

**ACTION PLAN
FOR THE REOPENING OF
WESTMINSTER BIBLE CHAPEL**

PHASE 1

DATE: JUNE 30, 2020

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LETTER FROM THE ELDERS

To the WBC church family:

The leadership would like to express our true appreciation to everyone who calls WBC their community of faith and place of worship. Your prayers, support, encouragement and contributions through this pandemic and in absence of each other's company is worthy of true followers of Christ.

At this time we would like to continue with our zoom meetings that are open to all and as they are scheduled on a Wednesday and Friday at 7:15 as well as our online streaming of our Sunday morning service with a small change of location as we are moving from Brian's home back to the chapel. This would allow us to open the service to people that would intently like to attend and especially those that do not have access to online streaming.

Now as we consider everything that needs to happen in order for some to gather together again in person, we will need your continued patience, support and help. We have put together this Action Plan because we want to welcome back those who desire to attend church in-person in a way that is safe, responsible, and respects the community we are in. Please pray for us as we move forward in a manner which honors the wishes of the BC Government and still glorifies the Lord. We would like to move forward:

In Humility

We admit that we don't have all the answers. However, the experts don't have all the answers either, we are all learning as we go.

In Empathy

We realize that there are many opinions about COVID-19. Some are not too worried about contracting the virus, while others are extremely cautious. It is our desire that each one of us will respond with tremendous grace and compassion, especially when we are asked to adhere to certain protocols for the sake of others.

In Wisdom

We recognize that sometimes it is difficult to gain clarity with regards to best practices for keeping people safe or even information on COVID-19 itself. We are asking the Holy Spirit to help us to process the information we have and make appropriate decisions with wisdom and clarity.

In Courage

COVID-19 has already brought many challenges and opportunities our way. It has inspired us to learn and try new ways of doing ministry. As we move forward into the days ahead, there will be opportunities for us to grow and refine how we function as a church and as individuals in the future. We trust the Lord will grant us the courage to use what we learn to grow in and share our faith.

Thank you for taking time to read and ponder our 'Action Plan'. You will notice that things will be very different moving forward; however, we are confident that the Lord will continue to lead us and bless us in the future.

Thank you for trusting and believing with us!

Gert Kriel, on behalf of The Elders

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This document has been put together with guidance and input from the Government of Canada, BC Health Office, and other church leaders. This Action Plan details how Westminster Bible Chapel will enter phase one of opening its doors again to have in-person meetings. This is meant as a guide for attendees, volunteers and renters. It will be updated to include future phases. WBC will continue to offer online meetings and services for the foreseeable future so that those unable or uncomfortable attending will still be able to take part.

There are two facets to consider when WBC resumes in-person meetings in the building. Firstly, the safety of all tenants and attendees - this includes all the logistics required to ensure physical distance guidelines as well as sanitization protocols. Secondly, the actual Sunday service - this includes both in-person and online.

Safety-wise that means:

- Reservations and attendance protocols
- Physical distancing
- Controlled flow for entry and exit
- Creating a touchless environment as much as possible
- An Exposure Control and Communication Plan that details how WBC will respond in the event of a positive COVID-19 test from an attendee.
- A commitment to cleanliness and sanitization before and after building use

For the Sunday service that means:

- A shorter service to limit exposure time
- Precautions around singing (as per BC Health Officer Guidelines)
- New production requirements for the sound, presentation and music team
- Volunteers who will serve as ushers

As such the Plan here takes into account all of the above and outlines:

- A cautious reopening
- A phased reopening that can build as restrictions are lifted
- Consideration to create sustainable solutions in terms of complexity and the requirements on Pastors, staff and volunteers.

DISCLAIMER

The Directors and Elders are committed to the safety of all who attend WBC. As such, our processes for managing the COVID-19 pandemic will be guided by the Provincial Health Officer's Guidelines, the British Columbia Center for Disease Control, WorkSafeBC, research, and best practices.

