

Northgate Church: Covid-19 Ministry Re-Engagement Package
Summer/Fall 2020

Last Updated: June 15, 2020

1. Overview

Throughout the last few months, COVID-19 has changed the way we do life, and church as we know it. Although we have been challenged and stretched in ways we have never been before, God's Church is still alive and moving! Here at Northgate, our small groups have been growing, our next generation, Young at Heart (YAH), and social mercy ministries have still been running, and the Gospel is still being shared on a weekly basis. It is important to remember the Church never actually closed, just the doors to our physical spaces.

As restrictions begin to loosen in the province of British Columbia, we want to be proactive in the ways we carry out in-person ministry. In this time we want to be creative and intentional, yet wise. As far as priority goes, we have to remember that ministry that is not conducted in a safe manner, is not ministry at all. With this in mind, as a community, we must act in safe ways that consider our most vulnerable members and minimizes the potential spread of COVID-19. The following package outlines a set of standards and procedures we are committing to in this season as we navigate the ever-changing pandemic that is COVID-19 while beginning to engage small-scale events and gatherings. Note that this policy is not intended to be comprehensive in nature, alternatively, it is designed specifically to serve as a framework for Northgate Church's ministry re-engagement for the summer and fall of 2020. For any additional safety procedure or detail pertaining to workplace safety, best practices for first aid/CPR administration, and any other inquiries pertaining to COVID-19, please see the list of "documents and policies consulted" in the document footer.

2. What we know about coronaviruses and COVID-19

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses found mostly in animals. In humans, they can cause diseases that range from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). The viruses are spread through large liquid droplets when a person infected with a coronavirus coughs or sneezes; the virus in these droplets can enter

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through the eyes, nose, or throat of another person if they are in close contact with the person who coughed or sneezed. The virus does not transmit through particles in the air and is not something that can come in through the skin.

A person infected with SARS-CoV-2 can infect other people with whom the infected person is in direct contact, through droplets in the air, or from fluid containing SARS-CoV-2 left on surfaces. As noted in our provincial guidelines, the gathering together of a large number of people in close contact with one another in either an indoor or outdoor place for the purpose of attending an event can promote the transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and increase the number of people who develop COVID-19. With this considered, while this virus is still active, it is imperative that we first and foremost take our cues from our public health authorities and government when it comes to large gatherings. As of June 2020, the limit to large gatherings is 50 people, while still upholding a strict cooperation with the established social distancing mandates. As a church, Northgate is committed to adhering to these expectations in all of our internal and external operations.

3. Regarding Symptoms and Travel

In this time, individuals are asked to abstain from participating in Northgate events/activities if they are exhibiting any of the following COVID-19 symptoms:

- Fever
- Chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Sore throat and painful swallowing
- Stuffy or runny nose
- Loss of sense of smell
- Headache
- Muscle aches
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite

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Additionally, individuals must not participate in respective activity or event if they have symptoms of COVID-19 or have travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days or have been identified by public health as a close contact of a person with a confirmed case of COVID-19. Pastor/Event host must have a “COVID form” present for attendees to fill out prior to the event ensuring that none of the above requirements are both considered and adhered to.

4. Which events are we operating in-person?

- As of June 2020, Northgate Church is beginning to re-engage the following sub 50 person events:
 - 1. Kids and Youth events
 - Day camps
 - Park/Lake/Beach days
 - Other activities
 - 2. Small-scale Adult and Family Events
 - BBQs/special drive-thru events
 - Small groups/Watch parties
 - YAH get-togethers
- See below for protocol and guidelines for both types of events, including best practices, direction, and check-in expectations for operating each respective event.

5. Protocol for Fall and Summer Kids and Youth Events

We want to ensure to be wise and prudent about how we carry out all of our summer and fall “next gen” events. Although COVID-19 has a very low infection rate in children and youth, we want to do our part to ensure these demographics are not responsible for transmitting the virus to other, more vulnerable demographics. The following outlines are procedure and protocol for Northgate’s summer events for the age group of 4-17.

