

Return to Sunday Service Q&A

1. Will the service be the same as before?
 - a. The one thing we can confidently say is that the service will not be the same! We have to make many changes in order to keep our congregation safe, adhere to government restrictions, and provide a good witness to our community.
 - b. That being said, we will still meet at 10:30 AM on Sunday morning, we will still have music, and we will still have preaching.
 - c. We will also work to provide quality worship and preaching online each week for those who can't join the service in person

2. Will we be able to sing together?
 - a. No, we will not, and I know this will be hard for many of us. The government of BC has regularly and repeatedly said that singing is a high risk activity and requests that groups not sing indoors.

3. How can we meet if we can't sing?
 - a. It will be a challenge to be sure. Singing is a significant way we express our worship to God.
 - b. Fortunately, singing is not the *only* way we can worship God for what he has done. Although we cannot sing, we will find other ways to express worship to God as we gather.

4. Will anything else be different?
 - a. Quite a few things! For example:
 - i. The music and preaching may be live or it may be a video, or one may be recorded and the other live. This is the summer of experiments so we are going to try some things out!
 - ii. The service length will be shorter! Washrooms will be available but a shorter service means fewer people will need to use the washroom.
 - iii. We will likely have more interaction as a part of the service, whether sharing, praying, or just talking.
 - iv. Everyone will need to maintain social distance of 6 feet (2 meters) from the time you get out of your car when you arrive until you get back in your car to go home. As hard as it is, this also eliminates handshakes and hugging.
 - v. There will be no coffee provided
 - vi. There will be a limit of 50 people in the building per week
 - vii. Doors will open at 10:15 AM on Sunday morning but not earlier
 - viii. Everyone will be signed in before entering the building. This will include:
 1. Recording your name and contact information
 2. Being asked if you have symptoms of COVID-19, if you have been out of the country in the last 14 days, or if you have been diagnosed or live with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19
 3. Being asked to sanitize your hands
 4. Being asked to wear a mask until you reach your seat
 5. Being asked to head straight to your seat and not to mingle in the lobby

5. If there's a 50 person limit, how will we decide who gets to come on Sunday?
 - a. This is one of the things we still need to figure out! Many different methods have been suggested and we might try some different things. Our first experiment will look like this:
 - i. The summer is divided into two sets of dates:
 1. Group A: July 12, July 26, August 9, August 23
 2. Group B: July 19, August 2, August 16, August 30
 - ii. You may register for **one** group on the website next week. When the group is full, registration will be closed. (Please keep an eye on your e-mail!)
 1. Note: You will only need to register once, not each week.
 - iii. The Deacons will phone those members of our congregation who do not have internet access to register them for one of the groups.
 - iv. **You may only come on a week for which you have registered.**
 1. We will have a registration list each week that we will use for checking people in. *If you are not on the list for that week, you will not be able to attend the service that week.*
 - b. This likely isn't a perfect system, but it will be our first experiment! We will learn from this process and revise it for September onward.
6. What do I do on the weeks where I am not in the building for the Sunday service?
 - a. Safely meet with your small group! It is essential that we maintain relationships regardless of whether we are in a Sunday service and small groups are an important part of that. You can meet:
 - i. In person or online, or a mix
 - ii. Every week or just the weeks you're not in the church building
 - iii. On Sunday morning at 10:30 or another time
 - iv. Anywhere that allows you to maintain safe social distance
7. What can I do when I arrive on Sunday for the service to help keep our church members safe and uphold the witness of Christ to our community?
 - a. **If you are sick (fever, cough, runny nose, sore throat, etc.), if you have been out of the country in the last 14 days, if you have been diagnosed positive for COVID-19 in the last 14 days or live with someone who has, please stay home.** We love you and wish you a swift and speedy recovery, but we ask that you enjoy the worship and preaching from the comfort and safety of your home.
 - b. We ask that you **wear a mask** from when you get out of your car until you sit in your seat and then from your seat back to your car. If I wear a mask, I can keep other people safe. If other people wear a mask, I am kept safe. If we all wear masks, we can keep each other safe.
 - c. We ask that you **follow all signs** and directions in the church.
 - d. We ask that you **maintain social distance** of six feet (two meters) from the parking lot to the church building and back again.
8. This is a lot of work! How long will we have to do all of this?
 - a. Likely for one year, and perhaps longer.

- b. Dr. Bonnie Henry, BC's Provincial Health Officer, has regularly and repeatedly said that these restrictions will not be lifted until there is a vaccine available for COVID-19. Although it is only speculation and things may change, it is unlikely that a vaccine will be widely available in less than a year.
9. These policies aren't enough! We need to have more regulations in place.
- a. We know everyone has a different comfort level as things begin to open up again. Some people feel more confident and others more cautious. We have done our best to put good policies in place to keep people safe.
 - b. As hard as we've worked on this, it is likely not perfect and we are open to feedback! If there is something we've missed, please give the office a call (604-856-8454) or an e-mail (office@bethelmc.ca) to let us know.
 - c. However, if you don't feel safe or are filled with anxiety about returning to a service in person, I would encourage you to stay home for the time being. We will do our best to implement these policies but naturally cannot guarantee that everything will go perfectly, particularly the first few weeks. If you are nervous, anxious, or don't feel safe, **please stay home** and continue to partake in the online sermon & worship, and connect with a small group, either in person or virtually, through the week.
10. This is all way too much! It's ridiculous and I won't do it.
- a. Again, we recognize people have different comfort levels when it comes to COVID-19. We want to have you join us and feel these are reasonable things to ask of each person so we can keep each other safe. In some ways, wearing a mask or maintaining social distance is like a seat belt – it may not be as comfortable as not doing it, but it is a minor inconvenience for me that I can do to keep myself, and others, safe.
 - b. As a church, we carry the reputation of Christ in our conduct. How we respond to COVID-19 will impact how members of our congregation feel cared for. It will also impact how our community views Bethel, churches in general, and most importantly Christ and His Gospel. We want to give Jesus a good reputation by living lives that demonstrate selflessness, compassion, wisdom, and adherence to good government guidelines.
 - c. If you still feel that these policies are too restrictive, that's OK! We do then ask that you **please stay home** and participate in the online sermon & worship until you do feel that you are able to join us in person, policies and all.

Skimming to the End? Looking for a Summary? You're in Luck!

1. Please register on the website next week for one of two groups in the summer
2. Please stay home if you are sick, have been outside the country, have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or have been exposed to someone who has.
3. Please maintain social distance from the moment you leave your car until you return to it
4. Please wear a mask from the moment you leave your car until you are seated in the sanctuary. Please put your mask back on when you leave your seat until you are back in your car.
5. The service will be shorter, there will be no singing, and either the music or the preaching might be pre-recorded. Regardless, it will be good to be together!