

Revised Guidelines **as of June 6, 2021** for BC Synod Congregations

COVID-19 Restrictions for Faith-Based Organizations

All religious indoor worship services in all regions of BC

Additional info to the variances around inside and outside worship services

Guidance around inside and outside Services and Lifecycle Events

Be Informed	Notes
<p>Updates as of June 6, 2021 – PLEASE READ PHO Gathering and Events, Variances around Stand-alone inside and outside Services and Lifecycle Events to ensure compliance with public health orders.</p> <p>PHO Gathering and Events: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19-pho-order-gatherings-events.pdf</p> <p>Guidance for Holding Low Risk inside and outside Worship Services: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19-guidance-worship-services.pdf</p> <p>Guidance for Holding Low-Risk Stand-Alone Lifecycle Events (Wedding ceremonies, Funerals, Baptisms, Medical Assistance in Dying Gatherings). https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19-guidance-lifecycle-events.pdf</p> <p>Variance of the <i>Gatherings and Events</i> Order of the PHO to permit Inside Worship Services: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19-variance-indoor-worship.pdf</p>	<div style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 10px;"> <p>In accordance with the order of the provincial health officer, a COVID-19 safety plan must be posted at the worksite AND website</p> <p>Faith-based organizations - WorkSafeBC</p> <p>Check out Mt. Zion’s Employee Covid Safety Plan here Check out Gloria Dei’s Covid Safety Plan for an outdoor worship service here</p> </div> <p>Synod COVID-19 Response Team is available to assist you:</p> <p>Lower Mainland (A-L): Jean Jay jeangunn8@hotmail.com</p> <p>Lower Mainland (M-Z) and Vancouver Island: Karen Lee kelee2018karen@gmail.com</p> <p>Northern BC: Robin Dielissen dielissen.rd@gmail.com</p> <p>Southern Interior: Pr. Brian Krushel flcpastor@shaw.ca</p>

<p>Variance of the <i>Gatherings and Events Order</i> of the PHO to permit Outside Worship Services: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19-variance-outdoor-worship.pdf</p>	
<p>Preparations Congregations must ensure they are compliant with the most recent provincial and federal health regulations as posted on government websites and Work Safe BC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Review your insurance policy and consult with your insurer for coverage. <input type="checkbox"/> The church (as the Employer) must develop a COVID19 Safety Plan and be posted at the worksite and on the website. See notes for Safety Plan. <input type="checkbox"/> Everyone entering the church must do a health check. See notes. <input type="checkbox"/> Close spaces/rooms in the building where people do not need to be. 	<p>Health check: Symptoms (bccdc.ca) Self Assessment Tool for BC at https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en</p>
<p>Seating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Arrange or mark (in the case of pews) to ensure proper physical distancing. Block rows of pews/chairs as needed to maintain 2 metre distancing in all directions. Consider using tape to indicate available properly distanced seating options. (Households may be seated together.) <input type="checkbox"/> Leave a few available seats for visitors. <input type="checkbox"/> No further entry should be permitted once capacity has been reached. 	

Communicate before opening	Notes
<p>Communicate what they can expect and go over the changes made to the worship space, common areas and children’s ministry to decrease risk of virus transmission. Communicate by email, mailed letter, website, poster, during virtual services and/or Youtube video. (see notes for examples of how to communicate to your congregation)</p>	<p>Examples of how you can communicate your re-opening: Poster Sample: https://bcsynod.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Welcome-Back-Sample.pdf Poster Template: https://bcsynod.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Welcome-Back-Template.docx Make this your own by inserting pictures from your own church building. This will help people visualize the changes they can expect when they are attending indoor worship</p> <p>Youtube video: (690) Back to church guidelines 2020 - YouTube</p>
Preparing for Worship	Notes
<p>Pre-registration is required as per Variances.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Consider how will you continue to include those who will not/may not be able to attend in-person worship. <input type="checkbox"/> Train greeters and ushers so they are familiar with traffic flows and revised practices. <input type="checkbox"/> Worship leaders should plan and practice their movement in the worship space to ensure physical distancing throughout the service. <input type="checkbox"/> Place a logbook or checklist at the entrance to keep a record of all people entering the building in order to facilitate contact tracing (including date, time, name and contact number or email address). <input type="checkbox"/> Have congregants and visitors sign waivers upon entering. <input type="checkbox"/> If you are using bulletins, have them pre-placed by someone wearing gloves. (As opposed to handing them out as people enter.) Place them at 2 metres intervals to help ensure adequate distancing. Use projection screen, if possible. 	<p>Release, Waiver of Liability, and Assumption of Risk Agreement Form relating to COVID-19: https://elcic.box.com/s/oe926id9pbo8aq99lyyttwk4qrg69e3h</p> <p>Signage: Sick or self isolating? Do not enter DoNotEnter v1.1 (bccdc.ca) Physical distancing PhysicalDistancing_draft5 (bccdc.ca) Cleaning and disinfecting CleaningDisinfecting_PublicSettings_PPHchanges_April_07_2021 (bccdc.ca) How to wear a mask properly Covid-SurgicalMaskv4_draft6 (bccdc.ca)</p>

