

# ***In This Together at All Saints' Westboro – A Plan for In-Person Services in the Yellow Stage August 2021***

## **Introduction**

COVID-19 continues to circulate in our community but with increasing levels of vaccination we are seeing changes in our approach to gathering. Public Health officials are urging us all to remain vigilant because of Covid variants in the community. All Saints' Westboro, along with its sister parishes of the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa, continues to embrace a new way of worshipping and gathering in the months ahead.

Jesus says, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there among them." (Matthew 18:20). Communal worship is always of value, no matter how few are present. We will endeavour to make in-person worship as safe as possible while also providing live online worship to ensure our entire church family is included in our services.

We have a significant duty of care to the congregation and a responsibility to mitigate and limit risks. We do not want one single case of COVID-19 traced to our congregation because we failed to care for those who gather with us. By following our Diocesan plan, we have returned to limited in-person Sunday worship while continuing to provide worship and connection to our entire faith community.

Informing all our decisions is the goal of ensuring that All Saints' is a welcoming place of fellowship, communion, and inclusion.

The safety of all church members as well as staff and those served by this faith community needs to be at the centre of any decisions not clearly defined by our Diocesan plan.

## ***In This Together***

The Anglican Diocese of Ottawa's plan is called *In This Together* and serves as our guide as we begin offering in-person worship and beyond. Version 3.2 of the plan was released on July 21, 2021 and this document has been updated to reflect the changes it has introduced. It can be found at the following website:

<https://www.ottawa.anglican.ca/index.php/covid-19>

*In This Together* outlines four stages: **Red**, **Amber**, **Yellow** and **Green**.

All Saints' Westboro, as well as all the parishes of the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa, was in the **Red** Stage from mid-March, 2020 until moving to the **Amber** Stage on September 1, 2020. On December 26, 2020 the Diocese returned to the **Red** Stage. On July 6, 2021 we returned to the **Amber** Stage, and now on August 3, 2021 we will move to the **Yellow** stage. During all of this time we have done the following:

- Our services have been pre-recorded and shared online weekly and then we moved to Zoom services and in-person worship when allowed in a hybrid model.
- Our church building has been closed to the public.
- The church office has been closed and staff have worked from home. Staff have come in to the office to check mail and arrange for bank deposits. Masks have been worn and physical distancing maintained.
- Committee meetings and small group meetings have taken place as needed online.
- The Food Bank has remained open, operating with dedicated volunteers and implementing masking and physical distancing practices.

On August 3, the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa transitioned to the **Yellow** stage. The rest of this document serves to outline policies, procedures and practices that shape our church life during this continued **Yellow** stage.

We ask for your patience and flexibility as we navigate this new reality together. Our plans will need adjusting as we continue to offer in-person worship in a hybrid model sharing our worship online.

### **Sunday Morning Worship**

- One Anglican Sunday worship service will be offered each week at 9:30 am. We also hold the Wednesday 10:30 am service in the Church.
- We currently have a maximum number of 80 people, including clergy, musicians, sides-people and anyone else assisting with worship. This represents 30% of our maximum capacity for the Church.
- The 9:30 am worship service will be live-streamed and recorded, so that it can be viewed either live on Sunday morning at 9:30 am or at a later date. Instructions for participating in online worship will be sent via clergy's weekly email and will be available on the All Saints' Westboro website.
- Every effort will be made to prevent in-person church attendees from being visible on the online broadcast unless actively participating in leading worship, i.e. readers or soloists. However, it is possible that all in-person attendees be visible on the live and recorded broadcasts.

### **Pre-Registration**

- Everyone attending a Sunday 9:30 a.m. service must pre-register using an online form found on the All Saints' Westboro website, or by calling the church office.  
**Registration will open on Monday mornings at 9 am for the following Sunday** and be on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Once the Sunday service is full, registrations will no longer be accepted.
- Names and contact information (phone numbers and email addresses) must be provided for contact tracing. We will keep this information secure. The lists will be destroyed after one month.
- Desired social grouping will also be requested upon registration for seating purposes.

