

Northminster United Church
300 Sunset Blvd.
Peterborough, ON
K9H 5L3

(E) northminster@cogeco.net
(T) 705-748-4881



Monday, August 17, 2020

Dear Northminster Community,

I hope this letter finds everyone well and enjoying the beautiful summer weather. Though warm, it has been nice to get out and interact a bit more now that we have entered phase 3 of the provincial reopening.

That brings me to some long anticipated good news, Northminster will officially begin public, in-person worship on Sunday, September 6th at 10:00 a.m. Sunday School will resume on Sunday, September 13th under the care of our new Youth Ministry Coordinator, Hunter Masters. Please be advised, though, that we will be returning to worship and Sunday School in altered forms for the foreseeable future. For example, we have a maximum capacity of 80 people allowed in the sanctuary at one time. A detailed package of the new protocols and what to expect is included with this letter so please read through it carefully. A video walk-through of the protocols and processes will be available on the website 10-14 days ahead of our reopening, as well.

Some of the new protocols may seem extreme but we gather together to share in the spirit, joy and companionship of worship while keeping each other safe and healthy. As we live into this new normal together, I ask each and everyone of you to be patient and ask questions if you have them. We will adapt our processes going forward as we need to.

Please respect any direction that is offered from our dedicated volunteers and staff as we begin to gather together again on Sunday mornings. Any instructions and direction we give will follow the guidelines laid out by our Health Unit and the United Church of Canada and are offered to maintain the health and safety of our faith family community and the wider community to the best of our ability.

I look forward to seeing you on the 6th.

Thank you and take care,

Kevin

Rev. Kevin Derry

Northminster United Church Worship Reopening Protocols

Timeline:

Northminster currently plans to reopen on Sunday, September 06th, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.

Capacity and Worship Practices:

Sanctuary:	63	
Balcony:	09	(Including 1 Sound and 1 Video Tech)
Chancel:	10	(Including the Minister and Music Director)
Total:	82	

Please see attached diagram (not to scale) for seating configuration and layout. The balcony layout will be a similar pattern to the Sanctuary placing an empty row between two staggered rows. The Video and Sound Techs are already socially distanced from the seating area.

Worshippers living at the same address will not be required to socially distance from each other but are required to sit together and socially distance themselves from others in the pew. The numbers allowed in a pew and placement will be adjusted accordingly.

If possible and you have access to a computer, tablet or smartphone, we ask you to register at Eventbrite if you plan to attend the service on a specific Sunday so we have an idea of possible numbers for that Sunday. A link to Eventbrite will be included with the weekly emails sent out from the office. If you choose this option, we ask that you arrive to the church by no later than 9:45 a.m. Also, if you choose this option and for some reason are unable to attend church on that specific Sunday, we ask that you phone the church and leave a message indicating you will not be attending. This will allow us to increase the number of walk-in spots available. If you do not have internet access and wish to take advantage of the Eventbrite option, please call the office during normal office hours and we will assist you.

Worshippers will be asked to enter by the North Porch (parking lot) doors and exit by the same doors following the service (the area will be cleaned and sanitized during the service to prepare for exit). As they enter, they will be requested to sanitize their hands and wear a mask if they have one and are able. They will be offered a mask if they do not have one and are not medically exempt from wearing one. Their names will be recorded for tracking in case it is necessary. If they are a visitor or new to Northminster a contact number will be requested. They will then be directed down the Hall to the Sanctuary and ushered to an available pew.

When the capacity of the Sanctuary (82) including Greeters, Duty Person, Choir members, Music Director and Minister has been reached. A sign indicating the Sanctuary has reached capacity a sign thanking folks for their interest and indicating full capacity has been reached will be placed at the North Porch entrance. In the event lack of capacity becomes an issue a second service mid-week or expanding into Upper Wright Hall (allowing another 31 worshippers) will be considered.

The Lift (elevator) will be available for those who require it. It will be sanitized by Greeters at each level after each use as it is not large enough for social distancing. The same protocols for entry will be followed as at the North Parking Lot Entrance.

