

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

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## **Plan of Worship Services During Covid-19 of St. Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Sobor Parish** **Updated May 19, 2022**

Христос воскрес! Воістину воскрес!

Christ is risen! Indeed He is risen!

Dear Parish Honorary Members, Members, Associate Members, and Friends,

The purpose of this communication is to provide an update to the Plan of Worship Services During Covid-19 at St. Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Sobor Parish, hereafter simply referred to as the Plan. The Plan (previously called the Reopening Plan) was developed by the Board of Management and is based on the documentation listed below issued by the Government of Alberta. City of Edmonton bylaws may also be providing direction to how we operate our facility as it applies to COVID-19.

With the Blessing of His Grace, Bishop Ilarion, Sunday Divine Liturgy and other services at the Parish were re-launched beginning July 19, 2020 following the closure of all UOCC parishes nationally with the initial outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. At that time, in order to safely re-launch worship services, a Reopening Plan was developed; it was modified from time to time considering the status of the pandemic. At this time, the name is changed as continuing to refer to it as the Reopening Plan could be confusing.

COVID-19 is reportedly not affecting as many people as it has previously; however, it remains in our community. All of us have a responsibility in preventing and reducing the spread of Covid-19.

The Parish Board of Management has the following responsibilities:

- ❖ Monitoring and ensuring adherence to the Plan.
- ❖ Assuring worshippers that the procedures and practices that have been implemented for worship services are in the best interests of their health.
- ❖ Be welcoming to all worshippers who wish to worship respectfully within our Parish – whether vaccinated or not and as long as they do not cause harm to others.
- ❖ Providing a vaccination policy.

Worshippers and other users are responsible to:

- ❖ Know that they attend church and worship at their own risk.
- ❖ Be aware that asymptomatic Covid-19 positive worshippers may be present in church.
- ❖ Be aware that worshippers in church could be either partially or fully vaccinated or not vaccinated.
- ❖ Please stay at home if you:
  - Have been diagnosed with Covid-19.

- Are experiencing a cough, fever, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, flu-like symptoms, or have underlying or compromised medical conditions.
- ❖ Know that you are required to and agree to isolate if you have or recently had Covid-19.
- ❖ Not place yourself in compromising situations.
- ❖ Become familiar with the Plan.
- ❖ Report to the Parish President (contact information at the end of this communication) if you become sick with Covid-19 within 10 days of attending a worship service. Your identity will be kept confidential.

Worship services and facility use does not mean a return to how we previously (prior to March 2020) attended church and how we celebrated the Divine Liturgy. Things are different. Covid-19 response procedures and practices vary from parish to parish. Our Parish's Plan of Worship Services During Covid-19 is presented below.

**Sections A to I** provide information and list directives for worshippers who want to attend a worship service at our Parish.

#### **A. Reference Documents**

1. Alberta Government CMOH Record of Decision 02-2022
2. Alberta Government CMOH Record of Decision 09-2022
3. Others as referenced in the aforementioned
4. There are no City of Edmonton bylaws in effect as it relates to COVID-19.

#### **B. Limitations**

5. Very few limitations exist as it applies to attending a worship service or other event at St. Andrew's:
  - a. Worshippers can be either fully, partially, or not vaccinated whatsoever.
  - b. You are required to isolate in accordance with government of Alberta requirements if you actively have COVID-19, had COVID-19, or show symptoms of COVID-19.
  - c. Unlike previous times, there is no limit of the maximum number of worshippers that can attend worship services as it pertains to COVID-19.
  - d. Masks do not have to be worn at any time, but people may choose to wear them. If there are people choosing to wear them, please be respectful of their decision.
  - e. Physical distancing between you and others of a different cohort in church is not required. However, please be respectful of those that wish to continue to physically distance and accommodate. Spacing in between cohorts, if chosen, is self-patrolled.

#### **C. Planning on Attending Worship Services?**

6. If you are prepared to follow the procedures within this document and attend a worship service, then you:
  - a. Are certainly welcome, and there is no reason to call ahead and reserve a spot prior to attending Divine Liturgy.
  - b. Although not required, we encourage you to bring the following:
    - i. Mask (just in case).
    - ii. Filled water bottle.
    - iii. Your own Prayer book until all prayer books and other materials have been placed back into the pews.
    - iv. Anything else that you need to reduce your risk to coming in contact with the Covid-19 virus.

#### **D. Procedures upon Arrival**

7. Upon arriving at the doors leading to the Atrium, you will be greeted.
8. You may sanitize your hands with the sanitizing solution provided. However, we ask you to bring some with you to avoid causing the parish added expense.
9. Until such time that there is church school, you will be asked to have your children be seated with you. You are responsible for looking after your children.

