



COVID-19 and The Journey Church Q&A

Q: Is everyone missing the in-person public gatherings for worship, fellowship, and teaching as much as me?

A: We are missing the ability to meet in person. So much of church is meant to be “together” where we can talk, hug, handshake, share in the elements of Lord’s Supper, sing, laying of hands during prayer, holding the newborn baby, place a hand of encouragement on someone’s shoulder and all the other ways we physically connect as a church family.

Q: I hear that there are churches in California, USA where 100 people can gather in their church building or that 25% of the space can be used. That sounds like a good idea.

A: As nice as the weather is in that part of the world, we live in New Brunswick and must abide by the guidelines and restrictions set down by our provincial government. Presently that is 50 people or less with the 2-meter physical distancing rule being practiced.

Q: How soon do you think we will have public worship gatherings in light of our new restrictions?

A: The short answer is, “Not soon.” What we are taking into account is how **different** our in-person gathering experience will be. Screening at the door, no mingling of the congregation, children’s ministry space presently suspended, corporate singing is not encouraged, families will need to sit together, masks must be worn and what is the maximum number that can truly be managed at each of our campuses in a room where people are sitting for up to and over an hour at a time.

Q: I hear that other churches are opening in the area, shouldn’t we be doing the same?

A: Churches will make different decisions in times like these. Our responsibility is to make decisions for TJC that keep all people safe, and that reflects a desire to be wise and loving. We believe - Slow is better . Rushing is risky. One of our rule of thumbs is “*stay one step behind the government and our neighborhoods.*”

Q: How do you see us doing church for the remainder of the year?

A: Here is the abbreviated answer:

- Gathering Online is the primary means for virtual corporate worship and teaching.

- Bubble Groups of friends and family will meet for watch parties and fellowship times.
- Online programs will be developed for children and youth
- Our church buildings will be used primarily for small ministry events and gatherings.
- We will experiment with a few outdoor gatherings throughout the summer and early fall.
- Faith @Home best practices will be taught.
- We will mobilize a group of people with the gifts of mercy to care for the most vulnerable in our congregation that will involve phone calls and zoom gatherings.

Q: I know older people who don't know how to connect to the weekly online experience. How do we not leave them feeling left out?

A: Our goal is to help them access our digital presence as we figure out who is and is not able to connect. Presently we are determining this. Other churches are coming up with creative solutions on how to digitally minister to the older adults. (For example, some churches have purchased inexpensive user-friendly tablets that are distributed to seniors)

Q: I normally give to the church through giving envelopes. Now that it appears we won't be meeting in-person anytime soon, what is recommended for people who give by envelopes?

A: The Journey Church family has been so generous through this pandemic so far. If you primarily give through using envelopes here are a few suggestions to help you and to help the church:

1. Consider Pre-Authorized Giving. If you have a void cheque, it's super easy to set-up automatic giving. Lisa McKim, our Financial Administrator, can help you with this. Just call the church office at 853-7170.
2. You can still drop off your giving at the Brentwood Campus and drop it in the mail slot.
3. You can drop it off at the Allison Campus (Monday to Friday - 9:30am to 4pm - call the church office before you come). One idea you may want to consider to reduce the risk is dropping off your giving on a monthly basis instead of a weekly basis. Either in one envelope or multiple, whatever is more convenient for you.

Q: I'm a key holder at The Journey Church. I hear that the buildings are 'closed' but I am not sure what that means for each Campus?

A: As we put in place our Operational Plan for TJC, we still want to limit people who are coming and going into our buildings to mitigate risks related to COVID-19. We ask that

anyone coming to our campuses (even if it is a drop-off) not have any of the following symptoms: fever above 38°C or signs of a fever (such as chills); a new cough or worsening chronic cough; sore throat; runny nose; headache;a new onset of fatigue;a new onset of muscle pain; diarrhea; and loss of sense of taste or loss of sense of smell. Once you come into one of campuses please follow the instructions for each campus stated below:

1. Allison Campus: If you are dropping off your offering, please set it in the offering plate on the table inside the door. There is hand sanitizer for your use. If you are coming to volunteer in some capacity, we ask that you stop at the table inside the door, use the hand sanitizer and sign-in. Practice physical distancing, good respiratory etiquette and wash your hands often.
2. Riverview Campus: Because of the daycare that is operating at this Campus, we really do ask that TJC key holders do not enter the building at this point unless they have a very legitimate reason. We want to support our daycare operator as she and her team have very strict protocols they need to follow. If you do need to enter this campus, please use the office door (the door with the mailbox). Once you enter the building you must have your temperature taken and it needs to be logged then wash your hands. This is extremely important to follow whether you are there during the day, evening or weekend. At this time, we prefer you contact either Dean Patterson or Linda Hisey in advance if you need to go into this building.
3. Brentwood Campus: This building is basically closed at this point except picking up giving envelopes and for a rental that is happening on Monday and Thursday evenings. Please contact Linda Hisey in advance if you need to go into this building.

Q: *What do you see happening to our church?*

A: A pastor recently said, *"In this season we believe there is an opportunity to do the ministry and mission of our church 'small'"* It may be a small group of 5 youth meeting with a mature Christian on learning how to pray, it may be a 3 family/friend bubble group doing deeper community, it may small acts of kindness at the end of driveways - that when put all together people see God's love and are drawn to faith in Jesus. In other words, I see Jesus' church continuing to be made up of people who will *worship* in new ways, *grow* in their faith, *serve* others with love, *connect* with fellow believers and *share* their hope in Jesus with the world around them.