

FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions

A: SPBC COVID-19 Policies & Protocols

A1: Q?> Where can I find a copy of the SPBC COVID-19 Policies & Protocols?

The COVID-19 Policies & Standards of Practice have been adopted as Section 17 in the SPBC Policy Manual. A copy of Section 17 will be available on the Church's website.

A2: Q?> Why are we taking all these precautions?

- (1) To protect the health of those in our congregation and community who may be more vulnerable to COVID-19.
- (2) To honour and submit to the governing authorities God has placed over us.
- (3) To protect the church from risks like lawsuits or loss of insurance coverage.
- (4) To maintain the good name and witness of our church, and of Christ, in our community.

A3: Q?> Aren't these precautions too strict / not strict enough?

We've adopted these precautions based on the requirements and guidance provided by the provincial and local governments and public health authorities, and in consultation with our lawyer and insurance provider. We realize these will seem overly strict to some of us, and not cautious enough to others, so we ask for your patience and understanding. We will continue to update our procedures as the situation changes.

A4: Q?> What screening questions will I be asked before entering the church building?

You will be asked:

- Have you travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days?
- Have you tested positive for COVID-19 and have not subsequently been cleared as recovered by a health care provider?
- Have you had close contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, without wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) in the past 14 days?
- Do you have any of the following symptoms:
 - A fever?
 - A new onset of cough, worsening chronic cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing?
 - A sore throat or difficulty swallowing?
 - A decrease or loss of sense of taste or smell?
 - The chills?
 - Headaches?
 - Unexplained fatigue/malaise/muscle aches?
 - Nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, or abdominal pain?
 - Pink eye (conjunctivitis)
 - A runny nose or nasal congestion without other known cause?

A5: Q?> Why do we have to have a Disclaimer?

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Section 17.6: Disclosure of Risk and Disclaimer of Liability is included in the COVID-19 Procedures and Standards of Practice to provide a level of protection for the Church.

A6: Q?> Does the Disclaimer have to sound so “harsh”?

In order for the disclaimer to be able to provide the necessary protection, a certain “*legalese*” needs to be incorporated. This is much like the “*legalese*” used in your auto or home insurance policies. You read it; you know it is there; but when you’re driving your car on the 401, you’re just happy to have the policy, and you don’t think too much about the “*legalese*”. In essence, the Disclaimer protects Stanley Park Baptist Church and ALL of the members. It is there only as the necessary legal requirements of the COVID-19 Policies.

B: SPBC Re-Opening of the Building:

B1: Q?> When will the Church Building be re-opened?

The building is now opened for limited use:

- (1) The pastoral staff is *now* working from the building, and must follow the protocols as outlined in Section 17.1: Workplace Procedures of the COVID-19 Procedures and Standards of Practice.
- (2) A weekly Prayer & Bible Study Group is meeting on Wednesday mornings, and must follow the protocols as outlined in Section 17.2.3: Specific Procedures for Other Events in the Church Building.
- (3) Small Groups / Growth Groups / and Grey Matters are now permitted to use the building. Leaders of any of these events must first call Sara in the office to reserve a date, time and room. If more than one group is using the building at the same time, they will be assigned separate areas of the building, and entry times will be staggered. ALL groups meeting in the building must follow the protocols as outlined in Section 17.2.3: Specific Procedures for Other Events in the Church Building.

C: SPBC Sunday Morning Worship Services:

C1: Q?> When will Sunday Morning Worship Services resume?

Worship Services will resume in two stages. We are hoping to have the first stage up and running by the third or fourth Sunday of September. This will be a “*viewing*” of the YouTube Service as currently provided on-line. The second stage will happen later in the Fall, and will be a live-streamed service, and will be opened to the maximum number of people as mandated by the Province of Ontario.

C2: Q?> Why a “viewing” service when the service is already available on the internet?

This first stage of resuming Sunday Morning Worship is designed for those who do *not* have access to the internet, and are currently able only to “*hear*” the service on a recorded CD. This is largely a seniors group, and *not* all will be comfortable coming back into the building at this time. As space permits, the “*viewing*” services will also include some of those who live alone, and are in need of some kind of fellowship, albeit, limited.

C3: Q?> Will we still have on-line worship when in-person services resume?