Worship	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Make announcements about the need for non-contact greetings and remind people to refrain from shaking hands and hugging. <input type="checkbox"/> Worship leaders should not share microphones. <input type="checkbox"/> Limit people’s movement in worship to minimize the opportunities for contact. <input type="checkbox"/> When sharing of the peace, people should remain where they were sitting and may bow or open their hands in a gesture of peace to those in other pews/seats around them. <input type="checkbox"/> A participant, other than a worship leader must not chant. Communal responses (speaking in unison) including the creed, the Lord’s Prayer, liturgical responses, etc. are discouraged. Invite worshippers to participate silently or to use movement and gestures. (e.g. The Lord’s Prayer in Movement) THE LORD’S PRAYER IN MOVEMENT Lorraine Kisly (patheos.com) <input type="checkbox"/> Pastors and worship leaders should avoid greeting people as they exit the worship space. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide a place where worshippers can deposit physical offerings. Encourage worshippers to make contributions through electronic means. <input type="checkbox"/> Offering counters have access to gloves and enough space to maintain physical distancing. 	
<p><u>Singing</u> Refer to the Indoor and Outdoor Variances. How it Spreads (bccdc.ca)</p>	

<p><u>Holy Communion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> All elements must be in single use containers. See variances. <input type="checkbox"/> Worshippers should go up for communion in an organized fashion, leaving physical distance between family groups. <input type="checkbox"/> Whether standing or kneeling during communion worshippers must maintain physical distancing. <input type="checkbox"/> Mark to indicate the appropriate distance. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure worshippers are directed back to their seats in an organized fashion, leaving physical distance between family groups. 	
<p><u>Renters / User Groups</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Outside groups may use the building provided as long as they follow local health regulations regarding physical distancing, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Rentals should be suspended if groups cannot or will not adhere to gathering restrictions including maintaining a record of participants by gathering date. <input type="checkbox"/> Confidential user groups (e.g. AA, OA, NA) are asked to keep their own records and work with provincial health officials if requested for contact tracing. <input type="checkbox"/> The facility will need to be cleaned and sanitized (e.g., 15 minutes) in between services or groups as long as one group of people does not come into contact with another group (this means each gathering needs its own entrances, exits, and washroom facilities) <input type="checkbox"/> Unless the rental agreement specifies that the renter must clean and disinfect, then it is the congregation's responsibility to ensure the facility is safe. They must have their own safety plan in place. <input type="checkbox"/> Rental groups shall provide written details to the Owner of how they will observe health guidelines. <input type="checkbox"/> Have renters sign waivers and keep their own contact list for 30 days. <input type="checkbox"/> Include Indemnity Clause in rental contracts. See Notes. 	<p><u>Indemnity Clause for Rental contracts:</u> https://elcic.box.com/s/obli5vky0jjyxzyidojcs1esluqvvyu30</p>

<p>Holy Baptism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Discourage the practice of worshippers touching the water in the font as they remember their baptism. Instead, invite people to pause a moment in silent prayer. <input type="checkbox"/> Sanitize and provide fresh water in the font for each baptism. <input type="checkbox"/> Have parents/family hold the child for the baptism. <input type="checkbox"/> Water is poured on the baptized with a shell. The baptized is anointed with oil using a cotton ball. <input type="checkbox"/> A member of the baptismal party lights the baptismal candle from the paschal candle as the words of presentation are spoken. 	
<p>Meal preparation as part of a religious service (like at a Gurdwara) with a COVID-19 safety plan in place.</p> <p>Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and food safety - Canada.ca - Bing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Religious services that include meal preparation like that of a gurdwara or a temple may still continue, but people cannot gather to consume those meals. <input type="checkbox"/> There must be a COVID-19 safety plan in place, which includes packaging those meals individually. 	
<p>Group support meetings (like AA)</p> <p>Group support meetings like that of Alcoholics Anonymous are not considered “events” and are considered “essential” so they may continue in faith buildings with the appropriate safety measures in place.</p>	

Returning to Other In-person Ministries of the Congregation	Notes
<p><u>Visitation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Religious leaders may attend the home of a member of their religious community to provide religious services to the occupant. <input type="checkbox"/> Care home and hospital visits will follow the protocol of the health authority in your region. Familiarize yourself with the requirements before you visit. <input type="checkbox"/> Take only essential items into the facility and disinfect carefully before using in another setting. <input type="checkbox"/> It is advisable to limit visits to one per day to minimize risk and potential spread <input type="checkbox"/> Visits with church members should take place outdoors or at the church building with proper cleaning and sanitation between visits. <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid physical contact and wash hands regularly. Keep hand sanitizer on hand for times when you cannot access soap and water. 	