

**ST. ANDREW'S
UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX SOBOR PARISH**

9831 - 75 STREET
EDMONTON, ALBERTA
CANADA T6A 2Y8



May 6, 2021,

Слава Ісусу Христу! Слава навіки! Glory Be to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!

Dear Parish Members and Friends;

Re: COVID-19 Pandemic Re-opening Plan

We pray that all of you and your families are safe and healthy.

On behalf of the Board of Management, **it is a privilege for me to greet you and present to you this updated COVID-19 Pandemic Re-opening Plan. The Plan's new updates are shown in red colored text and previously published re-opening plan modifications have been converted to black color.**

The Re-opening Plan developed by the Board of Management is based on the *Guidance for Places of Worship* (Government of Alberta) and the *Checklist for Reopening of Churches* (UOCC). Both documents are included. This update adds some clarity to some of the items in the reopening plan.

With the Blessing of His Grace, Bishop Ilarion, Sunday Divine Liturgy services at the Parish were re-launched beginning July 19, 2020 following the closure of all UOCC parishes nationally. To date, attendance has ranged from 12 to **32** worshippers, which includes the Parish Priest, a palamar, a cantor, 1 or 2 greeters, and 1 or 2 ushers. The average attendance is around 20 worshippers. **Only for 2021 Easter Sunday service the attendance was close to the maximum allowed of 75 as the Tillie Kurysh Hall was opened (expanding the area where worshippers could be) and a closed circuit audio and video signal was sent from the rented camera in the nave and projected using the big screen TV in the Hall.**

As of now, Divine Liturgy services are held only on Sunday; services on Holy Days falling during weekdays (Monday to Saturday) will not be held until further notice.

All of us have a responsibility in preventing and reducing the spread of Covid-19. The Parish Board of Management has the following responsibilities:

- ❖ **Initially developing and modifying as required the Re-opening Plan**
- ❖ Insuring and monitoring that the Reopening Plan is adhered to and followed,
- ❖ Assuring worshippers that the environment for worship services is clean and sanitized, and

- ❖ Assuring worshippers that the procedures and practices that have been implemented for worship services are in the best interests of their health such that their health is not comprised.

The re-launching of worship services does not mean a return to how we previously entered the Church and how we celebrated the Divine Liturgy. Things are different. Procedures and practices vary from parish to parish depending upon each parish's plan for reopening.

The Parish's Reopening Plan is presented below:

St. Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Sobor Parish Reopening Plan for Worship Services

Limitations

1. We encourage you to stay at home if you:
 - a. Have been diagnosed with Covid-19, live with someone with Covid-19, or been exposed to someone with Covid-19 in the past 14 days.
 - b. Are experiencing a cough, fever, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, flu-like symptoms, or have underlying or compromised medical conditions.
 - c. Have travelled outside Canada in the past 14 days.
2. Number of worshippers is **limited in accordance with the restrictions issued by Alberta Health Services which promotes physical distancing. Refer to the AHS restrictions for current restrictions.** Only every second pew will be used for seating. Please note that depending upon the number of single worshippers and the number of family (2 adults and children or combination thereof), it may be difficult to seat **the maximum number of worshippers, especially when the maximum number of attendees is small.** The **maximum number of worshippers** includes the priest, palamar, cantor, **greeters, and ushers.**
3. To manage fairness, equal access, and ensuring adherence to provincial guidelines, attendees will be determined in advance and you will be informed when you can attend a service.
4. **Especially with lower maximum number of worshippers allowed, if you attend often, you may be asked to not come every Sunday and take turns in attending a service, which allows others to attend.**
5. **It is only to your benefit to call ahead of time (as described below) to reserve a spot for yourself.** If you come on a Sunday that is not designated for your attendance, you may not be allowed to enter due to attendance limitations.
6. The only areas of the Parish Building Complex that are open to worshippers are the west entrance to the Atrium, the Atrium, the Vestibule, the Church Nave, the upstairs washroom, the west entrance to the Cultural Hall for those requiring use of the elevator, and the stairs from the Cultural Hall doors leading up to the Atrium. The Nursery is open to accommodate one family. **The choir loft may be used for only the Cantors when there are more than one Cantor singing responses.**
7. The upstairs kitchen, classrooms, Tillie Kurysh Hall, Cultural Hall basement, kitchen downstairs, choir loft, coat room in the vestibule, and the washrooms downstairs are closed to worshippers.

