

Riverdale Baptist Church

Covid-19 Operational Plan

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**Covid-19 Committee Members Contact Information:**

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**Our goals** are to outline steps following recommendations and requirements as outlined by the Yukon Government, to protect the health and wellbeing of our congregants and community, by ensuring:

- physical distancing;
- good hygiene practice; and
- enhanced environmental cleaning/disinfection.

Our Operational Plan and guidelines for RBC reflect the current recommendations and requirements of the Yukon government and are subject to change as Government directives change.

We are humbly trying to safeguard our community while balancing the spiritual wellbeing of our community, and ask for grace with your response.

**General Practices – Applies to All Gatherings**

Everyone should self-monitor for symptoms before visiting Riverdale Baptist Church– if you have symptoms, stay home. For more information refer to the “Covid-19 self-assessment tool” found on the Yukon Government website. <https://yukon.ca/en/find-out-about-symptoms-covid-19>

To ensure our church remains a safe place to worship and work, we will actively follow the Safe 6, and the mandatory wearing of masks.

We will also continue to encourage the medically vulnerable congregants (people over 65, and those with underlying medical conditions) to decrease their risk of exposure by staying home and participating in worship through our services online.

## **General Guidelines for Faith-Based Gatherings**

Activities may be held in separate rooms within Riverdale Baptist Church.

Each room (main sanctuary and basement hall) should be no more than 1/3 occupied up to a limit of 50 and 35 people, respectively, and physical distancing must be maintained.

Groups must not intermingle and will be asked to use separate exits and washrooms.

Our Capacity: 50 in sanctuary  
35 in downstairs hall

### **Physical distancing**

- Physical distancing of 2 meters (6 feet) must be observed. People from the same household or combined households can sit together.
- Seating areas and directional flow of people through the building will be marked.
- Physical distancing posters will be posted.
- Social gatherings before and after faith-based activities are not recommended.
- Adequate time (recommend 1 hour minimum) will be left between events to clean and disinfect common surfaces and allow people to exit and enter in a safe manner.

There will be a sign-up sheet by the entrance, beside the hand sanitizing station, for people to register whenever they enter Riverdale Baptist church. Name, date, and email or phone number is required. This record of attendance will make it easier to do contact tracing in the event that someone gets Covid-19. These lists will be discarded after 30 days. They will not be shared with anyone other than YCDC.

### **Hygiene**

- Everyone is asked to sanitize their hands when entering and exiting the building.
- Hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol content will be kept at facility entrances, exits, sound room, offices, and other high traffic areas.

### **Cleaning and disinfection**

- Extensive cleaning and disinfection (by paid staff) will occur on a weekly basis, before and after Sunday events. Volunteers are asked to assist with sanitizing after each event, following the documented procedures. RBC has created detailed cleaning instructions to ensure all volunteers are doing a thorough job of sanitizing. These instructions are posted by the cleaning supplies kept in the foyer. For quality control volunteers will record the date, the event, and their names in a log book kept by the cleaning supplies in the foyer.
- RBC will ensure there are supplies available for proper cleaning and disinfection.

### **Physical contact**

- Handshaking, hugging, touching or passing objects between people is not permitted.

## **Shared items**

Do not hand out or share items if they cannot be cleaned and sanitized before and after each use:

- Items such as hymn books, pew Bibles, and offering envelopes have been removed.
- Offering plates will not be passed between congregants. Offering plates will be placed by each exit. Online donations are recommended.
- Where possible, microphones are not to be shared between people. The exception is the pulpit mic which is not a close proximity mic and is not to be touched (a sign is posted at the mic). If two or more people need to use the same mic in one meeting it must be wiped down with disinfectant between users. Mics will be wiped down with disinfectant after each service and after other uses throughout the week.

## **Food**

Any serving of food or drink must adhere to the following recommendations:

- Have a designated server(s)
- Serve food and drink in pre-packaged or individual portions
- Do not share these items:
  - food and drink utensils
  - containers
  - coffee pots
  - snack bowls
  - water or milk pitchers

Physical contact between people serving food or drink and attendees must not occur. People serving should wash or sanitize their hands immediately before and after serving.

## **Singing and live music**

We recognize how important music is to many people's mental health, wellbeing and enjoyment. The Yukon government has provided guidance showing that singing, particularly when loudly and for prolonged periods of time, spreads respiratory particles, and is strongly discouraged. In the first service each Sunday, we will have leader-led worship. We will reiterate the territory's no singing recommendation and request that people not sing. However, we recognize that those in the congregation who may sing discretely behind their masks cannot be policed – no enforceable measures will be taken as we balance congregants' needs for emotional, spiritual and physical wellbeing. To care for those at most risk of Covid-19, RBC has designed a service where there is purposely no opportunity for singing. RBC communicates the difference in services to allow congregants to self-govern their decision to participate in various ministries within RBC.

For people leading the congregation in music, we ask that mics are to be set up in advance and not held or touched by singers.

## **Large Gatherings/Group** - 11 to 50 people upstairs, 11 to 35 people downstairs

### Expectations

#### *Regular Sunday services:*

1. The Sunday morning service will be held in the main sanctuary and live-streamed to the basement hall.

- The two groups are not to intermingle and will be asked to use separate exits and washrooms.
- People are asked to sign in when entering the church. Ushers are available to assist with this.
- Each person is to use hand sanitizer provided on table at entrance.
- Masks are mandatory, with the exception of when leading or speaking from the platform.
- Ushers help to maintain physical distancing by directing people to their seats. Once seated, we ask people to remain in place until the service ends.
- There is leader-led singing from the platform. Congregants are strongly discouraged from singing.
- We ask people in the sanctuary to exit by the side doors at the front of the sanctuary, and those in the basement to exit through the side door at the top of the stairs, while maintaining social distancing. Follow the established flow of movement (arrows).
- We ask that people do not socialize inside the sanctuary but exit quickly after each service, and socialize outside in the parking lot, respecting social distancing. This allows time for cleaning.
- Following each service, volunteers will sanitize the spaces that have been used.
- Food: During Covid, the church has chosen not to provide coffee and snacks following the Sunday services.

