

Reopening Plan

St. Andrew's United Church

180 Years
and counting ...

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Reopening Plan

The safety of our church family and community is our number one priority.

The following plan adheres to all regulations set out by the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit (LGLDHU) and the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council (EOORC) of the United Church of Canada (UCC).

The plan has been designed to ensure that you can enjoy Sunday service at St. Andrew's (STA) with confidence knowing that we have made every effort to keep you, your loved ones, friends and neighbours, our staff, and volunteers safe and healthy.

We will continue to monitor and follow all recommendations and regulations set out by the LGLDHU and the EOORC up to an including closing the church if, as predicted, there is another serious wave of the pandemic.

This plan has been approved by the LGLDHU, St. Andrew's Executive Council and the EOORC.

You can enjoy online services on our YouTube channel at:

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=ppc_pakenham_on_can

Resources

Ontario Ministry of Health

~ Religious Services, Rites and Ceremonies:

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/advice_religious_services.pdf

Public Health Ontario

~ Symptoms:

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_reference_doc_symptoms.pdf

~ Physical Distancing: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-guide-physical-distancing.pdf?la=en>

~ How to Wash Your Hands: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-hand-hygiene.pdf?la=en>

~ Cleaning and Disinfecting for Public Settings: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet-covid-19-environmental-cleaning.pdf?la=en>

Ottawa Public Health

~ https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/public-health-topics/resources/Documents/COVID-19_Guidance-for-Places-of-Worship.pdf?fbclid=IwAR1mFyYtRoNz01-2wOmCKHOgqkIar8HBMCX2KN90EXcu0dzt4RxVWjhLaE0

Leeds, Grenville, Lanark District Health Unit

~ Guidelines for Churches: <https://healthunit.org/covid-19-businesses/>

~ Face Coverings/Masks: <https://healthunit.org/health-information/covid-19/face-coverings-masks/>

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Accountability

Create an Ad Hoc Committee responsible for creating and implementing The STA Plan...Complete

Obtain approval of the plan from:

- ~ LGLDHU...Complete
- ~ STA Executive Council...Complete
- ~ EOORC; specifically Whit Strong at wstrong@united-church.ca...Complete

Implement, monitor, and adapt the Plan based on changing public health directives...Ongoing

Report regularly to the Executive Council...Ongoing

Keep all stakeholders informed about the plan...Ongoing

Fundamentals

Hand Washing

- ~ Install hand sanitizing stations throughout the building and especially in the office, washrooms, kitchen and at entrance/exit doors.
- ~ Please sanitize your hands when entering and leaving the building.
See Appendix A: Hand Washing. We encourage and gladly accept donations of hand sanitizer, wipes, Lysol, etc.

Face Coverings / Masks

- ~ Face coverings must be worn unless wearing one creates health concerns. People who are unable to wear a mask will not be required to provide proof of their health issue(s).
- ~ Face coverings/masks should **not** be worn by:
 - ~ Children under two years of age, or children under the age of five years either chronologically or developmentally who refuse to wear a mask and cannot be persuaded to do so by their caregiver
 - ~ Individuals with medical conditions that make them unable to safely wear a mask, including breathing difficulties or cognitive difficulties.
 - ~ Anyone who is unable to remove the mask without help
- ~ *See Appendix B: How to Safely Wear a Mask.*
We will supply disposable masks should you forget yours
- ~ Staff and volunteers will use a face mask when working with others.
- ~ The Minister, Speakers and Readers are exempt from this requirement while at the pulpit as they will be more than twelve feet from Congregants.
- ~ To ensure safe use of the microphones people will be asked not to touch them.

Social Distancing

- ~ You are required to maintain a distance of at least two metres/six feet from others as you move throughout the building. Families may sit together but must ensure a two metres/six-foot separation from other family groups.
- ~ Please arrive no more than 15 minutes before the service.
- ~ Please leave the building as soon as service has concluded.

Training

- ~ Conduct training with volunteers on all aspects of The STA Plan.

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- ~ Volunteers will be kept informed of developments.

Screening

- ~ There will be a volunteer at the entry door responsible for gathering contact information and screening for symptoms of Covid-19. This is required if there is an outbreak associated with St. Andrew's. This person will be given a printed contact sheet prior to each service.
- ~ An usher will help direct people to seats that are roped off to adhere to social distancing requirements.
- ~ All individuals, including children, volunteers and employees, will be asked the following questions:
 - ~ Do you have any of the symptoms of Covid-19?
 - ~ In the past 14 days have you been in close contact with a person who either has COVID-19 or has symptoms of COVID-19?
 - ~ Have you travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days?