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Yes! We will continue to provide an on-line service every Sunday. In the first stage of in-person worship, these will be the recorded services as currently provided on YouTube, just as we have been doing since the lockdown. In the future, we plan to switch to live-streaming the worship services that take place in the church, and these will be simultaneously available on-line.

C4: Q?> How many people will be allowed to come to in-person worship?

Currently the limit is 30% of the capacity of the room that is being used. For worship services, that means the sanctuary would be limited to about 80 people. This includes the need to keep some space for any unexpected visitors, as well as the pastor, worship leader(s), and volunteers. This means that we will probably be able to welcome about 60 people from our congregation to each in-person service.

C5: Q?> How will I know if it is “my turn” to come to church?

The Church Moderator will be communicating with the congregation through emails to let you know what is happening as we work out the details. Watch for an update soon!!

C6: Q?> What happens when I arrive for Sunday Worship?

Entry into the building for Sunday mornings will be through the *south doors only*. These are the doors which give way to the Church foyer/narthex. Once you have parked, you will need to put on your mask, and physically distance in the lines waiting to enter the building. Upon entry, you will be greeted by a volunteer who will ask the screening questions (see A4), take your temperature, and admit you into the foyer/narthex. You will then be met by another volunteer who will take you to the sanctuary door through which you will enter. You will then be met by another volunteer who will assign a seat for you and those who are in your immediate family bubble. Seating will start from the front of the sanctuary and work its way back. Once seated, you are asked to stay seated. At the end of the service, those seated at the rear of the sanctuary will be invited to leave first, exiting through designated doors. You will be asked to keep physically distanced as you exit, leaving the building right away. There will be *no* Stanley Park Café at this time.

C7: Q?> Once seated, can I take off my mask?

No. The Region of Waterloo has mandated that masks or face coverings which cover the nose, mouth and chin, must be worn indoors at all times. Only children under the age of 5, and people with a medical reason not to wear a mask (e.g. breathing challenges, health issues) are not required to do so. We will continue to monitor this requirement and update our procedures accordingly.

C8: Q?> Can I wear a “face-shield” in place of a mask?

No. Face shields are designed to provide the person wearing it a level of protection from air-borne particles. They are not designed to protect others from the air-borne particles of the person wearing it. Those who cannot wear a mask for medical reasons (see C7) may choose to wear a face shield, but face shields are not intended to be used in place of a mask.

C9: Q?> Can we sing in church or other meetings?

No. Unfortunately, singing is not permitted at this time due to the forced release of multiple air-borne particles. Humming is *good*!

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C10: Q?> How can we greet people we haven't seen for a long time in the church building?

Physical distancing – 2 metres / 6.6 feet – must be maintained at all times in the building. When it's not possible, be sure *not* to touch another person, as *not* everyone will have the same comfort level. Any socializing should be done *outside* of the church building before or after the service. Physically distanced virtual hugs are good, elbow-bumping is not.

C11: Q?> Can I bring water/coffee into the sanctuary?

Food and beverages will *not* be served in the church at this time. However you may bring a bottle of water or a travel mug of coffee/tea/water with you, as long as you take it out after the service.

C12: Q?> When will child care be made available?

Sadly, we cannot make childcare available at present. Families will be asked to sit together in the sanctuary for the entire service. Unfortunately, we cannot let people wander through the building, as any area that is touched will need to be sanitized. We will keep families posted, and will provide child care only when it is *safe* to do so.

C13: Q?> What about washrooms?

We are asking people to use their washrooms at home prior to coming to the church building. However, should you have to use a washroom during a church service, please use only the ones with access from the church foyer/narthex. Washrooms are cleaned & sanitized before & after each church service; however, limited use of these facilities is for the protection of *all*.

C14: Q?> What do I do if I notice someone not following protocol?

Depending on your comfort level, you can speak up to the individual – with love, gentleness and if possible, a bit of humour – or, you can draw it to the attention of one of the ushers who will most likely turn it over to one of the Church leaders. Remember, the protocols are in place to provide a *safe* worship experience for *all* who attend. It will take the effort of everyone to make SPBC a *safe* place!

C15: Q?> What happens if I get sick a few days after I have attended service?

Seek medical attention and contact the Church Office as soon as possible.

C16: Q?> What should I do if I suspect someone is sick and is attending our services?

