

Parkdale United Church

building connections · living faith · acting for justice

September 3, 2020

Dear Members and Friends of Parkdale United Church,

We hope you are well, keeping safe and finding meaningful ways to care for yourself and loved ones. In these early days of September, like it or not, we are learning to live with Covid-19. Yes, there have been numerous adjustments to our daily activities and expectations, and we can anticipate more changes and challenges in the days ahead. We keep encouraging one and all to be steadfast in compassion for self and others, persistent in nurturing relationships and life-giving behaviours, creative in embracing these new days with courage, kindness and patience. The words from the Apostle Paul to the followers of Jesus in Corinth echo how we might feel in these uncertain days, “seeing dimly” into the future. And then, he offers these beautiful words of guidance: “And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.”

We reside in God’s presence. In God’s compassion, we pray for all our front-line workers and essential service providers, for all who are grieving and ill, for those who have lost their jobs and those who are growing weary, and for all who are living with economic, emotional and relational challenges.

In the July 22, 2020 Pastoral Letter, we indicated there was strong interest in exploring the possibility of resuming in-person Sunday worship experiences. The Operations Committee has done extensive work in researching Alberta Health protocols regarding the reopening of places of worship. They developed a series of recommendations for Council’s review and evaluation. In the same manner, the Worship Arts Committee and others have researched best practices for relaunching in-person Sunday worship. Council met on August 26, 2020 to discuss, work through and approved a series of recommendations. Council has accepted an initial plan to open the church facilities to a very few outside user groups with strict adherence to all Alberta Health protocols. **Council also decided to renew in-person Sunday worship experiences beginning on Sunday, September 13, 2020.**

Please, carefully review the enclosed Parkdale United Church; **In-Person Sunday Worship Experiences – Essential Practices, Expectations and Procedures** document. This is an initial plan and it will be adjusted as new information becomes available. Creating and making available a recorded version of the in-person worship experience is being explored. The current weekly Spiritual Reflection, with pictorial, scriptural and musical reflections, will continue to be provided for members and friends of Parkdale United as an in-person worship option is not possible for everyone.

With prayers of blessing and peace,

Sheila Campbell, Council Chair

Rev. Murray Laverty, D.Min. Minister

In-Person Sunday Worship Experiences
Essential Practices, Expectations and Procedures

Parkdale United Church Calgary, Alberta

September, 2020

Parkdale United Church Council has reviewed the Alberta Provincial Health Protocols and current best practices for Sunday in-person worship. Council's recommendation is that the congregation resume in-person Sunday worship with strict adherence to the following list of Essential Practices, Expectations and Procedures. The current weekly emailed Spiritual Reflection, with its pictorial, scriptural and musical reflections, will continue to be provided for members and friends of Parkdale United as an in-person worship option is not possible for everyone.

- Our intention with Sunday in-person worship is to provide a time and place where we can safely connect as people of faith, participate in a community of care and compassion, and affirm our hope living in uncertain times with God's grace, guidance and blessing.
- The Sunday in-person worship experiences will be notably different; no congregational singing permitted, screens only worship resources, physical distancing and limited interpersonal interactions.
- Extended Prelude and Postlude music will be provided for a calm and respectful, intentional and enriching time entering and leaving the sanctuary space.
- There will be no beverage or food provided, and worship participants will be expected to enter and leave the building in a timely manner. Social conversations may occur outside the building.
- We encourage congregants to use the online Alberta Health Services COVID-19 Self-Assessment tool before every visit to the place of worship.
- We remind congregants that they must not attend in-person worship if they are feeling unwell and/or are experiencing the most common symptoms of COVID-19 (cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose, or sore throat).
- Registration for in-person Sunday worship is mandatory, as space is limited.
- Registration will be received and confirmed through the Church Office, by email parkdaleuc@telus.net or phone (403) 283 – 3301; from Wednesday, 9am until Friday, 12noon for the upcoming Sunday Service. Registration will include all names and the number of worship participants in each family cohort.
- In-person Sunday registered participants will be welcomed by trained worship hosts in a calm and respectful manner, entering and exiting the building via the front doors.
- Worship participants will move directly to their seats in the sanctuary. The sanctuary will have physically distanced pods where family cohorts can sit together. Each pod is six feet of pew sitting area, and all children must sit with their parent/guardian during the worship experience. Larger family cohorts may require more than one pod.
- The church doors will be locked on Sundays at 10:30am when worship begins.
- Physical distancing, mask wearing, hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette are required.