Communion elements will be served in individual packages, that are passed to each participant by an elder/usher as they enter the sanctuary or downstairs hall.

2. A shorter service is held at 1pm on Sundays, designed to cater to the needs of those at higher risk. It will follow the same protocols as the morning service, except there will be no singing at this service.

**An On-Line Service option:** The Sunday morning Worship Service will be uploaded (Streamed) for anyone to view online. This is a good option for those who cannot, or choose not to, attend. Medically vulnerable people are encouraged to take part in services online.

#### *Saturday Evening Worship*

- There is leader-led singing. People will be reminded that singing is not recommended, but recognizing that smaller numbers, greater distancing and wearing masks helps minimize the risk, people will not be asked to refrain from singing.
- Leaders will be responsible to ensure proper sanitizing is done following the meeting.

#### *Youth Group*

- Youth Leaders will keep a registration of attendees to help with contact tracing efforts if needed.
- During snack time a leader will be responsible for following food and drink protocol.
- Youth will not enter the kitchen area.
- For activities that require the use of the same item by multiple people. the leaders will be responsible for the sanitization of the item before and after each use.
- Youth leaders are responsible for sanitizing surfaces once youth have left.

## Responsibilities

Leaders (Elders and Deacons present) will help communicate the importance of following the operational plan out of love for one another and adherence to the YTG Emergency Measures Act.

Each person in attendance is asked to be observant, understanding and compassionate. Reach out in love (call your fellow congregant) to ensure they are okay. If you see something you're not comfortable with call them afterwards to seek to understand, if you're concerned that your actions are making someone uncomfortable reach out and find out, pray about it and discuss in love. RBC wants to meet people where they are at. If someone is hurting, or in a moment of thanks giving/praise sings or speaks up and you hear it, make it a point to call them and find out. We can/need to be alert to the spirit working in our midst. Help make the Worship services as glorifying to God as possible.

## **Small Gatherings/Group** - 2 to 10 people

Prayer Meeting, Bible Study, Committee Meetings, etc.

Leader to notify the Church Admin Office (email or by phone) confirming date and time of event. Regular/Standing events would only need to notify the Church Office if event was canceled.

## Expectations

- Each person is to use hand sanitizer provided upon entering and before leaving the building.
- Each person to fill out sign-in sheet at entrance.
- Physical distancing must be maintained. People should not be mixing and mingling, but should be seated in chairs arranged for proper physical distancing.
- Masks must be worn.
- People are encouraged to bring their own snacks or drink. If food and drinks are served, it is the responsibility of the group leader to ensure that the proper guidelines are followed.
- Each attendee will be provided with their own handouts.
- Each attendee will be responsible for providing their own pens.

## Responsibilities

- Leaders will be responsible for sanitizing surfaces once people have left.

Many meetings, such as Business Meetings, Deacons and Elders meetings, and small group studies, have moved to Zoom, instead of in person gatherings, until the Emergency Measures Act ends. Leaders will communicate the dates, times and agendas well in advance. Any members who would like assistance on how to connect via Zoom are encouraged to contact the office for help.

## **Staff and Volunteers Working Within the Church Outside of a Ministry Event**

Staff member in an office, cleaning staff, person praying in the sanctuary, volunteer working

### Expectations:

- All staff/volunteers must self-monitor for symptoms daily. Any staff/volunteers displaying symptoms of Covid-19 must stay home. Please contact co-workers or appropriate leader / chair to let them know, so that temporary arrangements can be made to cover your duties.
- Everyone is required to sign in each day you work in the building.
- Physical distancing must be maintained if 2 or more people are working in the same space.
- You may remove your mask if you are working alone and all doors are closed to that space.
- Food and drinks can be brought in for personal use with all utensils removed when exiting from the church building.
- All spaces occupied must be sanitized prior to leaving the building

### Responsibilities

Moderator to communicate protocols and guidelines to staff / volunteers / hired workmen.

Staff who notice an individual in the church building to confirm understanding with others who enter and bring to Moderators attention if non-compliance.

## **In Conclusion**

RBC has created a Covid team to:

- be responsive to changing guidelines from the territory and the changing pandemic
- answer questions and concerns from staff and congregants
- ensure all ministries delivered align with our stated goals of reasonably ensuring our community's safety

When there are changes to our community's response to the changing pandemic, we will inform the community promptly with emails and Facebook posts – prior to the attendance of any delivered ministry. We will also have direct calls and emails to the ministries directly affected.

In the case of possible exposure to Covid in the church, communication from YCDC states that RBC would be advised by YCDC if it was felt it should close because of a possible exposure. If there is an exposure, YCDC will do contacting based on what their risk assessment is. The church is not required to do any contact follow-up, but may inform the congregation of a possible exposure through a general email. No additional cleaning would be required beyond the cleaning and disinfecting that is happening on a regular basis, unless directed otherwise.

If people wish to communicate to us the possibility of an exposure, or that they are infected, we will communicate only the information the person wishes to share. Otherwise, we will respect the privacy of the person(s) involved and follow any steps that YCDC recommends.