



# The United Church of Canada L'Église Unie du Canada



First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council  
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## **First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council Covid-19 Update** **July 19, 2021**

**Dear Members of First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council,**

As we enjoy some lovely summer weather, we have much to celebrate. We pulled together, and are now enjoying the easing of some pandemic protocols that have been in place, in one form or another, since March, 2020.

As of July 1, 2021, the province entered into Step 1 of the Together Again Plan. With this new development, I have been asked questions about recommendations for congregational singing, and how the new guidance affects faith-based gatherings. It is important to please note:

***Masks are required while inside places of worship, including when seated, in accordance with the Special Measures Order.***

Please also see the information on the government of Newfoundland and Labrador Covid-19 website for Faith-Based Organizations, including funerals, using this link: [Faith-Based Organizations](#)

***Attendance at faith-based ceremonies is considered a formal gathering; therefore, the number of people who can attend in person is subject to the limits for formal gatherings. There is no limit for drive-in services. Please see [Guidance for Distanced Gatherings](#) for more details.*** (This includes weddings and Funerals)

***Outdoor: 250***

***Indoor: up to 200 or 75 per cent capacity with physical distancing***

***Funeral visitation: up to 25 people at a time***

***To best prevent the spread of COVID-19, places of worship are encouraged to continue hosting services and faith-based activities online or through [drive-in services](#) to promote equitable participation from everyone wishing to attend. Social gatherings that normally occur before and after a service (e.g. communal dinners and lunches) should be avoided at this time.***

With respect to congregational singing, the current guidance is accessed using the following link: [Group Singing and Wind Instrument Playing](#), and includes the following recommendations:

***Consider having one soloist or a small group sing for the entire congregation, ensuring at least 2 metres between the singers and the congregation.***

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***Encourage humming along to recorded music or along with a soloist or small group of singers.***

If you decide to have congregational singing in your church, please ensure that people are distanced properly from one another, unless they are in the same bubble. The worship service should be no longer than 60 minutes, singing in the service should not surpass 30 minutes, and should only be for the last 30 minutes of the service.

Time for at least two air exchanges/rotations should be allotted between sessions (depending on the specifics of the venue). Alternatively, if air exchange information is unavailable, a minimum of one hour of ventilation should be allotted between sessions. Conductors/choral leaders should use and/or adapt physical space accordingly (e.g., different appropriate rooms with concurrent or sequential sessions).

There needs to be a minimum of a 30-minute break between worship services or events to allow time for cleaning/disinfection, to support good ventilation, and to prevent interactions between groups. Cleaning and disinfection should occur after the time allotted for ventilation. In larger facilities, consider staggering group start/stop times to reduce traffic flow in hallways and common areas.

These guidelines will protect those who are not vaccinated, including children who are not able to be vaccinated, and it is also a help to protect us from any variants that might be appearing.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to be in touch at [fmaccuish@united-church.ca](mailto:fmaccuish@united-church.ca) or at 1-800-268-3781 ext. 6156.

Sincerely,

*Faith*

Faith March-MacCuish  
Executive Minister

July 19, 2021