- We are mindful that as a church, part of our role is to welcome everyone to our worship. However, in these challenging times there will be very limited capacity to welcome newcomers to our services. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis. If a decision is made on a Sunday morning to allow a newcomer to attend a service, that person must provide contact information and abide by the same requirements as those who have pre-registered.
- Before arriving at church, attendees are asked to self-assess for any of the usual symptoms of COVID-19 and to stay home if they are feeling unwell.

### **On Sunday Morning – Arriving**

- Sunday morning protocols, including cleaning procedures outlined by Public Health and the *In This Together* plan for the building will be adhered to when the building is open for public use, as per **Appendix A**. This is a working document shared with our partner congregation, First United.
- Attendees should enter the church at the Richmond Road (courtyard) door or from the Madison Avenue parking lot door. They should exit using the same door and are asked not to meet in the hallway or vestibule for discussions with others. The rest of the church will be closed to public use. The washroom at the back of the sanctuary will be the only one available.
- Masks must be worn at all times by all participants while inside the church. The only exception to this is that masks may be briefly removed when receiving Holy Communion (see below).
- It is preferable that attendees bring their own mask. Masks will be available for those who do not bring their own.
- Outdoor clothing must stay with the attendee; clothing cannot be hung up.
- All visitors must sanitize their hands upon entry and exit. Hand sanitizer made with at least 60% alcohol will be available at the entrance and exit and throughout the church.
- Households and individuals must keep at least two metres apart in all directions from other households or individuals at all times. Attendees are to remain in their assigned seats and are strongly discouraged from moving about the Church except when participating in liturgical functions, coming forward to receive communion, or when accessing the Washroom at the Richmond road door.
- Pre-registration will allow for indicating which attendees are part of the same household. A seating chart will indicate where each pre-registered attendee is to sit. **Note that this may not be your “regular pew”!** Once seated, moving around the room will be strongly discouraged.
- A service bulletin, prepared with sufficient sanitizing precautions, will be made available and will be self-serve.
- Water is not available at the back of the Church so please bring your own water or coffee.

### **On Sunday Morning – During the Service**

- Well-ventilated spaces are safer – doors and windows will be open when possible.

- There will be no physical touching during any part of the service or before or afterwards. This includes sharing the Peace (although exchanging the Peace without touching will be encouraged).
- The person offering the homily will read the Gospel.
- Parishioners are encouraged to donate their offerings through pre-approved withdrawal or online. An offering plate will be available at the back of the church. The person counting the collection should wear gloves.
- The congregation are allowed to sing but they must wear a mask and maintain physical distance.
- Wind and brass instruments are not permitted.
- In September, a limited version of Sunday school and the nursery will be available. In August children will be required to stay with their families in their pews. The play area/craft table for children at the back of the church will not be available.
- Baptisms may occur during a Sunday service with the additional provision that a separate bowl of water should be used for each candidate during baptisms.

### **On Sunday Morning – Holy Communion**

- All surfaces, vessels and hands will be sanitized before and after the Eucharist.
- The celebrant will wear a mask at all times and will sanitize their hands just before the Eucharistic Prayer and again before the distribution of communion.
- The celebrant will consecrate a priest's host and individual wafers for those receiving communion. The wafers will be covered and placed on the side of the altar during the Eucharistic Prayer.
- After the breaking of the bread, the celebrant will receive communion in both kinds (from the priest's host and the consecrated wine) and will put on their mask afterwards.
- The celebrant will then sanitize their hands again and distribute the consecrated wafers to those receiving, making sure not to touch their hands. The congregation will proceed forward to communion when directed by the sidesperson who will provide them with hand sanitizer when it is their turn to receive. Each person will maintain an appropriate social distance from the person in front of them. Families may come forward to receive together.
- Communion will be available in both kinds: bread and wine. As always it is fully sufficient to receive in just one kind; receiving just the bread is considered full communion. Information about the use of the Common Cup can be found in **Appendix B** of this document.
- The celebrant and the Deacon will be the only communion administrators for now.
- People must sanitize their hands before receiving, leave their masks on when receiving the wafer, then remove the mask if they choose to receive the wine from the Common Cup. As always, *intinction of the bread in the wine is never permitted*. They then should immediately put their masks back on and sanitize their hands again at one of the side aisle stations before returning to their seats.
- After all have received communion, the celebrant will sanitize their hands again.

