL AND INSURANCE CONSIDERATIONS

CONTACT INFORMATION AND PRIVACY

120. It is important to protect personal information when taking attendance in AMBER and YELLOW. Parishes should put appropriate physical, administrative and technical safeguards in place to protect personal information from unauthorized access, collection, use, disclosure, copying, modification or disposal or similar risks. We must also ensure that personal information that is included in any attendance forms will not be used for any other purpose (such as fundraising).
121. Each day’s list of attendees at services and people who have visited the church for any other reason must be destroyed 30 days after the date on which they were collected
122. Parishes must display this disclaimer when collecting contact information:
 - a. *During Amber and Yellow stages of reopening, everyone who attends a service at [name of church] must provide their names and contact information (phone number or email) before participating. Families attending together need only provide contact information of one person [18 years of age or older].*

- b. *Please note this personal information is being collected **only for the purpose of assisting government agencies in tracking the potential spread of COVID-19**. This information will be securely stored by [name of responsible parish representative], will be provided to government agencies only when necessary and will be destroyed 30 days after it was collected.*
- c. *If you have privacy concerns, please speak to a sidesperson.*

INSURANCE COVERAGE

- 123. In order to ensure coverage through our insurers, the guidelines in this plan must be followed at all times for services and all other congregational uses of churches. They must also be followed for any other uses of church buildings and property, including ongoing rentals, new rentals and special events.
- 124. If you are planning an event which is permitted under these guidelines, you will need to answer these questions to obtain insurance coverage:
 - a. Does public health allow this activity?
 - b. What are the specific timelines for this event?
 - c. Does the sponsor of the event have insurance coverage for it?
 - d. Have you planned and documented how you will meet public health standards for physical distancing, screening and cleaning, and disinfecting?
 - e. Who will be responsible for cleaning and disinfecting the premises?
 - f. Who will verify appropriate cleaning and disinfecting has been done?
- 125. Please contact C19helpdesk@ottawa.anglican.ca if you have questions that need to be addressed with our insurers.