WBC has undertaken to institute measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19; however, we cannot eliminate all risk, only ensure reasonable measures are taken to mitigate the risk of exposure. **Everyone who attends should know they do so at their own risk.**

ARRIVAL AND ATTENDANCE

Attendees are kindly reminded physical distancing guidelines are to be followed outside the building as well as inside. Smiles and waves are permitted!

Screening

WBC asks that people attend only if they are feeling healthy. At the door, attendees will be asked screening questions by a volunteer. The questions that they will be asked are:

1. Are you experiencing symptoms of fever, cough, or shortness of breath?
2. Have you returned from overseas travel in the last 14 days?
3. Have you been around anyone who tested positive with COVID-19?

If the answer to any of these is "Yes", the attendee will not be permitted entrance into the building.

Attendance

At this time, WBC will have one morning service on Sundays at 10 AM. In keeping with the practice of our online services, we will celebrate Communion/Lord's Supper on the first and the third Sundays of the month.

During the month of July we will limit attendance to the speakers, sound engineers, and a maximum of 15 people. Preference will be given to those folks without internet access. After them, it will be on a first come, first served basis. The number of attendees will be reassessed by the elders from time to time.

The government has recommended we keep a record of attendees to help with contact tracing in the event that one of our attendees tests positive for COVID-19. In order to facilitate this, WBC will keep a record of attendees for a minimum of 30 days [source: May 26, 2020 meeting with Dr. Bonnie Henry and the Faith Community

Leaders]. The WBC board believes that keeping these records is the most accurate way to ensure all people are contacted in the event of exposure. See following sections for more info on how the information is shared and communicated.

Reservations and Seating

WBC will require people to reserve attendance in advance by phoning the church (604) 522-9311 and booking their spot with Betty, our secretary. Reservations will be accepted during the week for the coming Sunday. As mentioned, during the first phase we will accommodate a maximum of 15 people. Preference will be given to those folks without internet access. After them, it will be on a first come, first served basis.

Seating will be assigned by the ushers on duty, who will ensure that the seating configuration in the church will work with the appropriate physical distance guidelines.

Entry, Exit and Movement

In order to maintain physical distancing and provide a touchless environment there will be guidelines put in place to control entering, exiting, flow and seating. Where possible, doors will be propped open and/or ushers present to hold the door open.

Upon arrival, attendees will need to line up outside of the building, while maintaining the 2 meter physical distancing requirements. Access will be granted one person/household at a time. Attendees will be screened (as noted above) and offered hand sanitizer. They will then be allowed into the foyer where they will wait for an usher to seat them.

After the service, ushers will lead people out of the sanctuary, through the foyer and outside. Unfortunately, gathering and visiting inside the building will not be encouraged. Everyone is reminded to practice physical distancing even while outside.

The following areas will be accessible:

- Foyer
- Sanctuary
- The Handicap Washroom upstairs

The remaining areas of the building will not be accessible.

Personal Protective Equipment

Face masks will be required to be worn by all attendees, but not gloves. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own face masks to the Sunday service. There will be a hand sanitizer station available at the front door upon entering/exiting the building. Nevertheless, attendees are encouraged to wash their hands before they arrive at the chapel.

WBC reminds all attendees that physical distancing rules mean that a smile and a wave are the best way to greet people! Hugs and handshakes will have to wait.

SUNDAY SERVICE

On the Day

Only attend if you are feeling healthy and if you have a reservation. Do not attend if anyone in your household or anyone in your bubble (at work, school or play) is feeling ill. For step-by-step instructions, please see "Sunday Safety Protocol" attached at the end of this document.

Online

The service will be live-streamed on Sundays at 10 AM. It will be available on our church website as well as on our YouTube channel. After the service it will be edited and posted online, however, all music will be removed in keeping with music licensing.

Music

We will comply with the guidance received from Service Canada and Dr. Bonnie Henry in the listed discussions. Dr. Bonnie Henry has noted singing carries high-risk and should be avoided [source: meeting May 26, 2020 with Dr. Henry and Faith Leaders and Jun 16, 2020 BC Update by Dr. Henry.]