A self-screening tool is available from the Government of Ontario at: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/severe-symptoms>

See Appendix C: Do Not Enter If.

The Building

The building has undergone renovations during closures for the Pandemic.

Cleaning and Sanitizing

- ~ The church has been professionally cleaned including carpets, walls and windows.
- ~ Only the accessible washroom will be available for use.
- ~ All books have been removed from the pews.
- ~ Bathroom, door handles, light switches, toilet and faucet handles, and all highly used areas will be disinfected after each service or event. *Appendix D: Sanitizing and Disinfecting the Church.*

Entry and Exit

- ~ People will enter the building through the tower room door and exit through the main door.
- ~ Weather permitting, doors will be propped open so there is no need to touch door handles.
- ~ Weather permitting, available windows will be open to facilitate maximum circulation.
- ~ Please, no handshakes, fist bumps or hugs.
- ~ A volunteer will greet people, ask that they sanitize their hands, conduct screening as specified above under Screening and capture contact information to enable contact tracing.
- ~ An usher will assist people with seating to ensure social distancing.
- ~ People will leave services by row as instructed by the Worship Leader.
- ~ There will be waste receptacles at both doors lined with plastic garbage bags.
- ~ Only the Sanctuary and accessible washroom are open. All other areas of the building are closed to the public for now.

Seating

- ~ The sanctuary has been measured to ensure we do not exceed the allowed number of people.
- ~ Pews have been roped off for social distancing of two metres/six feet. No one will be allowed to sit in the aisle seats.

Signage

- ~ Signs will be posted around the building about Covid Symptoms, safe use, care and/or disposal of masks, hand washing etc.

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Book Store

- ~ The Stewart Hall Book Store is closed until further notice.

Worship Services

Resumption of services in the church will be in a modified format as described in this plan. We will continue to offer online services.

Music

- ~ Choir members are taking turns singing hymns on Sundays. Singers must be from the same household and stand behind an impermeable barrier. See *Appendix E: NATS Panel on the Safety of Singing*
- ~ Congregants are allowed to sing in their pews if: they remain seated and wear their masks.

Offerings

To protect our staff and volunteers we strongly recommend members eliminate cash and envelopes as their method of giving. Instead please consider:

- ~ **Signing up for PAR** by filling out the [PAR authorization form](#)
- ~ **Increase the amount of your PAR donation by contacting** our Pakenham Pastoral Charge Office Administrator Nancy Townend at: st.andrews.secretary@hotmail.com or the national PAR administrator at: par@united-church.ca You can also forward the form and void cheque by **fax**. Please fax them to the General Council Office fax at 416-231-3103. Please **DO NOT** send scanned or photographed images by email because email is not secure and there is sensitive financial information on the form.
- ~ **Using E-Transfers** to make your donations. Send your e-TF to st.andrews.office@bellnet.ca
- ~ The preferred methods for giving can be found on our website at: <https://www.standrewsunitedpakenham.org/donations-during-the-pandemic.html>
- ~ If alternate methods of giving are not possible for you there will be an offering drop.
- ~ We will provide disinfectant and disposable gloves to volunteers who count offerings and make bank deposits.

Communion

On Communion Sunday members will be invited to bring their own elements.

Baptism

- ~ Baptisms will be done individually unless members of the same family are being Baptised.
 - ~ For infant baptism, the parents/guardians of the child will be the only ones to hold the child. The officiant will sanitize their hands before performing baptism.
 - ~ Water for baptisms will come from individual bottles for each person and be sprinkled.
- ~ We can arrange private baptism with participation by our Clerk of Session.

Weddings

Weddings will be accommodated if all Ministry of Health guidelines are observed.

Funerals

Funerals will be conducted if all Ministry of Health guidelines are observed.

Bulletins

There will be no bulletins. We will use the A-V system to project necessary information including words to hymns.

Sunday School

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As instructed by EOORC.

Reservations

At the moment we will not require people to pre-register. We will monitor attendance and if there is a need for pre-registration the office administrator will process phone and e-mail requests for a reservation. Pre-registration will be used for services such as Christmas Eve to determine how many services we will need.

Governance and Meetings

- ~ Meetings can continue to take place using Zoom.
- ~ People attending live meetings must wear masks, practice social distancing and observe health recommendations concerning maximum number of attendees.
- ~ We will supply disposable masks in case people forget to bring one.

