

**Fairview Baptist Church**

**COVID-19 Safety Plan for Sunday Services** – Effective July 5, 2020

Gathering together in the church building that has been Fairview’s home for close to 70 years has always been a precious, worshipful, and community-building practice and privilege. The physical distancing we have endured over the past three months in order to care for one another and our broader society has been challenging, and a return to the space of our church will be a joyful homecoming for many. Our duty of care continues, however, taking the forms of the processes described here as well as the continuation of our virtual gatherings to enable the gathering together of *all* our community, including those for whom a return is inadvisable, uncomfortable, or not possible.

The following protocols were developed by a safety team of the church, relying on guidelines and advice from numerous authorities including the BC Government, Worksafe BC, and the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada. They are intended to be revised as necessary and prudent as the outbreak situation evolves, and when Kitsilano Christian Community also returns to the sanctuary. It is possible that at some point we may wish to, or have to, return to fully virtual gatherings.

We do not encourage attendance by those at greater risk of serious illness from COVID, or by those who feel uncomfortable doing so for any reason. Please do not come if you fall into any of categories listed below under ‘restrictions’ (see the useful self-assessment tool at [bc.thrive.health/covid19/](https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/) if you are uncertain).

We warmly welcome all those joining us, whether physically or virtually, as we worship together in spirit and in truth!

**Facility**:

* The number of occupants in the sanctuary will be limited to 50. We will also ask that congregants refrain from gathering in significant numbers in other places of the church such as hallways or small rooms.
* Signage will be displayed indicating:
	+ Restrictions: A request not to enter of anyone with COVID-like symptoms (fever, chills, new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, new muscle aches or headaches, sore throat); those who have travelled outside Canada within the prior 2 weeks; or those who are a close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.
	+ Practices: Requested practices in infection control, including physical distancing (12 ft[[1]](#footnote-1)), covering coughs, not touching face, and use of the provided hand sanitizer before entry.
* Hand sanitizer will be provided at all entrances.
* Disposable masks will be available if needed at all entrances.
* Offering baskets will be provided at all entrances.
* Every second pew will be cordoned off.

**Procedures**:

* Ushers will be available at every entrance to advise on seating arrangements:
	+ It is fine to sit together in social ‘bubbles’ (those in the same household or in frequent contact)
	+ Otherwise, we will ask that people sit at least 12 ft apart, and not immediately behind or in front of others.
* Service bulletins will not be used – words as necessary will be displayed on the screen in front. The use of hymnbooks is permitted.
* No individuals will share microphones.
* At this point, we will refrain from communion, the presence of the choir, and church school.
* We will make every attempt to encourage and include full participation by those joining virtually as well as physically.

**Singing and personal protective equipment:**

* While singing does carry a greater risk of spreading the COVID virus, it is an extremely meaningful activity for many. We will therefore continue to sing God’s praises, but take the additional precautions of requesting all those who intend to sing to wear a mask and to remain at a distance of at least 12 ft from those outside their ‘bubbles’.
1. This greater than the normally recommended distance relates to our plan to continue singing – with additional measures in place to limit aerosol spread. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)