The elders feel that we will still be in compliance if attendees sing or hum inside their masks, since it will stop droplets from being expelled into the air.

During the service we will use pre-recorded music received from our music team and other contributors. All music must comply with our CCLI streaming license or be available in the public domain.

Communion

There will be no distribution of communion during the service. The bread and cup will be prepared ahead of time: one cup for the juice and one cup with a wafer/cracker. On Communion Sunday, attendees will be asked to pick up juice and a wafer/cracker from the foyer before they enter into the sanctuary. Attendees are asked to hold the emblems, or to place them in the pew backs until it is time to celebrate Communion.

Trash bins will be placed at the sanctuary exit doors. Attendees are asked to please bring their cups with them on the way out of the sanctuary and deposit them in the trash bin.

Ushers

We will need two ushers on duty each Sunday morning. One will be responsible for screening as people enter and the other will be responsible for seating everyone.

Offering

The offering bags will not be passed around. However, there will be a box to collect offerings in the foyer, at the back of the sanctuary. WBC encourages everyone to prepare their offering ahead of time using their numbered envelopes, but offering envelopes will still be made available for those who require them. If using these envelopes, you are asked to use your own pen. Those who wish to leave an offering in the offering box are to inform their usher on their way into the sanctuary and they will be given time to take care of that before they are seated.

Of course, the options on the "Giving" page of our church website are all available, including the newly added option of e-transfer. Another way to do it safely is to send offerings through the mail.

Guests

Since we are limiting our attendance during phase one of reopening, there will be a few spots available for guests. During the welcome and screening at the front door, the usher will record the person's contact information for tracing purposes and ask if they would like someone to be in touch in the future.

All newcomers will be verbally instructed by the seating usher and our Sunday Safety Protocol will be explained to them.

Bulletins and Literature

There will be no printed material or literature available during this time. Church bulletins will be available on the homepage of our church website under the “Bulletin” tab, as usual.

Coffee

There will be no church coffee or fellowship time until further notice. WBC will revisit this as new information from the BC Government becomes available.

Children

Upon reopening WBC will not be able to provide children’s activities during the service and the nursery rooms will be closed. Children will be expected to sit with their families during the service.

Providing nursery access and Sunday school classes will be revisited when there are provincial guidelines in place that provide guidance to unlicensed child care and nursery.

WEEKLY MINISTRIES

Wednesday Prayer Meeting

Church wide prayer meetings on Wednesday evenings at 7:15 pm will continue to be online, using the Zoom meeting platform. The meeting ID for Zoom is found on our church webpage (www.wbchapel.com) under “WBC Going Online” in the “Latest News” section. The password for the online meetings is “Psalm23”.

Friday Care Group

Care group meetings on Friday evenings at 7:15 pm will continue to be online, using the Zoom meeting platform. Everyone in the church is welcome to join this meeting and the Bible study materials for discussion can be found on our church webpage (www.wbchapel.com) under “WBC Going Online” in the “Latest News” section. The meeting ID for Zoom is found in that same document and the password is “Psalm23”.

Monthly Prayer Meeting

The monthly prayer meeting on the last Saturday of the month will continue to be held at the chapel. This will be an in-person meeting, but the necessary safety protocols (like physical distancing) will be followed. Participants will be responsible to clean all the surfaces they have touched when the meeting is done.

CLEANING AND SANITIZATION

Cleaning

The building will be cleaned each week by using government approved cleaning supplies.

Sanitization

The building will be thoroughly disinfected each week between services using a government approved disinfectant for viruses. After every Sunday service, all high-touch areas will be sanitized. This will include the following areas:

- Front doors
- Pews
- Pulpit
- Sound booth
- Bathroom(s)
- Hand railings on stairs

EXPOSURE AND COMMUNICATION PLANS

Exposure Control Plan

The WBC Board is committed to the safety of all who attend WBC. As such, our processes for managing the COVID-19 pandemic will be guided by the Provincial Health Officer's Orders, the British Columbia Center for Disease Control, WorkSafeBC, research, and best practices.