Hand sanitizer will be available at all Sanctuary and Lift entrances, Upper Wright Hall entrances, in all washrooms, offices and meeting rooms. Masks will be required for everyone except those with Medical exemptions. Disposable masks will be available for those who forget their own. Markings and signs will be placed on the floors and walls to promote social distancing. Signs indicating symptoms for COVID 19 will be visible and available at all entrances to the building and the, Sanctuary and Upper Wright Hall asking folks to respect others and stay home if they are feeling unwell or exhibiting any related symptoms. All hymnbooks, bibles and other materials will be removed from the pews, including the pew cushions. A combination of pews and chairs will be used in the balcony and on the chancel.

Offertory plates will be available at the front and back of the Sanctuary.

There will be no congregational singing and the choir will be restricted to singing as choral social distancing allows. The current plan is to have the Choir sitting on the Chancel 23 feet from the first rows of pews in the Sanctuary allowing for soloists and smaller groups offering music.

Exiting the building will be guided by Greeters and done in stages beginning with Upper Wright Hall if it is occupied and concluding with those needing to use the Lift. There will be no Coffee or Fellowship time following the service and worshippers will be encouraged to maintain social distancing even in the parking lot and refrain from prolonged socializing in the parking lot.

The Sanctuary and Hallway will be sanitized after each service including pews, chairs, railings, and doors.

The Sacraments:

We are a sacramental faith. The new reality of COVID 19 means we will have to examine how we celebrate the sacraments safely and faithfully.

Baptism:

Social distancing will always be maintained. The presider will sanitize their hands between each baptism and only the person being baptized will come to the font. The Congregational Elder or designate will assist the presider from the Lectern. If the person being baptized requires a companion or care giver, they can accompany them forward. The presider will symbolically raise the water up in their palm and allow it to flow back into the font. At no time will the person being baptized be touched by the presider.

Communion:

Social distancing and proper hand sanitization will always be maintained. Masks will be worn during preparation and distribution. Preparation will follow strict hygiene (sanitization of hands and wearing gloves and masks during prep) and food preparation protocols. **There will be no common cup or intinction.**

Initially, on Communion Sundays, the elements will be supplied in individual packages and distributed at the registration tables upon entering the building allowing for no physical contact or movement during the Communion liturgy. The Sunday School will participate in Communion in their Sunday School room to minimize movement within the building and service.

Church School:

Reminder to maintain physical distancing 2 metres apart (if not from same household)

Importance of proper and frequent hand hygiene

Respiratory etiquette-covering of coughs and sneezes (coughing into sleeves-not hands or use a tissue

Followed by performing hand hygiene

Avoid touching face with unwashed hands.

Youth Ministry Co-Ordinator and 1 support person will manage flow to prevent crowding and maintain 2 metre social distancing and separation at the entrance into Lower Wright Hall. (See attached diagram - not to scale)

The Youth leader will review the above health and safety protocols once all are seated.

Everyone will use hand sanitizer upon entering Lower Wright Hall. There will be a limit of 30 youth and leaders in this space. Our young people will be asked to remain in their seats at the table assigned to them. A maximum of 10 tables for our young people will be the limit, those from the same household will sit together at 1 table. A plastic zip lock bag containing pencil

crayons markers will be provided for each table. The family name will be written on the bag, so that it maybe be sanitized and stored for the following week. Any paper that supports the lesson will be on the table when they arrive. Papers not used will be recycled. Our young people will leave by table number as instructed by the Youth Leader.

SUSPENDED ACTIVITIES

No food or drinks will be served.

No borrowing an item from the table next to you.

Nursery

Our nursery will remain closed until further notice.

Offering:

As mentioned above, the offering plates will not be passed, they will be at stationary points at or near the entrance and exit points. Those counting the offering will practice hand sanitizing protocols. People will be encouraged to sign up for PAR or use on-line payment options that are available as alternatives to using envelopes and the offering plates.