Hospitality

- ~ There will be no use of communal dishes, glassware, mugs or silverware until further notice.
- ~ Coffee Hour will be discontinued until further notice.
- ~ Suppers such as the Fish Fry will be offered as takeout only.
- ~ Concerts and fund raisers are on hold until further notice.

Special Events and Rentals

- ~ The Special Events Committee will develop a plan to manage gatherings including coffee hour, congregational dinners and fundraisers with food preparation based on health and safety regulations.
- ~ This plan is intended to cover the reopening of the church for services. It does not cover rentals. Decisions concerning rentals will be made by Executive Council.

Communication

We will keep stakeholders informed using:

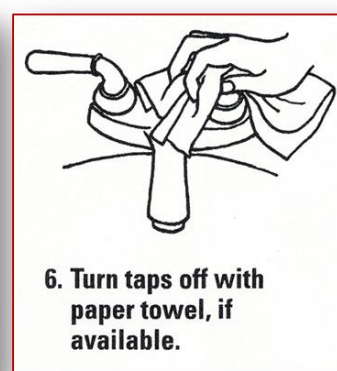
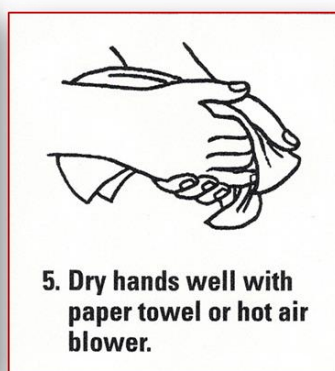
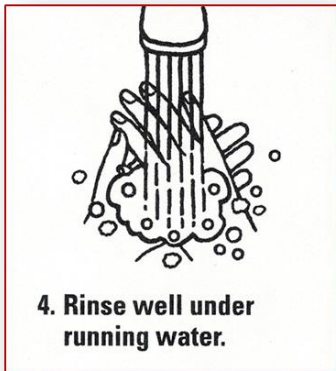
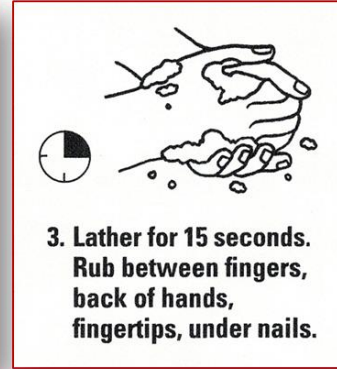
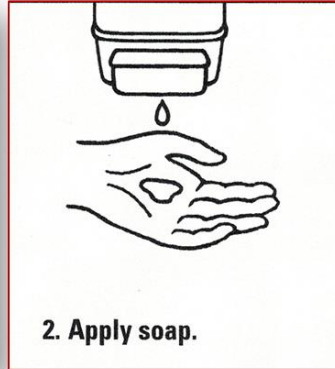
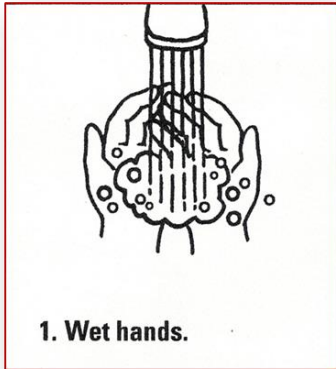
- ~ The *Staying in Touch* email distribution list staisstayingintouch@hotmail.com
- ~ St. Andrew's website <https://www.standrewsunitedpakenham.org/>
- ~ St. Andrew's Facebook (plus neighbours, local and area pages)
STA <https://www.facebook.com/St-Andrews-United-Church-Pakenham-1282988698495956/>
- ~ Sanctuary big screen news etc.
- ~ Church sign

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Appendices

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Appendix A: How to Wash Your Hands

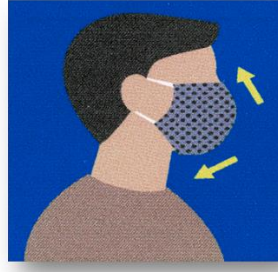


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Appendix B: How to Safely Wear a Mask



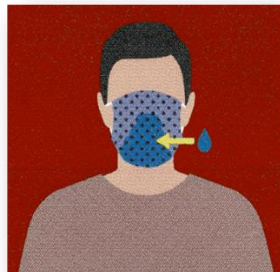
Step 1
Before putting on your mask, wash your hands & secure hair away from your face



Step 2
Place mask snugly over your mouth & nose, making sure there are no gaps



Step 3
Avoid touching your face and mask. Do not leave your mask on your neck, forehead or hanging from your ear.



