

Details regarding NVBC congregational gathering during Covid-19 restrictions

This document has been created by the Deacon Board in consultation with the Leadership Team and the medical professionals (Kara Carroll, Alicia Gross, and Elizabeth Thomas) that attend NVBC. We are following CDC guidelines and then tailoring it specifically for NVBC's circumstances. These recommendations are based on 3 truths: firstly, our Scriptures command us to obey authority set over us (Romans 13:1-10, Titus 3:1, I Peter 2: 13-15); secondly, this is an act of love towards the other person (Eph 4:2, John 13:34, Rom 13:8, I John 3:18); thirdly, our behavior should present a responsible witness of Christ to the community (Phil. 2:15)

*Who is "high risk"? According to the CDC guidelines, anyone who is 65 years and older, has pre-existing medical conditions, is not feeling well, etc ... you fall into this category. **Covid-19 is everywhere** and it's possible that at NVBC there will be asymptomatic people who are contagious!*

1. Who should attend

Our responsibility is to advise and encourage lovingly. Please do not see this as us limiting your coming; in fact, it is our effort to protect you. If you fall into that category, you are encouraged to stay home. If you are uncertain of your own vulnerability or whether these gatherings will put you at risk, we encourage you to join us via our virtual broadcast. If you are able to come, after taking into consideration all of the above, and are willing to comply by our guidelines, we warmly welcome you!

2. Registering

Because of the 6' distancing requirement, we will be requiring a sign up on the NVBC website so that you will know ahead of time whether there are space limitations (in event the Service is in the Sanctuary). We don't want people landing up on Sunday morning and realizing that because all the seats are taken, you are not allowed inside!

3. The Parking Lot

As you exit your cars, we are requesting you to wear a mask.

4. Entry and Exit

For this season, we are requesting you to enter

- a) the facility through what is the "Front" of the building and exit through the rear [*this means that those who are used to parking in the rear, will need to walk to the front for entry*]
- b) once in the Foyer area, please use the double doors to enter and exit through the side (*near the piano*) or the rear double doors

5. Hand Sanitizers

We have bought and placed multiple hand sanitizers in every public space – please use them when you walk in, after you've used the restroom, etc.

6. "Do I need to wear a mask?"

All guidelines indicate the need to wear a mask at all times, especially if indoors where the 6' distancing may be compromised, and in our case if there is singing involved. Children above the age of 2 are required also to wear a mask. Here are some counsel from our medical staff:

- Don't pull your mask under your nose, even if someone can't hear you
- Don't lift to sneeze or cough (*after your sneeze, feel free to take one of our free ones!*)

7. Bathrooms

Since social distancing is difficult to maintain in our bathrooms, we are requesting that its use be limited to 1-2 people at a time. Please announce yourself before entry!

8. Where will we be Worshipping

Weather permitting, we will look to do as much of our worship outside. If inside the Sanctuary 6' distancing allows approximately 40-45 individuals; with couples or families sitting together, we may be able to stretch this to 50.

9. Children

This unfortunately is the one that hurts the most. We will not be able to provide any Children's ministry or support (*this will be revisited in the Fall*). Children above the age of 2

- need to wear a mask, and
- be with their parents at all times

10. The Foyer

Kindly self-monitor social distancing here! Do not crowd for conversations here, kindly keep this space vacant as much as possible so that people can pass through and not have to pause or guess if there's sufficient social distancing. Remember, there needs to be space and distance for an usher at all times.

11. In the Sanctuary

Seating – we have arranged chairs 6' apart; if you are sitting as a family, please take the folding chairs placed against the back wall and create your seating next to each other making sure that your group is sufficiently separated from others.

Offering – as you enter the Sanctuary, you will find offering plates – please deposit your offerings on entry. If you forget, during the singing of the Offertory song, you can place your offering either in the plate located in the back or bring your offerings to the plate that will be located in the front.

Communion – we will be using pre-packaged wafers and cups that you will have to open yourself for usage. They will be set out on the Foyer Table – please pick them up before entering the Sanctuary [if you forget to pick it up, there will be some placed in the front ... please come forward and pick them up just before we celebrate]

12. Give yourself Time!

Arrive early! Everything is going to take longer and slower! Example: if you come as a family, you may need to arrange your set of chairs closer together. Whether entering or exiting, we will need to wait for others.

13. Leaving

After the Service, instead of congregating in the Sanctuary or the Foyer, please exit the facility and fellowship outside. This will give you freedom to be out of the restrictive environment and also allow others to exit the Sanctuary

14. Volunteers

As you can see, this has created a tedious set of restrictions – we want to honor what God has set over us, make our gatherings safe for others because we love each other, and take all the precautions we can so that when we are there, we are not worrying. That can distract from worship and fellowship! So, we are requesting that on every Sunday, if we can have 4-5 volunteers who can stay back for 15 minutes so that after everyone else has left the facility, we can go around and clean/sanitize the frequently touched areas.

Philippians 2:15 was quoted earlier to emphasize our witness in the community. Verse 14, where the passage starts, says "Do all things without grumbling or disputing". As we go through what is certainly inconvenient, may we do this well. May our response and motivation exceed that of the pagans. Let's do this out of love for one another and pray for the day when everyone can rejoin us ... when we can let our masks down! Like graduates at their ceremony, we can't wait to throw these masks into the air! Till then ... let's journey together.