### **During the Week**

- In-person small group gatherings are discouraged but can be permitted if we abide by size limits, maintain social-distancing and wear masks. The Incumbent will provide more guidance on a case-by-case basis.
- Funerals and weddings may occur in the church building following the protocols outlined for in-person worship.
- Office staff can work in the church office but are permitted to continue working from home if they wish to do so.
- A log-book of those who are in the office/choir room must be maintained.
- Staff will ensure frequent sanitization of high-touch areas, such as counter tops, doorknobs, and photocopier.
- Pastoral care done in person requires hands sanitization, masks worn and physical distancing kept.
- Non-church group gatherings and rentals may resume on a case-by-case basis, with the number of participants restricted to 1/3 of the room capacity. Groups should provide a written declaration stating they will safely maintain masking, sanitizing, registering and physical distancing protocols.
- The Food Bank will continue its operations using its protocols developed for its operation during the previous Stages.

Beyond the **Yellow** stage is the **Green** stage, with restrictions being progressively lifted for each subsequent stage. All Saints' Westboro continues to follow the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa's *In This Together* plan when moving to subsequent stages and all the Provincial and Local Health guidelines. Again, details on each stage are available in the *In This Together* document:

<https://www.ottawa.anglican.ca/index.php/covid-19>

## **Appendix A: Sunday Morning Protocol in the **Yellow** Stage All Saints' Westboro**

**August 2021**

Beginning August 3rd, All Saints' Westboro Anglican and First United have returned to limited in-person worship services simultaneously with on-line participation.

### **Timing:**

- 9:30-10:45 All Saints' Anglican will conduct their service (leadership and set up will begin at 8:30) Following the service, participants will exit the church/sanctuary in a timely fashion and any greeting between priests and parishioners as well as distanced visiting will take place in the courtyard.
- 10:45-11:00 In-between service cleaning, including wiping of all surfaces, sanctuary washroom high-touch surfaces, and the changing of microphones. We are not required to wipe seating surfaces.

11:15-12:30 First United will conduct their service  
(leadership and pre-service preparation will begin at 10:00 in room 7/8)

### **Church/Sanctuary Set Up:**

- Table/altar at centre in its traditional location.
- Piano to the right and behind of Presiders
- Lectern to the left of Presiders
- Computer/zoom/sound management behind choir chairs
- Microphones for singer(s) on the platform.
- Every other pew will be used.
- The sanctuary will be fully decluttered.
- Hand sanitizer will be available at all entrances and on the table beside the presiders/singer(s).
- All exit doors will remain open to facilitate ventilation, weather permitting.
- All windows will be opened to facilitate ventilation.

### **On-line Participation**

- All Saints' Anglican and First United will provide their own computer hardware as well as iPad for sound management and the technicians to run and manage the zoom service and computer connections.
- There is no limit to the number of people who can participate online, and the link will be made available weekly through an e-mail invitation as well as posted on the website.
- The courtesies of on-line participation will be in the weekly invitation posted on each congregation's web-site.
- For First United, there are two persons who are identified as Zoom Hospitality and one Zoom Host who will be present in the sanctuary to monitor the safety and effectiveness of the on-line experience.
- For All Saints' Westboro, online worship will also be available via Zoom.

### **In-person participation**

- The total number of people in the building is 30% of building capacity (one person for 4 square meters of publicly accessible floor space). This includes everyone in the building not just those in the room being used. This is a maximum of 100 persons for First United, and 80 for All Saints' Westboro; however, in the church/sanctuary the limit is 80 including leadership.
- Pre-registration is required (including contact tracing information) and each congregation is responsible for its own registration.
- For First United, all participants must complete the self-screening process prior to attending. For All Saints' Westboro, participants are asked to self-assess and not attend if exhibiting any of the symptoms of COVID-19.