Step 4
Change your mask when it gets damp or soiled



Step 5
Use the ear loops only to remove your mask. Launder it before using again.



Step 6
Wash your hands & any surfaces the dirty mask has touched

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Appendix C: Do Not Enter If:

Do not enter if you have:

- ~ any symptoms of Covid-19 (See below)
- ~ been in close contact with a person who either has COVID-19 or has symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days have;
- ~ travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days.

Common Symptoms

Fever
New onset of cough / dry cough
Unexplained fatigue
Chills

Less Common Symptoms

Aches and pains
Sore throat
Digestive issues (nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain)
Conjunctivitis or pink eye
Stuffy or congested nose not associated with allergies
Headache
Lost sense of taste or smell
Rash or decolourization of fingers or toes

Serious Symptoms

Difficulty breathing
Shortness of breath
Difficulty swallowing
Chest pain or pressure
Loss of speech or movement

For young children and infants: sluggishness and/or lack of appetite

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Appendix D: Sanitizing and Disinfecting the Church

Cleaning Products

We will:

- ~ only use cleaning and disinfectant products that have a Drug Identification Number (DIN).
- ~ regularly check expiry dates of cleaning and disinfectant products used
- ~ always follow the manufacturer's instructions for use
- ~ ensure products used are compatible with the item being cleaned and disinfected
- ~ ensure all garbage bins are lined with plastic bags

Cleaning

In addition to routine cleaning, high contact surfaces will be disinfected after every service.

Examples include doorknobs, light switches, toilet handles, counters, handrails, touch screen surfaces and keypads.

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Appendix E: NATS Panel on the Safety of Singing

National Association of Singing Teachers (NATS) Panel of Experts Lays Out Sobering Future for Singers: "No Vaccine, No Safe Public Singing"

On May 5th, an [expert panel](#) assembled by the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS), the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA), Chorus America, the Barbershop Harmony Society, and the Performing Arts Medical Association (PAMA) laid out a sobering vision for the future of public singing in America. The primary goal of the panel, according to NATS Executive Director Dr. Allen Henderson, was "to bring scientists and medical professionals directly to our audience, as those of us who run professional organizations do not have the direct knowledge ourselves of these complex issues."

In a [presentation](#) that sent shockwaves through the singing community, Dr. Lucinda Halstead, the president of the Performing Arts Medical Association and the Medical Director of the Department of Otolaryngology at the University of South Carolina, concluded that **there is no safe way for singers to rehearse together until there is a COVID-19 vaccine and a 95% effective treatment in place, in her estimates at least 18-24 months away.**

Dr. Halstead and Dr. Donald Milton, an infectious bio-aerosol specialist at the University of Maryland, presented at least three critical challenges to safely bring singers together:

1) There is no spacing solution for singing groups that would eliminate risk.

Both Halstead and Milton cite lack of proper ventilation as a cause to spread the aerosolized virus. Even multiple changes of air per hour in the room or an ultraviolet light may not fully eliminate the virus, which can infect people "at the micron level and can travel as far as 16 feet."

Physical distancing on a stage for a choir, according to Halstead, would not be possible: "You would need a football stadium to space apart the Westminster choir".

2) Masks don't provide safe methods of singing

On masks, Halstead states, "there are no barriers currently safe for singing." An N95 mask may provide some measure of safety if fit-tested, but it would be "difficult to breathe," "hot," "decrease the levels of oxygen with rebreathing," "cause headaches with an increase of CO2," and "could injure people with significant health issues, like asthma."

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Milton outlines a study of influenza patients who sat in masks for half an hour without coughing and "simply recited the alphabet three times." Even speaking only a few sentences, participants with masks shed influenza virus from their breath in fine particles that escaped their masks.

3) Current standard testing still has 3-5% false negatives, and rapid tests are not sensitive enough for large group testing.

Even if Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) testing becomes widely available, Halstead says that testing at her otolaryngology clinic results in **false negative results between 3-5% of the time.**

There are rapid diagnostic tests in development "similar in ease to a home pregnancy test." However, according to Halstead, current tests "are not as sensitive as the PCR test; you would need to be symptomatic, and it has a higher percentage of false negatives". For these reasons, Halstead **does not consider rapid testing safe for testing large groups such as choirs.**

Dr. Halstead states that the requirements to reopening "safe group singing and performances" are:

An effective vaccine, which would "probably take 18-24 months"; and **drug treatments** that are 95% effective with a time range of 6-12 months.

