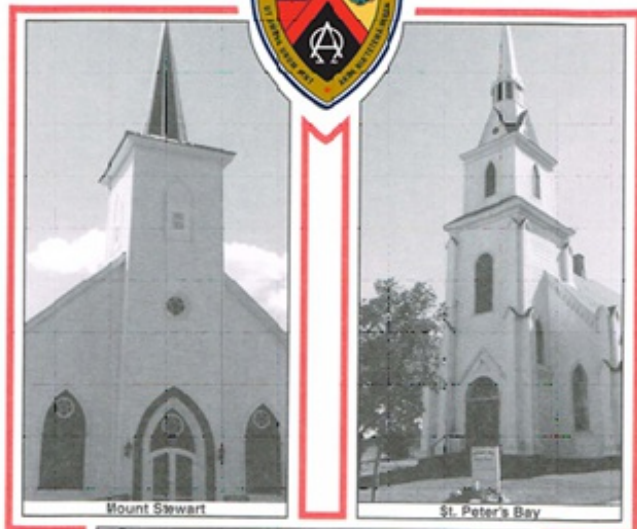


*Mount Stewart • Morell • St. Peter's Bay*  
**Pastoral Charge**



**COVID-19**

**Pastoral Charge Operational Plan**

**Approved:  
July 28, 2020**

## **Introduction**

1. This COVID-19 Operational Plan is prepared to promote safety by mitigating the risk of disease transmission in the three churches of the Mount Stewart-Morell-St. Peter's Bay Pastoral Charge.
2. Based on a minimum physical distancing of 6 feet the maximum capacity for each church, without families sitting together, is as follows:

Mount Stewart	- 28 people (absent family groups)
Morell	- 33 people (absent family groups)
St. Peter's Bay	- 25 people (absent family groups)

## **Maximum Attendance**

3. Attendance numbers could increase up to the current provincially authorized maximum of 50 persons when allowing families of the same household to sit together. Those family groupings, however, would still need to maintain 6-foot physical distance from others.
4. The maximum of 50 people within one area is based on the June 26th Renew PEI Phase 4 guidance, and will be adjusted should that guidance change.

## **Reopening for Worship**

5. Along with the physical limitation and the current state of uncertainty associated with COVID-19, the Pastoral Charge does not appear to be in a rush to reopen for regular worship services. At the time of writing, no date is determined for reopening. We do need, however, to be prepared for funerals or other unexpected events, which would be required to meet the guidance of this operational plan.
6. The Rev. Kevin Dingwell and others plan to continue to provide a weekly online video church service for the Pastoral Charge, at least until such time as regular services resume within the churches.

## **Gatherings Other than Worship**

7. Although this Operational Plan focuses primarily on the worshipping communities, the limitations and guidelines are to be applied for all church meetings or gatherings in the sanctuaries or church halls. Any exceptions for these non-worship activities are noted in this document.
8. Use of the facilities by outside groups will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Any outside groups using the buildings shall meet the minimum standards of this operational plan, have their own operational plan available if requested, and be responsible for fully cleaning any areas used.

## **Approvals and Amendments**

9. This Operational Plan is issued under the authority of the Official Board Executive on the advice of the ad-hoc COVID-19 Committee.
10. This plan is subject to change at any time, on the approval of the Official Board Executive, to meet the requirements of either the PEI provincial authorities or those of the Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters Regional Council in order to maintain the health and safety of our communities through the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Prior to Attending Events**

11. Anyone planning to attend events (regular services, funerals, weddings, meetings, fundraising or other activities, etc.) will be required to self-screen and not attend should they meet any of the following circumstances:
  - a. Currently experiencing symptoms of COVID-19,
  - b. Have recently been in contact with anyone diagnosed with COVID-19 or who has been recently exposed to it, or
  - c. Have visited areas outside the “Atlantic Bubble” and have not yet completed 14-day self-isolation.

## **Signage**

12. Signage will be posted at all church and hall entrances requiring those meeting the previously listed circumstances to avoid attending at this time.
13. In addition to the identified exposure and travel issues, the signage will list the following symptoms:
  - high fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath,
  - sore throat, stuffy or runny nose, weakness,
  - and/or acute loss of sense of taste and smell.

## **Physical Distancing**

14. All attendees are required to maintain 6-foot physical distancing, prior to, during, and after any event. This includes both while inside our sanctuaries and halls or outside on church grounds.
15. To assist in determining 6-foot distancing, indicators will be placed inside, as well as around the outside entrances.
16. Some church pews will be marked as unusable to ensure minimum 6-foot distancing, and indicators will be placed on the pews or the seats to emphasize this requirement.

## **Special Precautions**

17. The wearing of masks is recommended anytime 6-foot physical distancing is difficult to maintain.
18. Shaking of hands or other physical contact is prohibited.
19. All are encouraged to use the hand sanitizer that will be available at all entrances.
20. Neither Order of Service nor announcement bulletins will be distributed.
21. All literature, hymn books, Bibles, etc. will be removed from the entry and seats.
22. Coats and hats are to be kept with individuals and not left in vestibules or coat racks.
23. Offering plates, when required, will not be passed from one to another. They can be secured in a stable location to accept donations as parishioners arrive or depart. Those counting the offering after a service or event shall wear gloves, and ensure plates are cleaned after each use.
24. There will be no choir or congregational singing.
25. All pew cushions will be removed and placed in storage.

