

# Centretown United Church Policy for Opening our Building

## 1. Preface

On March 11th, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the global outbreak of COVID 19 a pandemic. On March 15th, 2020 Centretown United Church Council met and made the decision to cancel all Church services and Church-sponsored functions effective immediately. Everyone in the congregation was telephoned and advised of that decision. Follow up e-mails were sent, signage indicating that we were not holding worship services was put in our exterior notice boards, our Facebook page and website was updated with this information as well.

On March 17th, 2020, the Ontario Government declared a state of emergency, and ordered the closure of all indoor programs and services, including those of communities of faith. Centretown United Church closed its building to all outside groups and cancelled all bookings until further notice. On June 11th, 2020 Centretown Church Council met via Zoom and decided to follow the strongly stated recommendation from the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council (EOORC) deciding not to allow any outside group(s) use of our facilities until further notice. As per OORC every Community of Faith has to prepare guidelines for reopening and submit their plan to the Regional Council two weeks prior to their proposed opening date; every Community of Faith create a plan for re-opening for worship and a separate plan with guidelines for reopening their building to rentals and community activities or community groups.

## 2 During the Closure

Because Centre 507 and the Centretown Emergency Food Centre provide a necessary service to those in our community, both Centres were deemed essential services and remained open during the mandatory closure of church buildings. This was approved by the Ontario Government and by our Insurance Company (Ecclesiastical) on April 13th, 2020. As the Centres could not serve their clients in their own space and follow health safety guidelines, they both used and continue to use our Inner Room. The Food Centre serving clients on Monday and Friday, and Centre 507 serving clients on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday. Presently clients enter the Inner Room through an exterior door from Bank Street, walk through the Inner Room receiving either groceries or lunch (depending on the day) and exit through the exterior door into the parking lot. Both these doors are handicap accessible and markers were put on the ground for proper social distancing. Only one client is allowed to enter the Inner Room at a time, and they have to wear a mask to be served. All staff and volunteers wear proper PPE attire.

While our building was closed, the work of our church continued. With permission from our Insurance Company, two members of our Property Committee were in the building doing repairs and upgrades, a number of tradespersons worked, our Administrator came in 2 days a week to work and the Envelope Secretary came periodically to make bank deposits. All these people wore masks, sanitized their hands-on entry and kept a social distancing from each other.

## 3 Purpose

This plan was prepared with the intention of re-opening the Centretown United Church building for faith-based activities as well as to groups outside of our congregation, while preventing the transmission of COVID 19 among members and adherents of the congregation, staff, contractors, volunteers and the public.

This plan does not contain guidelines for opening the building for Sunday worship. A separate policy will be written for re-opening the building for worship.

The Church Council is responsible for executing a duty of care for all those who use our building. The Church Council and its Committees are responsible for the oversight of this plan. The COVID-19 sub-committee, reporting to Church Council, is responsible for the monitoring, implementation, evaluation and updating of this plan.

#### 4 The Plan for Re-Opening

Centretown United Church understands that the potential for spread of infection during gatherings is high. Many of the risks can be mitigated by maintaining physical distancing, wearing masks, cleaning and disinfection frequently, registering attendees, protecting attendees, the public, staff, contractors and volunteers, and limiting high-risk activities.

Building Policy	Individuals with symptoms of COVID 19, individuals who have travelled internationally in the last 14 days, and individuals who have had close contact with confirmed COVID 19 cases in the last 14 days are not allowed entry into the building. Posters will be displayed at all church entrances with this information.
	Everyone in the building must wear a mask as required by City of Ottawa bylaw #2020-186. Posters will be displayed at all church entrances with this information.
	Individuals must use hand sanitizer when entering the building. Hand sanitizer stations will be available at all entry and exit points of the building.
	All individuals (including staff) who enter the building must register their name, contact information and which area of the building they utilized. If the individual is with a group, the group will be responsible for registration. If the individual comes alone, they must enter by the parking lot door and a registration sheet will be available and they must register themselves. All records will be secured in the church office and will be kept for a maximum period of three months. Any personal information collected can only be used for the purpose of COVID 19 tracing. See appendix #1 + #2
	All individuals must maintain a social distance of 6' from each other at all times.
	Only 2 washrooms are available for use. One specifically for the use of StoryTellers the other outside the church office. This washroom will have cleaning supplies and a chart indicating how to clean the washroom after each use. See appendix #3
	Only one group will be scheduled in a room per day to provide our Custodian time to sanitize the room.
Centre 507	Discuss with the Executive Manager the new COVID 19 requirements implemented by Centretown United Church. Provide a copy of this policy to him. A document must be signed stating that they have read our policy and will abide by the requirements stated therein.
	Request a copy of Centre 507's COVID 19 policy and review/amend, as necessary.
	Keep in close contact, reviewing and amending policies as Government bylaws and policies change.
	Ensure that a record of all individuals, staff, volunteers and clients who enter the building and the space that is being used is kept and put under the door of the church office everyday they are open.
	Ensure that all staff, volunteers and clients follow the COVID 19 policy put in place.
	Ensure that all common spaces shared with the church congregation are thoroughly sanitized at the end of everyday.
Centretown Emergency Food Centre	Discuss with the Chairperson of the Centretown Emergency Food Centre (EFC) Board the new COVID 19 requirements implemented by Centretown United Church. Provide a copy of this policy to her. A document must be signed stating that they have read our policy and will abide by the requirements stated therein.
	Request a copy of EFC's COVID 19 policy and review/amend as necessary.
	Keep in close contact, reviewing and amending policies as Government bylaws and policies change.
	Ensure that a record of all individuals, staff, volunteers and clients who enter the building and the space that is being used is kept and put under the door of the church office