Attending a Worship Service

8. If you are prepared **to follow this re-opening plan and want to** attend a worship service, then you:

- a. In order to increase your chance of attending a worship service, you should contact Ernest Skakun by email at BLUEMALVA@shaw.ca or by telephone at 780-434-0543 no later than THURSDAY prior to the Sunday that you want to attend, indicating how many from your household that will be attending the service and their names. Your phone number or email address is also required for contact tracing purposes only should it be necessary. Your cooperation in meeting this request is greatly appreciated since it allows time to develop an Attendance Sheet and a tentative seating plan and determine whether the number of worshippers can be accommodated without exceeding the maximum number allowed.
 - b. Will be notified no later than FRIDAY if you can attend the service.
 - c. Will be attending at your own risk.
 - d. Need to bring the following:
 - i. Filled water bottle since the water fountain is shut off and getting water from other water taps is discouraged
 - ii. Gloves for additional protection
 - iii. Mask
 - iv. Personal disinfectant
 - v. Your own Prayer book since all prayer books and other materials have been removed from the pews
9. AHS often updates the maximum numbers of worshippers (for example: the maximum was decreased to 15% of rated capacity on February 15, then further limited to only 15 announced on May 4). During the reservation process, you will find out what the current limit of attendance is at that time.
10. Masks and gloves will be provided if you do not have any, **but we encourage you to bring your own in order to save cost borne by the Parish.** Hand sanitizers will be available for hand sanitization.

Procedures Upon Arrival

11. Upon arriving at the Parish Property, which includes the parking lots, please wear a mask and maintain a distance of 2 meters between members from different households or cohorts. **This physical spacing is not monitored or policed by the Board or others from the Parish; we simply ask for you to take personal responsibility in this regard and to follow this and all other AHS restrictions to help maintain your own safety.**
 - a. Upon arriving at the doors leading to the Atrium, you will be greeted by greeter(s).
 - b. Greeter(s) will ask you to wear a mask if you are not doing so. The mask must cover your mouth and nose and must be worn at all times while you are on Church Property. You must maintain physical distancing at all times while on Church Property and especially throughout the entire Divine Liturgy.
 - c. You will be asked to sanitize your hands.
 - d. You will be asked to wear gloves (optional).
 - e. You will be asked questions about whether you are experiencing any of the symptoms for Covid-19, general health, exposure to Covid-19, and travel outside Edmonton/Canada.
 - f. You will be asked whether you consent to have your name and telephone number or email be provided to Alberta Health Services should a worshipper test positive for Covid-19. This is to aid contact tracing. Sharing this information with Alberta Health Services is voluntary. Consent will be provided orally.
 - g. Your responses to 8e and 8f above will be recorded on an Attendance Sheet.
 - h. Attendance Sheets will be kept for 14 days and only used for the purposes of public

- health tracing and for scheduling worshippers for future worship services.
- i. You may have to wait in the vestibule before being ushered to a pew.
 - j. You will be asked to have your children be seated with you. You are responsible for looking after your children.
 - k. You will be asked to take your personal belongings such as coats, boots to the pews with you since the coat racks will be closed.
 - l. Worshippers should remain in their assigned seating place for the entire Worship Service. Worshippers should refrain from moving about the Church nave during the Worship Service. If you have to move, please follow the arrow markings on the floor.

