



“A caring and loving family.”

Cambridge Street United Church

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August 26, 2020

Greetings from the Reopening Readiness Task Group;

We hope this letter finds you as well as possible in these unusual times. We are writing to inform you that Cambridge Street United Church will be open for in-person worship services starting on Sunday, September 13, 2020. A great deal of thought has gone into creating a plan that follows provincial and health unit guidelines, as well as our desire to care for each other and our community as part of God’s call to us.

We know the Sunday morning experience will be very different. It would be easy to focus on what *won’t* be there, but we hope you will also be able to appreciate what *is*. The Christian spirit of love guides us to ensure we are being safe and doing everything in our power to protect the health of staff, congregation members and everyone connected to our church family. As new information arises, the way we do things will adapt, so we ask for patience and compassion as we move forward together.

There is absolutely no pressure to return to in-person worship if you do not feel comfortable. Live-streamed services will still be available through our website. If and when you do choose to come to Sunday morning worship — a reminder that services will start at 10:40 a.m. — here’s what to expect.

In general

- For everyone’s safety, please stay home if you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19.
- At all times, please keep a safe distance from anyone who is not in your personal “bubble.”
- We are permitted to have up to 30% of our space occupied, which translates to about 180 people in the sanctuary at one time.
- Given distancing requirements, we are unable to provide rides to church.
- Please respect directional markers and signs indicating how many people may use areas such as a washroom or the elevator at one time.

Before the start of the worship service

- The area from the main Cambridge Street doors south to Bond Street is reserved for dropping off passengers. Parking spaces from the doors north to the parking lot are reserved for those who need accessible parking. If you are able to walk a block or two, we ask that you park farther away. The part of Bond Street closest to that entrance will be reserved for members of Queen Street United who need accessible parking.

- Members of our congregation are asked to enter through one of the Cambridge Street doors; to limit contacts, Queen Street members will be using the Bond Street entrance.
- Please wear a mask and respect physical distancing rules any time you are inside the church.
- You will be asked to sanitize your hands as you enter the building.
- Volunteers will record your presence at the service for contact-tracing purposes.

During the service

- Once you are in your pew, please remain seated throughout the service.
- As is the case anywhere else, contact such as hugs or handshakes between those who are not in a family group is not allowed.
- There will be no singing by the congregation or choir, although soloists and instrumental playing are allowed, provided they are at a safe distance from others.
- In place of collection plates, offering will be taken as you leave, using washable baskets.
- There will be single-use activities for children, but no Sunday school or nursery facilities. Space will be available for nursing and diaper-changing.
- The order of service will only be available projected on the screens at the front of the sanctuary.

After the service

- There will be no social time after the service.
- While you are welcome to visit at a safe distance, we ask that you wait until you are outside to do so.
- Extensive cleaning will take place after every service, particularly for areas such as hearing assist devices, light switches, door handles, elevator buttons etc. that are touched most often. Queen Street members will clean the lower hall and high-touch surfaces after their services.
- The sanctuary will be closed for at least three days after each service.

The reopening task force has developed a comprehensive plan to ensure safety in all aspects of the church's operation, including rentals, other uses of the building, staff functions and more. A streamlined version of the plan has been filed as required with the East Central Ontario Region of the United Church of Canada. If you have any questions, or would like to see a summary of the full reopening plan, please visit our website at www.theunitedchurch.com or contact Pam in the church office.

This is an unprecedented time in the life of our world and our church. We pray for strength during the continuing stress and harm wrought by COVID-19, and take comfort in knowing that God is with us always. We wish you health and peace in the days ahead.

Sincerely,

Pam Burt

Pam Burt

Lisa Morasse

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Co-chairs, Cambridge Street United Church Reopening Readiness Task Group