- Those attending worship at All Saints' Westboro will enter and exit from the front sanctuary doors on Richmond Road, or from the Madison door.
- Details for entering the building and traffic flow will be communicated to participants.
- Attendees are to arrive 10 to 20 minutes before the service and be seated no later than 5 minutes before the start time.
- Greeters, masked and maintaining distance, will welcome all participants and confirm that participants have registered and/or self-screened. There is no physical touching when greeting. There will be limited capacity for non-registrants; however, they must provide contact information and/or complete the self-screening questionnaire before entry.
- All participants, attendees and leaders must wear a mask or face coverings from the point of entry to the building and during the service/meeting/gathering. Those without a mask or face covering will be offered a face mask or denied entry to the building if they are unable to wear a mask.
- All participants, attendees and leaders must keep at least 2 meters apart in all directions from other households (bubble) or individuals.
- Outdoor clothing must stay with the participant; clothing cannot be hung up.
- Designated seating areas will be identified and participants will be directed where to sit. Once seated, moving around the room will be strongly discouraged.
- A service outline, prepared with sufficient sanitizing precautions, will be made available and will be self-serve.
- During the services
  - A non-touching distanced ritual for passing the peace will occur.
  - For First United, those making a presentation may remove mask or face shield while speaking as long as they maintain a minimum of 4 meters from attendees, and soloists must maintain a distance of 8 meters from attendees. For All Saints' Westboro, all present, including presider, readers and singers must wear a mask at all times, except when receiving Holy Communion.
  - Leaders/soloists must use a microphone to amplify voice rather than natural projection.
  - Attendees who participate in any singing must wear masks.
  - The offering plate will not be passed. Offering plates will be available on the back table.
  - The celebration of Eucharist/Holy Communion will follow the safety protocols established by each congregation.
- Greeters will ensure there is no crowding in the exit by directing attendees when they can exit.
- Each church will only touch their tablecloths and candles.

- The collection will be collected by one person after each service and brought to the office for safekeeping until counting can occur. For ASW, this person is the priest or warden. For First United, this person is TBD.
- Weather permitting, there is opportunity for after-service distanced conversation in the courtyard.
- Only the sanctuary washroom will be available.
- The difference in allowed activities between congregations is due to the fact that ASW must abide by the guidelines spelled out in the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa's *In This Together* plan, while First United is following Ottawa Public Health guidelines.

## **Appendix B: Receiving from the Common Cup**

### **COVID-19 and the common cup**

Bishop Shane has announced that churches in our diocese can resume use of the common cup in Holy Communion. This change, after 16 months of pandemic hygiene measures, may be worrying for many of us. Please be assured this step is only being taken because it is known to be very low risk. What follows is a summary of a paper by Bishop Shane's public health advisor, Rev. Michael Garner. Michael is the associate incumbent of St. Thomas the Apostle church in Ottawa, but before joining the priesthood, he worked in public health and epidemiology for more than 20 years, including 13 years as an infectious disease epidemiologist at the Public Health Agency of Canada. The full-length paper was written for the national House of Bishops.

People have questioned the hygiene of sharing chalices during communion for more than 100 years, but during the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s, research showed the risk of transmitting HIV by using a common cup was very low. Since then, research on infection risks at communion has focused on whether viruses or bacteria can be found in the common cup after the service, and so far there is no documented evidence of diseases being spread by sharing the cup.

People also worry that during a regular communion service, the chalice will be contaminated by the saliva of the participants. While it's true a shared cup could transmit infection through saliva, the risk is extremely low, with no documented cases of any disease ever being spread that way. In the case of COVID-19 the risk is even lower because it's spread by aerosols and droplets: the fact is, the risk of catching COVID is far greater from breathing air exhaled by an infectious person next to you than from sharing a common cup.

It's essential, however, that in addition to wiping the chalice carefully after each participant drinks from it, we maintain the practices that have kept us safe so far: keep screening people to ensure no one who has symptoms, or who has recently travelled

(or who has been exposed to others who have) do not attend services in person. Keep everyone physically distant during Holy Communion.

However, the most important thing is that you do what you feel is best for yourself and your loved ones. In the Anglican church, communicating in either kind, just bread or just wine, is considered full communion. You need not share the cup if the idea makes you uneasy. Simply fold your hands across your chest when it is offered.