#### **E. During the Divine Liturgy or Other Worship Services**

10. Holy Confession sacrament is practiced as it was during pre-COVID times which places you and Fr. Yuriy to be in close proximity. Please contact Fr. Yuriy Suchevan (mobile 780-885-8143 or email [Parishpriest@uocc-standrew.ca](mailto:Parishpriest@uocc-standrew.ca)) especially if this proximity is of concern to you. Fr. Yuriy would appreciate advance notice if you will be attending Holy Confession.
11. Holy Communion sacrament is practiced with a special procedure taking into consideration Covid-19. A common spoon is not used during this procedure.
12. Worshippers are permitted to light candles for health and for those who have fallen asleep in the Lord. The candles are available for a suggested donation at the rear of the church. Be aware that an individual with unsanitized hands or one who may have Covid-19 without symptoms may have touched the candles in the box prior to you. Hand sanitizer by the candle box is available in this regard.
13. Long handled wooden candles are now used as they were during pre-COVID times during the reading of the gospel, during memorial litia, and during the Great Entrance, where you will be standing in close proximity to other worshippers. Please decline the invitation to hold a candle if the close proximity is of concern.
14. There are no restrictions on congregational singing.
15. Antidoron prepared in a sanitized fashion will be similarly distributed to worshippers as they exit the nave.
16. The decision to actually physical touch (kissing or with hand or forehead) of icons, crosses, or relics rests with each individual. It is not required, and it is strongly discouraged even while donning a mask. Be aware that an individual with unsanitized hands or one who may have Covid-19 without showing symptoms may have touched these items prior to you.
17. Fellowship after Divine Liturgy continues to not occur, but may restart.

#### **F. Memorial Service (panakhyda) immediately Following a Divine Liturgy**

18. A Memorial Service (panakhyda) immediately following a Divine Liturgy will be celebrated much like it was prior to March 2020 including the traditional gathering of family and friends at the front of nave. Long handled wooden candles and individual wax candles will be used. However, please do not feel that gathering at the front is necessary – it is your choice to stay in your pew to celebrate the panakhyda.
19. A memorial luncheon may be allowed after the conclusion of the service subject to the availability of the Hall and the Ladies' Auxiliary. Please contact the Ladies' Auxiliary.

#### **G. Facilities and Sanitization**

20. In general, the entire facility is open for use.
21. The facility office continues to be unattended and the entire facility locked during non-service occasions, but is checked regularly.
22. Sanitation of the facility against Covid-19 is not completed. However, hand sanitizer is placed in strategic locations of the facility primarily for use during worship services.

#### **H. Routing and Movement**

23. Walking into, within, and exiting from the parish facility is no longer controlled but is as it was prior to the pandemic.

## **I. Behaviour**

24. There are no published restrictions regarding handshaking, hugging, mingling, visiting with each other within the facility following a worship service.

**Sections J and K** provide information on worship services other than the Divine Liturgy.

## **J. Feast Day Worship Services**

25. Church Services on Feast Days which fall on days other than Sunday will be celebrated. Refer to the church calendar on the webpage which identifies those celebrated Feast Days. Fr. Yuriy usually announces those Feast Days on a Sunday Divine Liturgy service.

## **K. Baptisms, Weddings, and Funerals**

26. Contact Fr. Yuriy Suchevan (mobile 780-885-8143 or email [Parishpriest@uocc-standrew.ca](mailto:Parishpriest@uocc-standrew.ca)) when a baptism, wedding, or funeral is needed.
27. Unlike when Covid-19 restrictions were present, there are no attendance limits due to COVID-19.
28. Unlike when Covid-19 restrictions were present, indoor receptions for these services are allowed. Please contact Michael Zukiwsky for more details and pre-arrangement – contact information available below. Also, providing proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test is no longer required for indoor receptions
29. Outdoor baptism, wedding, and funeral services and receptions are not covered by this Plan.

## **End of Plan of Worship Services During Covid-19**

Although there are virtually no restrictions presently, we ask you to accommodate those around you who may choose to wear masks and physically distance. We will continue to monitor the reference documents and update this Plan as necessary. Since COVID-19 remains in our community, we caution that restrictions in this regard may be re-established.

We hope that the above information regarding the Parish's Plan is informative and helpful. Should you have any questions or need clarifications with regard to the Plan, or if you have questions regarding the rental or use of the Parish Complex, please contact Michael Zukiwsky by telephone at 780-660-0789 or by email at [president@uocc-standrew.ca](mailto:president@uocc-standrew.ca).

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 City of Edmonton, the Church Hierarchy, and this document – the Plan of Worship Services During Covid-19.

On behalf of the Board of Management of St. Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Sobor Parish  
Michael Zukiwsky, President