## **Greeters at Worship Events**

26. A Greeter, wearing a mask, will open the door, and welcome the attendees.
27. For contact tracing purposes, the Greeter will record the name and phone numbers of all attendees (one record for family from same household to include number of members).
28. These sign in sheets for contact tracing will be kept for a minimum of 30 days.

## **Seating at Worship Events**

29. Once greeted and after having names recorded for contact tracing, all attendees are to be guided by assigned usher to appropriate seating which will respect physical distancing requirements.
30. At the end of the event, ushers will coordinate departures.
31. Seating will be used in a manner that limits the need for passing by other attendees. (For example, first arrivals to be seated furthest from entry, and departures to begin with those closest to entry.)

## **During Worship Events**

32. Care must be taken during worship events to avoid contravening physical distancing guidance.
33. Items used during worship shall not be passed from one person to another.
34. Worship leaders, readers, soloists, and any others projecting their voice shall maintain 12-foot distancing from others and shall not share microphones, pulpits, lecterns, or books and papers.
35. Communion, when offered, will only be served in accordance with all public health and Regional Council guidelines.

## **Socials & Receptions**

36. Without specific permission from the Church Board (St. Peter's), Stewards (Morell), or Management Committee (Mt. Stewart) there will be no social time or reception or use of the kitchens before, during or after any event.
37. Should any exception be authorized in special circumstances all food preparation and service will meet provincial requirements found at:  
<https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/health-and-wellness/food-premises-guidance>

## **Sunday Schools**

38. Sunday School classes will only resume with permission of the respective Session.
39. When a Sunday School does resume it will follow all the same protocols and procedures used for any other church activity, as well as any additional safety and physical protocols put in place for those attending kindergartens or elementary schools.

## **Church Meetings**

(includes such events as formal or ad hoc Committees, internal planning events, Prayer Shawl Groups, classes other than Sunday School, etc.)

40. All applicable protocols and procedures contained in this operational plan will also apply for meetings and special events with reasonable exceptions authorized by congregational leadership.
41. For example, meetings would not normally require Greeters or Ushers and could use the attendance sheet in recorded minutes for contact tracing.
42. To maintain physical distancing and avoid sharing of material, projection equipment should be used for sharing agendas or other documents.

## **Recorded Worship**

43. The committee recognizes that even after the decision is made to reopen the churches some regular attendees may not wish to attend public events or are limited in doing so through self screening and/or other personal or medical concerns.
44. As the Morell congregation has installed audio/visual recording equipment and has a volunteer team trained to use it, that service will be recorded and either DVDs or computer files will be made available to anyone of the Pastoral Charge family who requests a copy.

## **Cleaning**

45. Volunteer cleaning groups will be established under the guidance of the Church Board (St. Peter's), Stewards (Morell), or Management Committee (Mt. Stewart).
46. All exposed contact surfaces will be sanitized with Health Canada approved cleaning supplies after every event. These include but are not limited to backs of pews, microphones, musical instruments (if used), chairs, tables, door handles, light switches, washrooms and all other highly used areas.
47. Cleaning supplies (wipes, hand sanitizer, etc.) will be available in each washroom.

## **Pastoral Charge Office**

48. The Pastoral Charge Office space with phone, internet, photocopier, files and church supplies is housed in the Mount Stewart church.
49. Physical distancing, cleaning and sanitation protocol for a small working office will be enforced.
50. Entry will normally be through the side door of the Church, and the office usage will be limited by physical distancing and only to those authorized by the Administrator or Minister.
51. Names and phone numbers of those attending the office will normally be recorded for contact tracing.

## **Mount Stewart - St. John's United Church**

52. The attached Hall with washroom and kitchen space will follow all the related COVID-19 Operational Plan requirements.
53. To encourage physical distancing, yet facilitate movement to and from the sanctuary and the church hall with the washroom, the two hallways (Choir Rooms) will be labelled for one-way travel.

## **Morell - Peter Gordon Memorial United Church**

54. Elevator use will be for one passenger at a time. If assistance is needed, the Elevator operator only should touch the controls, maintain physical distance as much as feasible and wear a mask.
55. The basement hall with washroom and kitchen space will follow all the related COVID-19 Operational Plan requirements.
56. The Morell Church seating capacity could be increased for special occasions by using the television in the basement but still applying entry and exit protocols and all physical distancing requirements. See Provincial guidance at: <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/health-and-wellness/multiple-gatherings-guidance>

## **St. Peter's Bay United Church**

57. The attached Hall with a single washroom and a meeting space will follow all the related COVID-19 Operational Plan requirements.
58. Seating capacity is higher and more efficient with families in the outside pews and singles in the inside pews.

## **Symptoms**

59. Public Health says symptoms shown by people with COVID-19 have included:
  - a fever above 38 C
  - a new cough or worsening chronic cough
  - sore throat
  - runny nose
  - headache
  - new onset of fatigue
  - new onset of muscle pain
  - diarrhea
  - loss of sense of taste or smell
  - difficulty breathing
  - In children, symptoms have also included purple markings on the fingers and toes.

## **COVID-19 Committee**

Andrea Studzinski  
Don MacEwen, Chair  
Donald MacSwain  
Eric Bowley  
Jennifer McQuaid  
Lawrence Coffin  
Rev. Kevin Dingwell  
Susan Anderson  
William McQuaid