

Westminster United Church
745 Westminster Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3G 1A5
(204) 784-1330

Building Reopening Plan Phases 1 and 2 (Limited Reopening)

Corresponding to:

“Restoring Safe Services Phase 4 COVID-19 Pandemic Response,” The Province of Manitoba
“Phase 2: Reopening in-person Worship during the pandemic,” The United Church of
Canada

First Draft Approved by: Westminster Board

Date: June 25, 2021

Introduction

Back in March, 2020, all of us were faced with a significant and quickly changing health challenge in our community, country and wider world due to the Covid-19 pandemic. All of us were called upon to care for one another, and make decisions and take action for the common good – for the great good. As people of faith, this is how we are called to live always. We are called to love and care for one another and our world, and to ensure our actions to help build and reflect the kingdom of God - the kingdom of compassion and generosity and wellbeing for all.

On March 16, 2020, the Board of Westminster United Church met to discuss the COVID-19 situation and determine next steps. At that time it was decided to close our building to the public until further notice and suspend in-person worship services and programming. Our care and compassion for one another and our community continued forward, as has our worshipping community.

A Re-opening Task Group was mandated by the Board in May, 2020, and began its work in August. The hope had been to reopen for in-person worship by October, but as Winnipeg’s case count continued to rise, the decision was made to continue with online worship until further notice.

The Re-opening Task Group created this document to function as a guide for decision-making for Westminster’s Board and congregation, until such time as the public health situation resolves. The primary goal and focus of these guidelines is to ensure the care, safety and wellbeing of all who come through the doors of Westminster United Church.

Phase I

The following conditions are in place:

1. The building is closed to the public. Only the virtual worship team enters the building weekly to record worship (number of participants based on conditions). Staff are reporting to work or working from home, dependant on health orders.
2. Custodial staff will work their normal hours to facilitate the childcare centre and perform maintenance work and will work with contractors for building maintenance.
3. Meetings of the board and committees are conducted via conference call, Zoom, etc.
4. Church services will be conducted virtually through YouTube, and promoted on Facebook, and on the church website.
Live streaming of services may also occur, dependant on health orders in place.
5. Sunday School will continue to be conducted virtually.
6. The daycare was reopened on July 1, 2020 in accordance with provincial health authority guidelines and protocols. A formal proposal by the Childcare Centre governs their safe operation.
7. Bell Tower Café - As a community partner offering essential service, the Bell Tower Café returned to Westminster on October 30, 2020, working from the Narthex and offering food hampers only, given the following conditions as submitted in their written reopening plan:
 - a. That no food will be served
 - b. That food hampers only be prepared for recipients, who will remain outside the building, and hampers will be delivered by the volunteer team to the door.
 - c. A commitment to safe food handling, sanitizing and clean up of the space once food hamper distribution is completed.

Phase 2

The following will be permitted based on the provincial guidelines in effect at the time of booking, meeting or meeting:

- Staff – staff are permitted to enter the building under the guidelines outlined in Appendix A
- Worship – In person worship may resume, with adherence to provincial guidelines. This may include soft launch(es) including worship team, with ushers, greeters and registration volunteers and a few volunteer congregants.
 - o At this time, visitors to the building during weekday working hours will be permitted, on an appointment basis. Office staff will obtain contact information details when booking the appointment to facilitate contact tracing and the health questions will be asked on booking the appointment, with confirmation that health has not changed since the booking was made. Details on Worship protocols are outlined in Appendix B
- Committees of Westminster Church – Committees of the church may meet once Worship is established and operating successfully. Booking space in advance through the office, sanitizing and wearing of masks is mandatory for all attendees. Each committee will be responsible to clean all touch points and surfaces including tables, chairs, etc. following use. Cleaning supplies will be provided by the custodian prior to the meeting.
- Small groups and other rentals for recording purposes – eg. AA, music groups and performers, etc. once #3. (above) is established safely
- Larger groups and concerts. Acceptance of bookings will resume effective July 2, 2021 for bookings after September 15, 2021. The provincial health guidelines in place at the time of the event will govern how or if the booking can proceed.

Phase 3

A return to normal conditions will be based on the guidelines and timing as announced by the province.