Until both a vaccine and drug treatments are readily available, social distancing, including masks, gloves, and spacing, is key.

A return to group singing, according to Halstead, must meet the following criteria:

- ~ **Acceptance of Risk:** Groups would have to accept a level of risk of someone having COVID-19 in a rehearsal or a performance; and
- ~ **Testing at Home and Screening at the Door:** Singers would need to undergo home PCR tests and symptom screening at the door, checks of temperature as well as oxygen saturation in the blood via pulse oximetry.

Halstead considers screening at the door without testing high risk: "There are a lot of people who spread this disease while asymptomatic. You could pass a screen test and still be highly contagious."

The Road Ahead for Singers

Reaction from the choral and opera community online ran the gamut, from shock to denial to anger to grief.

One musician questioned the role of performing arts education for singers in a time when they are unable to perform: "Are universities concerned that a significant number of students will just drop out of school for a year if no performances can happen? With tuition as expensive as it is, I

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imagine it has crossed the minds of many performing arts students to leave school until performing can resume."

A music teacher pointed out the challenge for older choir members who may have chronic conditions such as heart disease: "Even with super accurate rapid testing, would someone with a compromised immune system or health conditions be OK with the risk? I wouldn't."

That music teacher was stunned, but thankful for the information: "It is important to manage expectations with this. We need to know the realities."

Executive Director of NATS Allen Henderson, when asked to comment on the presentation, said, "I appreciate the candor and depth of data Drs. Milton and Halstead brought to bear on our particular industry and how they were able to discuss the particular settings we exist in every day. Our job now is to digest that information, let it sink in, and then plan proactive steps to return.

Some of us are decision makers and truly hold the lives of our colleagues, students, and families in our hands. Others will need to digest this data in order to formulate plans to advocate for their own safety when placed in a potentially compromising environment. I hope that those who listen will use this important information to support and protect our community while also looking forward to our ultimate return to making great music together."

Dr. David Young, an otolaryngologist and singer who studied under Dr. Halstead, and praised her as a "wonderful mentor," agreed with her findings: "It's bleak. The stories of super-spreader events at the churches in Washington State, the U.K., and South Korea are sobering." A vaccine, according to Young, "may be years away or never come- we're still waiting on that HIV vaccine everyone talked about 30 years ago."

Even so, Dr. Young, remains cautiously optimistic: "We have performed and thrived amid terrible infectious diseases before. We performed during the pre-vaccine measles era. We performed during polio. We performed despite tuberculosis lurking out there, a highly contagious disease spread via aerosols that can linger without symptoms for a long time. We've done it before.

The same science telling us it's dangerous to sing together now is also what can help us find a way through this dark time. I don't know the exact form this will take, but I know it's a puzzle with defined pieces and therefore has a solution or many solutions."

Dr. Young outlined three possible solutions to return to public singing:

- 1) A **vaccine** "is the holy grail. But it's not necessary to move forward. We have no vaccine against TB for adults and many unvaccinated kids against measles, yet we have kept those from spreading."
- 2) Ending spread through **rigorous social distancing, contact tracing, and public health measures** is what Young considers "the most likely scenario: it may have already happened in some countries like New Zealand and South Korea. We need to get to a point where there are no new cases where we can't immediately identify the source and isolate close contacts. We've done this already with TB. No vaccine, no immunity with infection, yet we have almost no

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community spread in the US outside high risk areas and we do screening tests for those. If a case pops up, the health department aggressively tracks down contacts and traces the infection. They perform mandatory testing and treatment and can even imprison people who refuse. We have lived our entire lives performing amid a highly infectious aerosolized disease that we keep in check mainly by public health measures. One could imagine that somewhere like New Zealand with no new cases in days, no community spread, and travel bans, that people there could probably start singing together soon."

- 3) **Countermeasures mixed with scientific investigation:** "Some papers suggest we could reduce risk significantly through masking, ventilation, testing, and pre-rehearsal quarantines. We could start putting singers and instrumentalists in different masks and measuring aerosols. Or study an orchestra with a combination of pre-testing for everyone, filters for brass, and hermetically sealed booths for winds, connected to a powered air purifier with holes for sound covered with P100 filters and a microphone inside the booth. The cost of all that would probably be less than the cost to produce a single concert. Many labs already exist that have this material, it's just a matter of people reaching out to see what is possible. I'd love to see our community start working with medical and engineering colleagues to make some strides toward finding solutions. There may be more ways than we realize to make this safer."