The Divine Liturgy

12. The following changes have been made to the serving of the Divine Liturgy **to promote physical distancing and to limit objects that are usually touched by worshippers in order to help limit opportunities to transmit virus between worshippers:**
- a. Memorial candles will not be handled by worshippers, however, at the time of a memorial service (panakhyda) for the deceased held immediately after a Sunday Divine Liturgy, the following apply.
 - i) **All worshippers attending the memorial service are to remain in your pews, allowing those who wish to depart.**
 - ii) **Please remain in your pews for the duration of the memorial service to not cause a congestion close to the small altar.**
 - iii) Long handled wooden candles are not available.
 - iv) Only wax candles will be available.
 - v) The Palamar will hand out candles to family members and those worshippers who wish to hold candles.
 - vi) At the conclusion of the memorial service, worshippers upon venerating the cross and as they begin moving to the NE exit door, will place their candles in a box or container, which will be provided. Worshippers may also place their candles in the stands commemorating those who have deceased.
 - vii) Candles placed in the box will be cleaned and saved for further use.
 - viii) The above procedures will be announced by the priest prior to the start of the memorial service.
 - b. Communal candles will not be available.
 - c. Worshippers are NOT permitted to light candles for health and for those who are deceased. HOWEVER, if you would like a candle to be lit for health and/ or for those deceased, please call Fr. Yuriy in advance, ask an Usher (if applicable) as you are about to be seated, or ask the Palamar and inform any of them of the number of candles for health and/or those who are deceased. The candles will be lit and placed in the appropriate stands by either Fr. Yuriy, the Usher (if applicable), or the Palamar.
 - d. There will be no confession and communion until further notice as directed by the Hierarchs of the UOCC.
 - e. There will be no altar servers. Note that we allow Fr. Yuriy's sons to serve as Altar Servers since they are from the same household **and physical distancing between them and Fr. Yuriy is not necessary.**
 - f. Congregational singing and replies are NOT allowed **per the restrictions of AHS. We ask worshippers to please hum the tune or say the words to responses if they so wish. This request includes the often sung Symbol of Faith (Creed), The Lord's Prayer, and The Prayer Before Holy Communion, and during our custom end-of-**

- month singing of “**Mnohaya Lita**” to anniversary and birthday celebrants. The singing of Mnohaya Lita and Vichnaya Pamyat is limited to the priest and the cantor.
- g. Prosfora will not be served.
 - h. Sunday bulletins and other printed materials will not be distributed.
 - i. There will be no physical touching (kissing, hand, or forehead) of icons, crosses, or relics.
 - j. Veneration of icons, crosses, and relics will be a deep and reverent bow and at a distance of at least 2 metres.
 - k. There will be no collection for donations. Instead donations will be by drop box, placed near the front door entrance to the Church nave.
 - l. There will be no Church School until further notice.
 - m. There will be no fellowship following the Divine Liturgy.

Facilities

13. The entire Parish Building Complex will NOT be open, specifically:
- a. Only the nave, sanctuary, vestibule, altar, altar preparation rooms, atrium, west Cultural Hall stairs, Elevator, Church stairs leading to the Atrium, and handicap washroom upstairs will be open.
 - b. The Nursery will be open but to only one family.
 - c. Classrooms, Tillie Kurysh Hall, Cultural Hall basement, choir loft, and coat room will be taped off and closed.
 - d. Water fountains will be shut off.
 - e. The number of worshippers at any one service **is set by the restrictions of AHS.**
 - f. Only every second pew will be used with alternating pews across the centre aisle.
 - g. **There will be either one or two cohorts seated in a pew depending on the count of the people within each cohort and the number of overall attendees.**

Routing and Movement

14. Walking into the Parish will be controlled, one way into the facility and into the Church nave, one way out to help maintain physical distancing and keep you safer. There will be signage and ushers to help you. Please follow the arrow markings on the floor and follow the directions for moving throughout the Parish Building Complex.
- a. Facility entrance is Atrium west door.
 - b. Church nave entrance is west main doors.
 - c. Aisle movement in the Church nave is from the outside either the north wall bordering the Atrium or from the south wall (Stain Glass windows side) to the inside (centre aisle). Ushers will guide you to the pews
 - d. Church nave exit to the centre aisle and then through the north-east door into the Atrium
 - e. Facility exist is Cultural Building west doors.
 - f. Duct-tape markers on the carpeting will show the direction of movement in the church aisles
 - g. At this time, use of the washrooms downstairs is not permitted; only the washroom upstairs is in use now.
 - h. Should the use of the washrooms downstairs be permitted, access to downstairs washroom is through cultural stairs and returning to the Church is through the Church stairs leading to the Atrium, then into the vestibule, and to your place of seating.

