



RESPONSE TO COVID-19/CORONAVIRUS – UPDATE #5 – June 17, 2020

As Phase 3 comes into play, tentatively on June 21, Provincial regulations will allow us to meet in our sanctuary with specific guidelines in place. The following quote was taken directly from “Restoring Safe Services: Phase 3” released by the province of Manitoba.

The maximum number of people permitted indoors is 50 and outdoors is 100, except where distinct groups of 50 or 100 can be separated to prevent contact with other groups. Indoor gatherings are permitted with a maximum group size of 30 per cent of the site's capacity to a maximum of 300 people in one space at one site, provided the group can be physically divided into sub-groups of 50 or fewer. Each sub-group must be able to arrive, depart and participate in the gathering without co-mingling with members from any other sub-group. Adequate physical distancing must continue to be provided for all participants.

In response to these new guidelines, coupled with the size of our sanctuary and congregation, **our plan is to resume regular Sunday morning services on June 28**. Before the Provincial mandated restrictions on public gatherings, SMC had an average of attendance of 100 people for the 2020 year (lowest attendance was 76 and highest was 119) and our sanctuary has a seating capacity of approximately 720 people. Current guidelines allow up to 30% capacity, which is 216 people. As we come back together, social distancing guidelines, along with 30% max capacity, will become the defining factor for how we gather. Our current SMC directory, which includes 183 active participants, has provided the basis for identifying 73 distinct family groups within the SMC congregation. Each family group will be asked to sit together as we resume Sunday gatherings. As we cannot predict which family groups, or portion thereof, will attend on any given Sunday it is necessary to plan for the possibility of a high percentage to attend. In light of this eventuality and so we can accommodate those who wish to attend, we have created 5 separate sections within our facility that have their own separate entrances and exits and have divided our congregation into 5 groups (of less than 50 people) that would occupy each section. Upon arrival at SMC, family groups will be asked to: park in a specific area of our parking lot, use a specific entrance/exit, and, with the help of ushers, find a seat in their assigned section. An email will go out to each family group identifying their assigned parking and entrance/exit. Each of the 5 sections within the facility have been marked so that social distancing can be maintained for the length of our service. Ushers assigned to each section will also help to direct family groups to observe social distancing and ensure that each section does not comingle with other sections. Washroom facilities will be available during the service with a maximum of 3 people allowed in the washroom at one time. A sign will be posted at each washroom asking congregants to observe this regulation and to wait outside the washroom if the number has reached its maximum. Sanitizing will occur before, during and after the event.

This plan has been approved by Manitoba Health.

Submitted on behalf of the SMC Executive in consultation with Lead Pastor Lee Hiebert, Chair Reg Penner, Vice-Chair Larry Thiessen and Past-Chair Karen Peters