We all have a hand in taking care to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 Virus. While one person may not be at risk for severe symptoms or outcomes, others around them, or at home, might. The following guidelines are designed to help everyone in doing their part to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our church and to our church family.

Should a risk of exposure to a positive COVID-19 case occur at WBC, we will contact the appropriate authorities once WBC has been informed that an attendee has tested positive for the virus. It is our understanding that Public Health will notify those who have been in contact with the COVID-19 positive case. However, it is our commitment to ensure all measures will be taken to eliminate any further risk of transmission through adherence to the Provincial Health Officers Orders.

Potential for Exposure

The most common and currently recognized routes of transmission include:

- Airborne – airborne droplets from sneezes or coughs
- Contact – when one touches a contaminated surface and then touches their face allowing for exposure
- Aerosolized - It has been noted that aerosols may be transmitted through singing or loud speaking

Symptoms

- Most common symptoms: Fever, dry cough, tiredness
- Less common symptoms: Aches and pains, sore throat, diarrhea, conjunctivitis, headache, loss of taste or smell, a rash on skin, or discoloration of fingers or toes
- Serious symptoms: Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, chest pain or pressure, loss of speech or movement.

Seek immediate medical attention if you have serious symptoms. If in doubt stay out!

Self-Assessment and Screening

As per the section on Screening, attendees will be asked if they are experiencing symptoms before they enter the building. WBC will also post public signs at the entrance to the building informing attendees that they should not attend if they answer “yes” to any of the screening questions.

It is very important that attendees do a self-assessment before they decide to enter the chapel. This is the best way for us to protect each other from exposure to the virus. The self-assessment tool is available on the BC Health website at <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>.

If an attendee begins to feel unwell while attending WBC, they should advise an usher and return home or seek medical attention as needed. It is very important that they do not return to WBC until they are permitted to do so by Public Health.

Communication Plan

The Exposure and Communication plan (along with the complete Action Plan) shall be sent to all WBC members and attendees via electronic means, shall be available on the WBC website, and a hard copy of the Sunday Safety Protocol shall be prominently posted on the church bulletin board.

Contact Tracing

Anyone with symptoms should contact Public Health. Public Health will either test and/or advise self-monitoring. Public Health is responsible for communication regarding potential exposure and transmission. For more details on how Contact Tracing works, please refer to the BC Centre for Disease Control: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/selfisolation/contact-tracing>.

An excerpt is included here:

1. When a person tests positive for COVID-19, they become a “case”.
2. A public health nurse interviews the case to identify people they have spent time with. These people are considered to be “contacts.”
3. Public health gets in touch with the contacts and asks them about symptoms of COVID-19.
4. Not every contact needs to be identified: only those who could have been exposed to the case’s respiratory droplets from coughing, sneezing, speaking or singing.
5. Public health maintains the case’s privacy. A case can choose to tell others about their diagnosis but should not do their own contact tracing.
6. Contacts with symptoms are sent for testing.
7. If the contact tests positive, they become a ‘case’ and the process repeats.
8. Contacts with no symptoms are asked to self-isolate and monitor for symptoms for 14 days after their last contact with the case.