- i. For those requiring an elevator, help and coordination will be provided by the ushers.
- j. It is recommended that the use of the elevator at any one time be restricted to people from the same household or cohort. That is, people from different households or cohorts should not be in the elevator at the same time.

Physical Distancing

- 15. A 2 - meter physical distance should be maintained:
 - a. Between members from different households at all times while on Church Property.
 - b. Upon your arrival at the Parish and during the time you are being greeted.
 - c. During the time that you are being ushered to your pew.
 - d. While seated in the pews and during the Divine Liturgy.
 - e. When venerating icons and the veneration of the cross at the conclusion of a service.
 - f. Upon exiting from the Parish.
 - g. **This physical spacing is not monitored or policed by the Board or others from the Parish; we simply ask for you to take personal responsibility in this regard and to follow this and all other AHS restrictions to help maintain your own safety.**

Use of Upstairs Washroom

- 16. At this time, only the washroom upstairs is available for use. The washroom is cleaned and sanitized prior, usually Saturday morning, prior to the Sunday Divine Liturgy worship service. If you are using the washroom, you need to:
 - a. Sanitize your hands before and after using the washroom
 - b. Disinfect all touched surface areas (e.g., toilet seat and flushing handle, faucets, water taps, sink, paper dispenser handle, door knobs, sides of door) prior and after their use.
 - c. Instructions for cleaning and sanitizing are posted on the washroom door and on the mirror. Disinfectant, hand sanitizer, and wiping cloth are provided.

Behaviour

- 17. It is advised that:
 - a. There be no loitering in the hallways, stairs, vestibule, atrium, and parking lots.
 - b. Handshaking, hugging, and other forms of physical contact cannot occur if physical distancing is to be maintained.

Procedures, Responsibilities, and Monitoring

- 18. Prior to each worship service, Board of Management members or designates will:
 - a. Recruit 4-6 volunteers to clean and sanitize accessible areas. The cleaning and sanitizing is usually completed Saturday morning for Sunday Divine Liturgy.
 - b. Recruit up to 4 volunteers as needed to serve as greeters and ushers. **During times of lower maximum number of worshippers, there may be fewer greeters and ushers allowing more worshippers to attend.**
 - c. Insure an adequate inventory of supplies necessary for cleaning, sanitizing, and personal protection (masks, gloves, wipes).
 - d. Clean and sanitize all high-touch/ shared surfaces such as pews, chairs, doors, door knobs and handles, hand rails, and light switches.