	everyday they are open.
	Ensure that all staff, volunteers and clients follow the COVID 19 policy put in place.
	Ensure that all common spaces shared with the church congregation are thoroughly sanitized at the end of everyday.
The Ottawa Storytellers	Discuss with the Office Manager of the Ottawa Storytellers the new COVID 19 requirements implemented by Centretown United Church. Provide a copy of this policy to her. A document must be signed stating that they have read our policy and will abide by the requirements stated therein.
	Request a copy of the Storytellers COVID 19 policy if they have one and review/amend it as necessary.
	Ensure that a record of all individuals, staff, volunteers and clients who enter the building and the space that is being used is kept and put under the door of the church office everyday they are open.
	Keep in close contact, reviewing and amending policies as Government bylaws and policies change.
FoodWorks	Discuss with the person responsible for FoodWorks at Operation Come Home the new COVID 19 requirements implemented by Centretown United Church. Provide a copy of this policy to her. A document must be signed stating that they have read our policy and will abide by the requirements stated therein.
	Request a copy of Operation Come Home's COVID 19 policy if they have one and review/amend as necessary.
	Keep in close contact, reviewing and amending policies as Government bylaws and policies change.
	Ensure that a record of all staff, volunteers and clients who enter the building and the space that is being used is kept and put under the door of the church office everyday they are open.
	Ensure that all common spaces shared with the church congregation are thoroughly sanitized at the end of everyday.
Outside Groups (choirs, meetings, access to music library etc)	Discuss with the person responsible for the group the new COVID 19 requirements implemented by Centretown United Church. Provide a copy of this policy to them. A document must be signed stating that they have read our policy and will abide by the requirements stated therein.
	Attendance sheets must be completed at each gathering and the space that is being used and placed under the door of the church office before leaving.
	No food or drink is to be provided or shared during meetings/events. The kitchen is not to be used during a meeting/event.
	All space users should review all activities and practices that occur to determine if they increase the risk of spreading COVID-19 amongst attendees. Any activity or practice that increases the risk of COVID 19 through contact (e.g. touching surfaces or objects) or droplet transmission (e.g. sneezing, coughing, singing, shouting) should be discontinued or altered to prevent the risk. Interpersonal interactions, such as shaking hands, hugging, touching or passing items, must not occur.
	Do not hand out or share items that cannot be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use.
Church Council and other church related groups.	Each group will be provided with these guidelines on how they can meet while adhering to COVID 19 restrictions.

## 5 Persons per Room

Occupancy must not exceed these limits, due to physical distancing

Inner Room (not available at this time as both Centres are using it daily)	
Green Room	
Vestry	4
Sanctuary	72 main level, 74 balcony
Choir loft	8
Fellowship Hall	40
Lounge	12
Kitchen	6

## 6 Moving Forward

Contact our regular space users to review the policy and have them sign this document stating their group will abide by the requirements stated therein.

Monitor each group to ensure they are following all requirements stated in the policy.

The COVID 19 sub-committee will keep abreast of the COVID 19 situation, review and discuss amendments to this plan and make necessary updates to it, as modification are made to government policy and directives.

If the situation occurs that a COVID-19 exposure has happened in the Centretown United Church building, Ottawa Public Health has the responsibility on contacting those people on our contact sheets that could be affected.

## 7 Approval

This plan for Opening the Centretown United Church Building to groups within the congregation and also to outside groups, was approved by Centretown United Church Council on August 24, 2020.

This plan for Opening the Centretown United Church Building to groups within the congregation and to outside groups, was approved by the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council on August 26, 2020.

Centretown United has taken many precautions as possible to mitigate the spread of COVID 19 within our facility. Although these steps have been taken please note that use of this facility is at your own risk.

I \_\_\_\_\_ as the \_\_\_\_\_ of  
(Name) (position)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(name of group or organization)

Agree that our group will adhere to the above noted policy, contributing to the safety of all those who use this facility.