

Greetings,

As you may have heard, we will be returning to adapted, in-person worship services, beginning in September. If you have not had a chance to do so, we would invite you to visit our website and watch a short video about our reopening plans, as included with our online services. We have also included details below. We appreciate you taking the time to read through carefully:

Rehearsal Service: In preparation for reopening, we will be holding a run-through service on August 30th. We have invited a small group of people to attend, as we rehearse a service in this new format. We ask that others not plan to attend that Sunday.

Alternating Services: In an effort to limit risk, and in response to concerns that we have heard, we have chosen to plan for alternating services. ***We will be holding Seniors Services every other Sunday, beginning at 10:00am on September 6th***, and services for others in between. While we recognize some instances will require flexibility, we ask that those over 70 who wish to participate to consider attending the Seniors Service. ***A schedule of services will be available in the bulletin.*** There will be no German Service at this time.

Online and Print Options: There is no obligation to attend, should you or your family be uncomfortable doing so. In choosing to attend, it will be assumed that you understand the risks involved in doing so. Services will continue to be made available online each Sunday, and sermons sent out by mail every other week, for those who are considered to be at higher risk, and/or choose to continue to worship from home.

Entering the Building: As you enter the building, our ushers will greet you and record your attendance. You will also be asked if you've reviewed the self-screening checklist that you will have received, and whether you have any concerns related to it to report. You may want to consider arriving a bit earlier, with this in mind. At this time, registration (calling or emailing to reserve a spot) is not required.

Once You Are Welcomed In: One of our ushers will lead you to a seat in the sanctuary. We ask that you not enter other areas of the building. Use of the accessible washroom will be limited to urgent needs. Masks will be required throughout (with exception for those who are unable to wear them, for medical reasons, and children under the age of five), along with physical distancing. We kindly ask that you not stop and visit, while inside and outside of the building.

Changes to Services: ***Services will begin at 10:00, and be shortened to run through to approximately 10:30.*** We look forward to hearing our musicians, but singing will not take place at this time. Sunday children's activities (nursery, Sunday School) are being considered for later in the fall, and will remain online, where applicable, through that time. Donations can be dropped in baskets that will be set up, as you leave the sanctuary. Online and mid-week options will remain available, as detailed in the bulletin. Once the service has finished, ushers will lead you out of the sanctuary.

We thank you for your patience and support as we navigate these realities. The pandemic has required a tremendous amount of adjustment for us all. We are grateful for the accommodations that we are able to provide, and for your understanding. We have committed to try this plan, knowing that it may change as we go along. May God continue to provide us strength and wisdom in this season,

Pastor Nick Schuurman, *on behalf of the Council of St. Catharines United Mennonite Church.*