- e. Clean and sanitize washrooms especially toilet seat and flushing handle, tank top, assistive railings, faucets, water taps, sink, paper dispenser handle, door knobs, sides of door.
 - f. Clean and sanitize elevator including elevator buttons.
 - g. Place signs, posters, and directives in appropriate places.
 - h. Develop Attendance Sheet, confirm attendance of worshippers (No later than Friday) and record their names on the Attendance Sheet; develop tentative seating plan.
 - i. Confirm that the Parish Priest is healthy and able to celebrate the Divine Liturgy
 - j. Confirm that the Palamar is healthy and willing to serve.
 - k. Confirm that the Cantor is healthy and willing to serve.
 - l. Confirm that the greeters are healthy and willing to serve.
 - m. Confirm that the ushers are healthy and willing to serve.
 - n. Maintain regular communication with members.
 - o. Maintain and update the Parish Website with respect to changes to the Reopening Plan.
 - p. Monitor procedures and practices; determine what is working well and what requires adjustments.
19. Prior to and during each worship service, greeters will:
- a. Have the necessary supplies (masks, gloves, wipes, hand sanitizer) available for use.
 - b. Greet worshippers in the Atrium, conduct the screening and request for consent, and record responses on the Attendance Sheet.
 - c. Remind worshippers to maintain physical distance and to wear masks. If worshippers have no masks, greeters will provide masks.
 - d. Request worshippers to sanitize their hands.
 - e. Offer gloves and wipes if worshippers want them.
 - f. Ask worshippers to wait for an usher to take them to their pew.
 - g. Keep count of the attendees. Will allow worshippers on the list to go in first; those who show up without prearrangement will be seated only if space is available.
 - h. Store the supplies for use at the next service.
20. Prior to and during each worship service, ushers will:
- a. Give instructions to worshippers on direction of movement and seating.
 - b. Keep count of the number of worshippers.
 - c. At the conclusion of the service, direct worshippers toward the veneration of the cross and icons.
21. Prior to the start of the Divine Liturgy service, the Parish Priest will inform the worshippers to:
- a. Wear a mask during the Divine Liturgy. The mask should fit properly to cover nose and mouth.
 - b. Keep a distance of 2 meters from members of different households.
 - c. Not to congregate and visit after the service. Worshippers must leave the Church Property immediately after the service.
 - d. Contact him by telephone or email should they wish to meet with him. Meetings should take place outside the serving of the Divine Liturgy.
 - e. Contact him by telephone or email if they want prayers for their family, relatives, and friends.
 - f. Memorial and communal candles are not publicly available. **HOWEVER**, talk to the Usher or the Palamar for assistance.

- g. Congregational singing and replies are **NOT** practiced, rather humming or saying them is allowed.
- h. There is no kissing or touching of crosses, relics, or icons.
- i. Veneration of crosses, icons, and relics will be with a bow and at a distance of 2 meters.
- j. Prosfora is not be served.
- k. Confession and Communion are not practiced.
- l. There is no fellowship or Church School.

Church Services on Holy Days

- 22. Church Services on Holy Days, which fall on weekdays (Monday to Saturday), will NOT be held until further notice. There may be exceptions during the time of Christmas and Easter when a service may be held on a day other than Sunday.

Baptisms, Weddings, and Funerals

- 23. **Contact Fr. Yuriy for all matters regarding a baptisms, weddings, and funerals.**
- 24. According to the Guidance for Places of Worship and the Mandatory Restrictions for **funerals and weddings:**
 - a. **Funerals and weddings are treated differently from Sunday Divine Liturgy services for capacity and other restrictions.**
 - b. Please contact the Parish Priest, who will explain, in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, any changes to the practices of either a marriage ceremony or a funeral service.
- 25. In terms of Baptisms, the following apply.
 - a. The UOCC Checklist states the following that "...Holy Water fonts will not be in use during the reopening phase."
 - b. If NOT an emergency, then it is recommended that the Baptism be postponed to a later date when the threat of spreading Covid-19 has subsided and a directive has been issued by the Church Hierarchs that the traditional Baptism Ceremony and Service can be served.
 - c. If considered an emergency, Fr. Yuriy will explain the practice of baptism for an emergency situation. The current directive from the UOCC Hierarchs is that this should be a very short service with only certain prayers, others said at a later date.
- 26. If use of the Parish Building Complex is required, please contact **Michael Zukiwsky**.

We hope that the Parish's Reopening Plan is informative and helpful. As a Board, we have the expectation that members and those visiting the Parish will follow the directives provided by the Provincial Health officials, the Church Hierarchy, and the Parish Re-opening Plan.

Should you have any questions or need clarifications, please contact Michael Zukiwsky by telephone at 780-660-0789 or by email at mjz@telus.net.

Yours truly, on behalf of the St. Andrew's Sobor Parish Board of Management

Michael Zukiwsky, President