

Update as of July 5, 2021

On June 30, the province moved into Step Two of the provincial plan. This allows minimal usage of the facilities at St. Mark's, where the gathering sizes are limited by government regulations.

As of July 5, 2021, the staff and summer students are now able to return to work in the building. However, occupancy is limited to 10 persons or less. As a result, ministries and small groups will continue to meet online. The building is not open and prior approval must be obtained before entering, to ensure we do not exceed occupancy levels.

We would like to report that Footprints4Autism has been functioning onsite since April 10th, and is now in the first week of summer day camp. The Great Big Theatre Company will also begin summer day camps in the coming weeks and between these two exempted programs, the lower level of the church will be active for the whole summer season, again with capacity limits.

The Food to Go program has begun successful and safe operations at St. Mark's, and has completed 3 weeks of bag lunch distribution on Wednesdays, to more than 60 individuals weekly. At this time, these approved programs are operating safely within the guidelines and following all COVID protocols.

We have updated our COVID Operations Plan for St. Mark's, to accommodate the changes the province has made to transition to the Reopening Ontario – Step Plan.

[Read St. Mark's COVID Operations Updated Plan HERE.](#)

On June 25, you will have received a congregational survey. We have had over 90 replies submitted so far, thank you for your comments!

The survey will remain open and active until midnight on **Friday, July 9, 2021**. We hope you will take a few minutes to respond, if you have not already. Your input is very important in the next steps for reopening St. Mark's.

Based on the responses received prior to the Council meeting on June 29, 2021, St. Mark's Church Council voted that St. Mark's will reopen for in-person worship on Sunday, September 12, 2021, given that the province achieves Step Three of their plan and all parties agree to follow the COVID-19 protocols outlined in the Operations Plan, including masking, social distancing and occupancy restrictions, as outlined by the province for worship services.

Church Council is currently building a team of volunteers to participate in the reopening of St. Mark's. If you are interested in more information, please contact us at office@stmarkswhitby.ca.

The COVID Team continues to meet monthly, or more frequently, as required. Gatherings are focussed on being conscious and sensitive to the vulnerable and creating a framework to best address St. Mark's Community of Faith with the parameters set by the province at the forefront of our discussions.

COVID Operations Team
David Milton Chair, Church Council