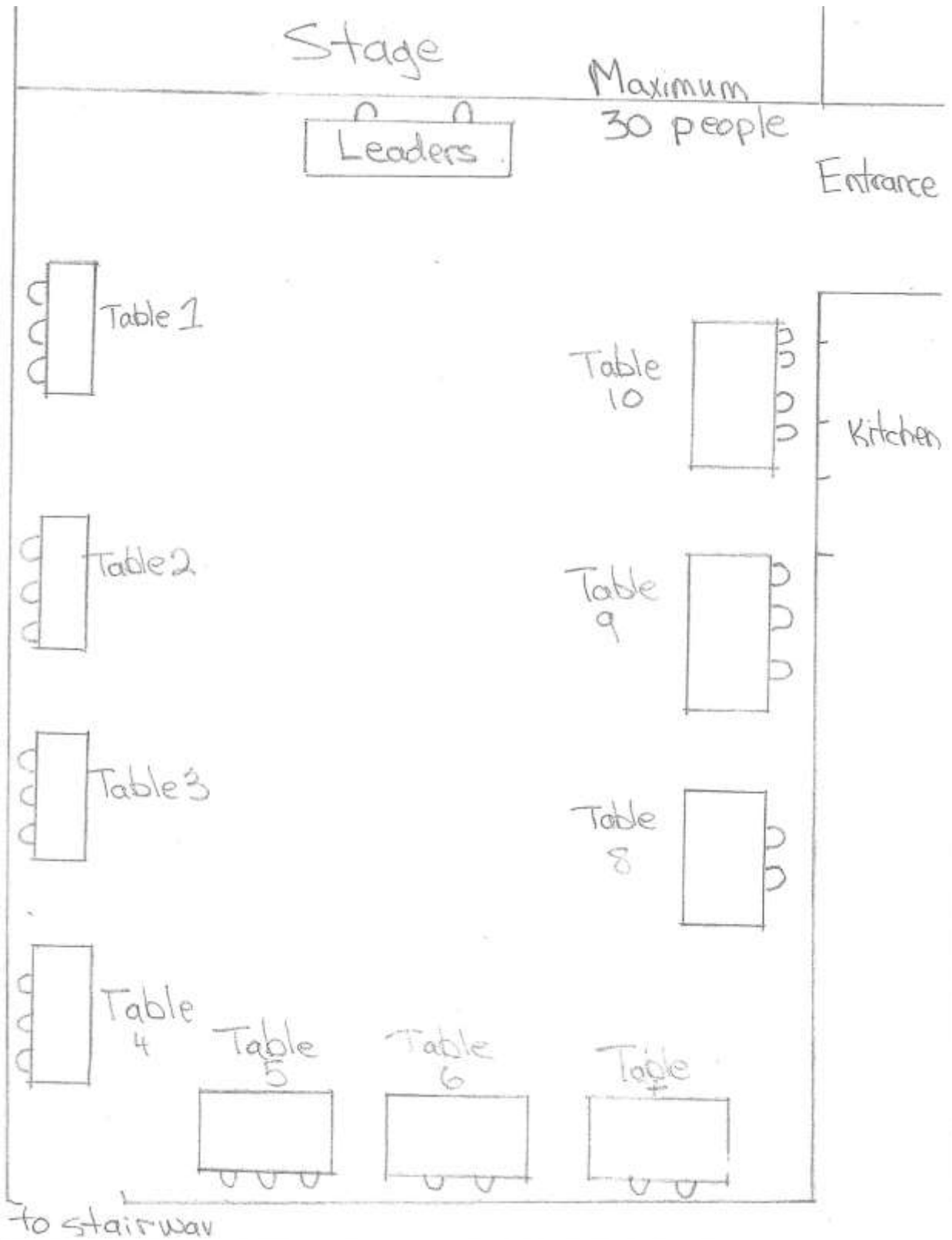
Tenants:

There are two regular tenants present in the Northminster Building. They have maintained COVID-19 protocols throughout the pandemic and will continue to do so. Further protocols will be put in place as the need arises. No further rentals will be happening until at least January 2021.

General:

Small Northminster groups meeting will practice social distancing, mask and sanitizing protocols. All areas used by small groups will be sanitized after or between uses. Subtle barriers to ensure and maintain social distancing at office doors will be in place. The safety of staff and the community is our paramount concern. Folks will be admitted by appointment only and social distancing, masks and hand sanitizing will be maintained by all. Assessment questions and symptoms will be posted at all entrances. All these protocols will be adjusted as government mandates and health mandates evolve and experience informs our protocols. Designated washrooms will remain open for use but will be regularly sanitized and have proper hand hygiene materials available.

The reopening diagram for the Upper floor of the church is found on 5 and the reopening diagram for the Sunday School in Lower Wright Hall is found on page 6.



Sunday School