



Fort Macleod Alliance Church

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Dear Congregation,

As most of you are aware, new provincial mandatory measures for addressing Covid issues were released this past week by the Province of Alberta. These measures affect gatherings in most sectors of daily activities, including faith-based gatherings. None of these measures are wanted by anyone, but they are put in place as our Province attempts to reduce the spread of Covid-19 and their negative effects - particularly on the most vulnerable parts of our population. One may argue as to their need or effectiveness, but nevertheless they are in place and will affect our church gatherings.

Although requiring extra effort and creativity, none of these measures prevent the church from gathering to worship or prevent Christian community from taking place or take away from either our opportunity or responsibilities with the Great Commission the Lord Jesus has given to the Church. (Matthew 28: 18-20). Within the restrictions that we have been experiencing, we need to continue to look for creative ways to reach out, notice, and care for one another and, even the Bible teaches us:

“And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap if we do not give up. So then as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.” Galatians 6:9 – 10.

As the Holy Spirit brings names and faces to mind, accept that as His “nudging” to reach out with a phone call and to pray for one another. I do sincerely believe that even as aspects of Christian community have been challenging this past year, there has also been many new personal connections that have grown and have strengthened the community of our church far past Sunday mornings.

As we navigate our church ministries and programs with creativity, some of what you can expect within our Church over the next month is as follows.

- **Wearing a mask is now mandatory and expected when gathering in the church building. Children should follow the same guidelines as they practise at school (K – Gr 3 exempt). Masks will be available as you enter the church. Please be gracious to our ushers as you enter. They already know that many of you don’t “like it”. Those speaking or ministering with music from the front are not required to mask while on the platform.**

- Our Sanctuary is limited in attendance to 78. (1/3rd capacity – you may read differently on different websites but this is the clarification we have received from our District) (The average Sanctuary attendance for the last 3 months is 61 with the highest Sunday being 78)
- Seating will continue to be available in the Fellowship Hall for families and / or Small Groups that wish to worship together there. This is in addition to Sanctuary attendance. If Small Groups wish to “book” the Fellowship Hall for Sunday morning worship, this may be an available option. Please contact the church office for more details.
- Live Streaming services will continue to be offered through our Facebook page as an option for those looking to worship from home. Those with a Facebook account continue to have the opportunity to interact with others during the Live Streaming.
- There will be NO Discoveryland this Sunday (Nov 29th) as some reconfiguring of the ministry is needed, but Discoveryland will resume for Dec 6th, 13th, and 20th. Discoveryland will then take a break over Christmas (Dec 27th & Jan 3rd) and resume on January 10th. Discoveryland will continue to follow the temporary measures that have been set out by Alberta Health. Our present Discoveryland ages are 3 to 8 (Gr. 3) and are exempt from needing masks.
- The Nursery will be closed for the remainder of 2020 and will look to reopen at some point in January.
- Youth Group will break for the next three weeks. Youth Leaders will be in contact with youth when they resume. Junior Youth will look to resume in the new year.
- Small Group, Bible Study groups, and Leadership teams are permitted to use the church to meet during the week. They may meet in either the Fellowship Hall or the Sanctuary. Distancing of 6 feet and wearing a mask is expected when gathering. Food and drink may be brought for own use but not to be shared in the group. This may be an option for groups wishing to continue to meet but unable to do so from home.

I want to express my gratitude for our volunteers who continue to work hard and serve our congregation through these many changes and those on our Elder’s Board and Church Council who continue to wrestle with the implications of the season we are in. Your work & expressions of love towards us as a congregation are very much appreciated. My prayer is that, even in the midst of unwanted circumstances, we would continue to be a people who “Share Christ’s Life, Show Christ’s love, and Shine Christ’s Life” all “Because of the Grace of Jesus” with “Graciousness towards one another”.

In Christ,

Pastor Kevin

**For more information on Alberta Health Gathering Measures for Faith Communities, see the following link: <https://www.alberta.ca/enhanced-public-health-measures.aspx#toc-2>