- A. Check-In Procedure and General Protocol for all events
 - Pick-Up/Drop-Off

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- A “no-touch” check-in process.
- No self-check in.
- Each attendee is to fill out a waiver and/COVID-19 form.
- One Parent drop off and pick-up
- No personal items such as bags, car seats, or toys from home
- Set up hand hygiene stations at the entrance to the church/venue. Provide alcohol-based hand sanitizer stations where a sink is not available. Ensure there is an adequate supply of hand washing supplies and alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Pertaining to indoor events, hand washing is mandated immediately upon entry of building after sanitizing hands.
- Drop off and pick up should occur outside of the child care setting where the age of the child and building design make this reasonably practicable.
- Implement strategies to ensure physical distancing is maintained at drop-off and pick-up areas. Consider staggered drop-off and pick-up times, using multiple entrance points if available, and placing markers at entrance points to support physical distancing.
- Where parents or caregivers must enter the child care setting for drop off or pick up:
 - Designate an area within the facility for this.
 - Direct them to maintain physical distance from volunteers and other children, and practice hand hygiene.
- General
 - Volunteers are encouraged, but not expected to wear masks.
 - Social distancing encouraged through signage.
 - Signage must be posted advising people not to enter the facility if ill, and to ensure a high level of hand hygiene.
 - Remove toys from the workplace that have surfaces that are not easily cleaned, such as plush stuffed animals.

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- Hand sanitizers must be used upon entry and exit of the building and classrooms.
- Children & Adults must frequently wash hands.
- Require volunteers, children, and others to wash their hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer immediately upon entering the facility. Keep hand sanitizer out of the reach of children and supervise its use.
- Support children to wash their hands regularly throughout the day, including:
 - When they arrive at the workplace and before they go home
 - Before and after eating and drinking
 - After a diaper change
 - After using the toilet
 - After playing outside
 - After handling pets and animals
 - After sneezing or coughing
 - Whenever hands are visibly dirty
- If you are sick (volunteers, parents, and children), entry into the building or event location is not permitted. Parents are asked to ensure that their children are free from colds, runny noses, coughs, and fever before arriving at church or event venue.
- Post signage at entrances to the event/activity reminding people not to enter the site if they have symptoms associated with COVID-19.
- At drop off, implement a daily “yes/no” verbal confirmation that children do not have symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other respiratory disease. Do not accept a child drop off if the answer is yes.
- No “drop-by” by visitors. Any visitors must be pre-arranged 24 hrs prior to event in question for purposes of attendance management.
- Kids and Youth will eat outside whenever the weather permits.
- Cleaning and Disinfecting

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- Enhanced cleaning and disinfection must be provided. Extra attention is required for all common touch surfaces such as door handles, payment equipment etc.
- Remove unnecessary items from the workplace to reduce surfaces that could become contaminated.
- Identify all common areas (e.g., washrooms) and frequently-touched surfaces (e.g., door knobs, cupboard handles, light switches, faucet handles, tables, chairs, toys). Develop and implement a cleaning and disinfection schedule and procedures in accordance with the BC CDC's Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings document.
 - General cleaning and disinfecting of the workplace should occur at least once a day.
 - Frequently-touched surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected at least twice a day.
- Toys and objects that children have placed in their mouths should be set aside, for example in a “to be washed” bin, until they are cleaned and disinfected. Toy, objects, and surfaces known to have been in contact with bodily fluids should be cleaned as soon as possible and between uses by different children.
- Clean and disinfect cots and cribs after each use, and launder crib linens between children. If parents are providing their own crib linen, the linens should be laundered and placed in a sealed plastic or washable bag before bringing to the centre. Do not shake the linens.
- Clean and disinfect diapering stations after each use.
- When holding young children, for example when feeding or rocking to sleep, use a blanket or cloth to cover clothing. Change blankets or cloths between children.
- Wash blankets, face cloths, towels, and bibs between uses by different children.
- Consider installing hands-free sinks and hand driers.
- Empty garbage containers daily at a minimum.
- If a worker or child leaves the workplace due to symptoms of COVID-19, clean areas those individuals were in,

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including surfaces they may have touched, immediately upon their departure.

- Maintain an adequate supply of cleaning and disinfection products and materials.

B. Pre-Kindergarten (0-4)

- Added screening questions to our in-room sign-in sheets
- Pacifiers on clips only please
- Uniform jackets on volunteers holding children
- Nursery workers keep toys with same child
- Kids in cloth diapers will be changed into disposable diapers
- Separate toys for each service (or rooms when able)
- Machine wash toys only
- Play doh, and legos prohibited
- Sanitization of all counters and areas in between services/events
- Post on signage when toys were last cleaned
- Disposable plates and cups
- Preschool restrooms cleaned after each use
- Limit of ten children and two adults per room
 - Adhere to social distancing of 2 meters per student.

