

In response to surging Covid-19 numbers in Manitoba and in attempt to help the health system be able to provide care to all in the province, the Manitoba Government has mandated some additional restrictions, effective Monday November 2. We as a congregation are choosing to comply with the guidelines for two very important reasons:

- It is our Christian calling to obey our governments unless they are asking us to do something that is contrary to God's will or Biblical teaching (Romans 13); none of the government mandates (wearing masks, distancing, smaller group sizes) violate God's teachings; in fact, we could argue they affirm the Biblical call to care for the most vulnerable and to put the needs of others ahead of our own
- It is our Christian calling to love our neighbours and we believe that observing the restrictions placed on us is a powerful demonstration of this essential commandment

We recognize that not all congregations in our community are following what the government has mandated (eg. most churches in Winkler have been singing for weeks and some don't social distance). We've chosen not to do what the majority is doing or to see how much we can get away with; instead we've chosen a path of greatest potential community benefit and care.

Our decisions are in no way a sign that we don't trust God to care for us (as some people suggest); our decisions indicate our deep love for all in our society and a recognition that God invites us to make wise, informed choices. Like Jesus in the wilderness (read Matthew 4:5-7), we don't believe it is right to unnecessarily "put God to the test", simply to satisfy some of our personal desires or discomforts.

Out of an abundance of caution and concern for our community (and to comply with Government Code Orange mandates), we are choosing to make the following changes, effective Monday November 2. With all of you we are longing for the time when we can resume many of the things we used to do. We believe being careful now is the best path to that possibility.

Sunday Morning Worship

- Will continue to be offered In-Person and Online but we will now only be able to welcome a maximum of 75 attenders to our in-person services
- All those attending will be required to pre-register for the service(s) they plan to attend; we will not be able to admit walk-ups
- Persons attending will be required to wear masks when entering, exiting or moving around within the building; masks are encouraged but optional when you are seated in a physically distant way. As in our schools, children grade 4 and younger are exempt from mask use.
- We will limit numbers on the stage to 5 or less.
- All other practices (careful entry and exit; physically distanced seating, etc.) will continue.

In Person GPS will not be offered during the time that we are in Code Orange

A Last Word – There is nothing about Covid-19 that is predictable; things are changing rapidly. We realize that things may change again, as soon as next week or perhaps a few weeks down the road, and that there really won't be a last word till a vaccine is created and effective.

However, this is our plan for now while we're in Code Orange. Please continue to pray for the church leadership as we make decisions and please, let's remain united in Christ even if we don't all interpret all decisions in the same way. We are all seeking to be faithful and "to be an inviting, Christ-centred community in which people are **being transformed to live like Jesus.**"

On behalf of Church Council Executive and Staff (and in consultation with medical professionals)