It is not the jurisdiction of WBC to provide contact tracing to attendees or provide medical advice. However, if someone in the congregation is confirmed as a “case” that person can choose to let WBC know. This is encouraged as a way to care for your brothers and sisters and to protect the WBC community. In such a case WBC may send an email to the congregation to make them aware of the case, to remind them to self-monitor and await any potential outreach from Public Health. Public Health will reach out to specific people if they deem that there was a potential exposure. Public Health will determine next steps as they deem appropriate and may do any or all of the following:

- Send out a formal notice to all attendees of WBC to alert them of potential exposure and ask people to self-monitor
- Contact specific individuals
- Investigate the policies of WBC and its tenants
- Advise on additional cleaning and disinfecting measures
- Restrict building usage for a period of time

Compliance

The WBC Elders are looking forward to welcoming the WBC family back to in-person gatherings during phase one of the reopening. In order to do this safely and responsibly it is imperative that EVERYONE adheres to the COVID-19 restrictions. There have been churches that have reopened and are now dealing with attendees that think the restrictions are “silly” or “way too extreme”. While we all look forward to returning to “the way it was” this is not likely to occur for a long while so we all need to do our part to “be kind, be calm and be safe”.

If an attendee persists to ignore the COVID-19 restrictions after being reminded, they will be asked to leave so that other attendees will not be put at risk of possible exposure.

GENERAL BUILDING USAGE

At this time, the building is not open for general usage and ministry meetings. That includes all meetings of the Mohabat Farsi Church and the East Burnaby Quilters. Meetings outside, in the parking lot, are allowed as long as physical distancing and other appropriate safety measures are followed.

Sunday Safety Protocol

(Updated June 30, 2020)

ARRIVAL

Upon arrival, attendees will need to line up outside of the building, while maintaining the 2 meter physical distancing requirements. Access will be granted one person/household at a time. Attendees will be screened (as noted above) and offered hand sanitizer. They will then be allowed into the foyer where they will wait for an usher to seat them.

FACE MASKS

Face masks will be required to be worn by all attendees. Bring your own face mask and put it on before entering the building.

SEATING

Seating will be assigned by the ushers on duty, who will ensure that the seating configuration in the church will work with the appropriate physical distance guidelines. Attendees will take their seats as assigned by the ushers. Kindness and consideration will be appreciated.

Please make sure to maintain at least 2 meters distance from the next person. Families from the same household may sit together. As far as possible avoid unnecessary contact with the walls etc. and try to only use the handicap washroom on the upper level. Anyone who uses the washroom will be asked to spray and wipe down all the surfaces they touched, before they leave the washroom.

OFFERING

The offering bags will not be passed around. However, there will be a box to collect offerings in the foyer, at the back of the sanctuary. Those who wish to leave an offering in the offering box are to inform their usher on their way into the sanctuary and they will be given time to take care of that before they are seated.

SINGING

Dr Bonnie Henry has noted singing carries high-risk and should be avoided. However, the elders feel that we will still be safe and responsible if attendees sing or hum inside their masks, since it will stop droplets from being expelled into the air. Singing without a mask will not be permitted.

SERMON

The sermon will be preached from the pulpit by a person without a face mask. In order to protect the attendees, nobody will be seated in the two front rows. The preacher and the person making the announcements will not share the same microphone.

COMMUNION

On Communion Sunday, attendees will be asked to pick up juice and a wafer/cracker from the foyer before they enter into the sanctuary. Attendees are asked to hold the emblems, or to place them in the pew backs until it is time to celebrate Communion. After the service attendees are asked to please bring their cups with them on the way out of the sanctuary and deposit them in the trash bin as they exit the sanctuary.

CLOSING and CLEANING

When the service draws to a close you should remain seated. The usher will pass you a disinfectant wipe and request that everyone wipe down the areas they have touched during their stay. The ushers will indicate the order of leaving and have a trash bin ready at the back of the sanctuary for your wipes and communion cups.

EXIT

At the end of the service, proceed directly outside, using hand sanitizer when leaving. The ushers will open the doors so that you do not have to touch it on the way out.

Practice social distancing when outside and try not to touch your face until you get home. Wash your hands again as soon as you get home.

THANK YOU

We understand that these protocols seem onerous and maybe unnecessary. However, it is by abiding by them that we will be able to open the chapel in a safe and responsible manner during this time.

A huge THANK YOU to everyone who is willing to attend in a responsible manner and to show brotherly love and kindness in this way. It is appreciated!