Please advise the head usher or the designated contact person on duty. He/she will deal with the situation.

D: SPBC Small Groups:

D1: Q?> When can my small group meet "in-person"?

The building is now open for small-group use. The group leader needs to reserve a date, time and room through the Office Administrator. Entry into the building will be through the *north* doors only – the doors on the office side of the building facing Lorraine Ave. Strict protocols must be practiced, including the wearing of masks at all times.

D2: Q?> Can small groups start meeting in people's homes?

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No. All small groups that come under the umbrella of Stanley Park Baptist can only meet in the church building at present. Provincial regulations do not allow for “*in-home*” gatherings of people outside of that home’s bubble, at this time.

D3: Q?> How can I join a small group? Are there any small groups happening virtually?

If you are not currently a participant of a small group, or are interested in joining a group meeting virtually, please contact the Small Group Co-Ordinator, Grant Rush. For contact information, call the Church Office.

D4: Q?> Can we serve refreshments during our small group meeting?

No. There is no serving, or sharing of food or drink inside of the church building at present. However, if individuals wish to bring a personal container of water, coffee/tea, they may do so, provided they take the container out of the building with them, unless it is a disposable cup. In such case, be sure that the *empty* cup is placed in a waste basket before leaving the building.

E: SPBC Youth Group & Children’s Ministry:

E1: Q?> When will the Youth Group & Children’s Ministries begin again?

Pastor Peter has been reaching out virtually to both the Youth and the Children of our congregation. At least one “*in-person*” youth gathering has already taken place, and plans are being made for more. Children’s ministry will continue through virtual contacts and with the Sunday morning children’s devotionals. For more information, please contact our Youth and Children’s pastor, Peter Brejcha.

E2: Q?> What precautions will be taken?

As in *all* of the in-person gatherings within the building, strict adherence to the established policies and protocols must be maintained.

E3: Q?> How can I help with the youth and children’s ministries? How can I pray for them?

The needs regarding children’s and youth ministries are always changing. Prayer, especially for saving faith, and for navigating these pandemic days is always needed. As both of these ministries open up further, contact Pastor Peter Brejcha for ways to help.

F: SPBC Child Care:

F1: Q?> When will child-care be offered during the service?

As stated earlier (see C12), child-care will be offered *only* when it is *safe* to do so. As we are able to move forward, we will advise the congregation.

F2: Q?> What is the current capacity for child care?

At present, *all* in-person gatherings in the building are restricted by the Province, to 30% of the room’s capacity. For example... If a room has a capacity of 12 people, that means only 4 can use the room, *including* the child-care provider(s). This alone presents a major challenge as we could easily have *more* children than current, allowable space for them.

F3: Q?> What do families with young children do?

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At present, families who attend are being asked to sit together in the sanctuary during an in-person service. You can bring your own books, pencils, crayons, paper and quiet toys for your own children. However, access & use of the church library is *not* yet open. We understand that keeping young children content through a service will be a *mega* challenge requiring lots of patience and creativity. Please know that we *welcome* children in our services! We would *never* want to turn our children away, and would very much like to see families attending services together!

G: SPBC Other Questions:

G1: Q?> I would like to meet with the pastor. How do I arrange that?

Call the church office at 519-576-1100. Appointments can be set up through the Office Administrator. Urgent needs will be met on as needed basis.

G2: Q?> How can I help during these times?

(1) First and foremost, PRAY...

- Pray for the safe re-opening of the building.
- Pray for the re-starting of our ministries & programs
- Pray for the health and safety of our pastoral staff
- Pray for the leaders of the church as they find their way through these times
- Pray for the health of those who are more vulnerable
- Pray for our families and especially for those who live alone

(2) Be an ENCOURAGER...

- Make a phone call, send a message, write a note to someone in the congregation
- Where possible, while keeping physical distance, meet for a coffee
- As you are able, reach out and help someone with a need

(3) Be an EXAMPLE...

- Follow the policies and protocols set out for your safety & the safety of others
- Whenever in doubt, err on the side of caution
- Calculate the risks COVID-19 presents, but don't take unnecessary ones
- Wash your hands often; use hand sanitizer; defer to other people's comfort levels; wear your mask; and respect the 2 metre physical distancing rule!

With prayer... wisdom... and a sincere love for each other...

we WILL ALL get through these unprecedented days!