C. Elementary (5-10)

- Maximum of 30 kids per event
- No food or drink in any room
- Disposable plates and cups
- Added screening questions to our in-room sign-in sheets
- Limit of ten children and two adults per room
 - Adhere to social distancing of 2 meters per student.

D. Youth (10-17)

- Maximum of 40 students per event
- Limited amount of students in each room
- No food or drink in any room
- Disposable plates and cups
- 50 people max per room (as long as room can adequately accommodate for social distancing expectations).
 - Adhere to social distancing of 2 meters per student.

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6. Protocol for Fall and Summer Small-scale Adult and Family events

A. General Expectations

- Maximum of 40 people per in-person event
- Abstain from handshaking or hugs outside of your family
 - Greet others with a wave instead of a handshake, a kiss or a hug
 - Keep your hands at your sides
- Exercise diligence in your practice good hygiene, including:
 - Regular hand washing
 - Avoiding touching your face
 - Covering coughs and sneezes
 - Disinfect frequently touched surfaces
- Keep physical distancing, as much as possible when in the community and where not possible, consider using a non-medical mask or face covering
- Post signage at entrances to the event/activity reminding people not to enter the site if they have symptoms associated with COVID-19.

B. Protocol when Gathering

- In personal settings when you're seeing friends and family who aren't in your household or "quarantine buddies":
 - Only get together in small groups of 2 to 6 people outside your household or "quarantine buddies"
- Keep a physical distance and avoid close discussion at all times
- Stay home and away from others if you have cold or flu symptoms
- Enhanced cleaning and disinfection must be provided. Extra attention is required for all common touch surfaces such as door handles, payment equipment etc.
- Have extra consideration for others, especially people at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19, including older people and those with chronic health conditions

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- Note for YAH events: If you are facilitating an event where attendees are at greater risk (over the age of 60 or with underlying medical conditions), be informed of your risk, think through your risk tolerance and take extra precautions.

7. Protocol and Procedure for Food Service

- General Rules:
 - Limit food sharing and potluck-styled meals
 - Where snacks and meals are provided, ensure to only serve and share pre-packaged, individual-portioned food
 - Self-service of foods, beverages and condiments is prohibited. This includes buffets, bulk water dispensing, bulk food dispensing, coffee stations, beverage stations, olive bars and similar offerings.
 - Effective sanitation must be ongoing within all food preparation areas.
 - Anything brought into the kitchen must be disinfected prior to bringing the item(s) in question into the kitchen. Please leave all personal items in the maintenance room (i.e. keys, cell phones, jackets) to avoid the potential of them being placed on surfaces in the kitchen.
- Volunteer Practice
 - Only 5-8 volunteers can be in the kitchen at a time. While in the kitchen, volunteers are to spread out in order to maintain social distancing.
 - Volunteers are not permitted to serve if they have been sick within 48 hours (sickness of any kind but most importantly COVID-19 related symptoms) of the event/activity in question.
 - Kitchen counters (especially when the event is at Northgate Church) must be wiped down before and after with the cleaning solutions provided.
 - If someone is serving food (especially when the event is at Northgate Church), they are to wear masks and latex gloves. If

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they touch their face, cough, or sneeze, they are to remove their gloves, wash their hands and put on new gloves before continuing to serve or prepare food.

- Require volunteers to wash their hands regularly throughout the day, including:
 - When they arrive at the workplace and before they go home
 - Before and after handling food (raw, cooked or pre-packaged), preparing bottles or feeding children
 - Before and after giving or applying medication or ointment to a child or self
 - After changing diapers
 - After assisting a child to use the toilet
 - After using the toilet
 - After contact with body fluids (e.g., runny noses, spit, vomit, blood)
 - Before donning and after doffing personal protective equipment
 - After cleaning tasks
 - After handling garbage
 - Whenever hands are visibly dirty

8. Concluding Thoughts

COVID-19 has presented challenges this year that no one would have foreseen. However, through the strength and guidance of God, it seems that our church has only grown more efficient and fruitful as this season took shape. In this time, we have not only been surviving as a church, but we continue to thrive. As God continues to provide the means for us to engage in effective ministry it is important to continue to model, in an exemplary manner, what it looks like to submit to our government authorities and public health officials in our efforts to limit our contribution to the spread of COVID-19 in British Columbia. As a church we ought to continue to press forward in a safe, creative, and intentional manner as we begin to re-engage in-person ministries. As a team, let's join together in prudence as we adhere

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to the aforementioned standards and protocol while endeavoring to engage in intentional, creative, and safe Christ-centred ministry.

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