



# **HOUSE OF PRAISE COVID-19 POLICY**

*HOP's official policy position related to the COVID-19 Pandemic*

This document defines our policy response to the COVID-19 pandemic as it relates to service attendance, protocols, waivers and preventive measures to be implemented, starting with a template that can serve as a pre-amble on the website, official PR and email communication.

## 1.1 Guidelines Before Attending Church Service

To keep in line with the physical distance measures and to protect you, your family and our community, below are the service guidelines that must be followed before attending an in-person church service:

- If you, a family member or someone you know is feeling ill, please do not attend any of the church services in-person
- Individuals and family members must register to attend in-person church services prior to the service date
- Individuals and family members must sign a waiver agreeing to all guidelines of attending the service in person
- Individuals and family members will receive a communication on the protocol and associated safety procedures before in-person church service starts such as –
  - Registration waiver with mandatory completion
  - Pre-screening prior to arrival to church
  - Use of hand sanitizers at every entry point into the main sanctuary
  - Seating allocation and arrangements in compliance with the physical distancing measures
  - Provision of hand sanitizers across key locations in the church building
  - Protocol of wiping all surfaces regularly after specified time periods
  - Limit to amount of people per service based on the 30% population capacity allowed by the Government of Ontario
  - Organization of inflow and outflow of people in and out of each service including traffic flow and entry/exit into sanctuary
  - The optional use of facemasks and gloves readily available ([Health & Safety Suggestion](#))
- Children below 17 years of age will not be allowed in the church premises during the initial phases of HOP's re-opening plan
- Individuals at higher risk, including those who are over the age of 65 and/or with compromised immune systems and/or underlying medical conditions, will not be permitted access to in-person church services during the initial phases of HOP's re-opening plan

## 1.2 Guidelines During Church Service

To keep in line with the physical distance measures and to protect you, your family and our community, below are the service guidelines during the in-person church service experience that must be followed:

- Anyone who is ill or feeling sick during the in-person service should;
  - Immediately limit their contact with anyone

- Retreat outside of the church premises
  - Inform members of their close circle and members of the pandemic committee
  - Self-isolate for at least 14 days
  - Seek testing if they have COVID-19 symptoms, by visiting one of the [145 assessment centers](#) across Ontario. This step is also encouraged if individuals have concerns that they might have been exposed to COVID-19 or feel they are at risk
- Physical distancing must be practiced, including other public health advice such as frequent hand washing, respiratory etiquette, not touching the eyes, nose or mouth
  - Strictly adhere to the instructions outlined on posters around church
  - Strictly follow floor markings, signage's and church workers directions always
  - Follow the guidelines of physical entry into church such as - the number of people coming into the building at a time etc.
  - Follow the seating allocation and arrangement guidelines at all times
  - Visitors must wear a face covering and hand gloves while on church premises (as stated above, this will be optional; HOP will have some available to be handed out)
  - Individuals and family members will be required to sit in their assigned seat as directed by an Usher
  - Individuals and family members will also have access to the service via the church online live streaming

### **1.3 Guidelines After Church Service:**

To keep in line with the physical distance measures and to protect you, your family and our church community, below are the service guidelines after the church service experience that must be followed:

- Individuals and family members must remain in their assigned seats until directed by ushers on exit procedure
- Individuals and family members must exit immediately as directed through the assigned exit doors
- Re-entry into the church premises after service is prohibited. This is as a result of the extensive cleaning of surfaces that will occur immediately after the service
- Attendees are encouraged to participate in the experience survey for continuous improvement and feedback

### **1.4 Other Considerations**

#### Vulnerable and At-Risk Groups

Some groups are at a higher risk of getting COVID-19. Therefore, It is important that we are mindful of these vulnerable groups within our family and church community. To ensure the safety of these individuals, there will be no access to in-person services at the first phase of HOP's re-opening. The identified vulnerable groups are highlighted below:

- Individuals who are 65 years and above
- Individuals who are receiving treatment that compromises (weakens) their immune system (i.e. chemotherapy, medication for transplants, corticosteroids, TNFinhibitors etc.)

- Individuals that have been diagnosed with a condition that compromises (weakens) their immune system (i.e. lupus, rheumatoid arthritis, other autoimmune disorders)
- Individuals that have been diagnosed with chronic (long-lasting) health condition (i.e. diabetes, emphysema, asthma, heart condition etc.)
- Individuals that regularly go to the hospital and/or health care setting to receive regular treatments (i.e. dialysis, surgery, cancer treatment etc.)

### Returning from Travel

To slow the transmission and spread of COVID-19 in the country, the Government of Canada has put in place an emergency order under the Quarantine Act that applies to all travelers arriving in Canada.

Under this mandatory directive, if you have recently returned to Canada you must self-isolate (quarantine) and stay home whether you have symptoms or not for at least 14 days. Even if you do not have symptoms right away, you are at risk of developing them and infecting others. Furthermore, if you are experiencing symptoms, you will get immediate medical attention when you arrive in Canada.

To learn more, click on the hyperlink - travel advisories regarding the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19)

### **For more information, visit:**

Ontario – COVID-19: Stop the Spread

Public Health Canada

Government of Canada