

Covid 19 2020 Niagara Falls First Assembly (The Bridge) Reopening Strategy

Niagara Falls First Assembly's statement regarding our ability to reopen in a safe and wise manner will be as follows:

“Plans are in place for Niagara Falls First Assembly (The Bridge) to reopen the church for public gatherings in a wise and safe manner, which adhere to the guidelines established by the CDC as well as the guidelines set forth by our governing authorities. Please know that while we may believe the guidelines for cleaning and safe distancing established by the CDC and local and state government may be excessive or even overkill, we strongly believe that to adequately protect you, your family, and the church, and to honor God's commandment ‘To love your neighbor as yourself’, and to build a bridge that will bless our community and bring honor to God, this plan goes over and above the call of duty.”

The nature of our gatherings will follow the guidelines as set forth by Federal, State, County and local authorities.

While we are thoroughly convinced that there will be a day when all the restrictions will be lifted and the whole Niagara Falls First Family will be able gather together as we did prior to this pandemic, the journey toward that day will require us to be wise, courageous and faithful. Wise to walk together slowly and patiently as we safely navigate this church through this season. Courageous to meet in ways we've never met before, even if it looks totally different, feels strange, and asks us to do things we aren't used to doing. Faithful to the Lord, yourself, your family, and the church family by remaining true to God and by continuing to foster a spirit of generosity and your continued faithfulness in giving your tithes and offerings to the church.

Please remember that our first priority is for the health and welfare of any individual, who attends one of our services.

So what precautions is Niagara Falls First Assembly (The Bridge) taking?

1. While the good news is that we have always kept our facilities to the highest standards of cleanliness and sanitation, we have developed a Sanitation Team, who will thoroughly clean and disinfect the entire

- building after each use.
2. To minimize potential contact surfaces, we are implementing a touch-less system for each worship experience.
 - a. Any announcements of upcoming events will be posted on our Facebook page and the Church website.
 - b. All the words to our songs and any Scripture references will be projected on our projection screen as well as on the bottom of our Live Stream and Facebook Live feeds. (Thus there will no longer be any Hymnals or Bibles located in the back of the pews)
 - c. The doors will be propped open, weather permitting, to limit the need of touching door handles. In the case where the weather prohibits us from propping the doors open, one of our Greeters will open the door for you.
 - d. Drop boxes (Giving Stations) will be installed in the sanctuary, which will be manned by one of our ushers, for the purpose of collecting our tithes and offerings. In addition, we will have a Chest in the front of the sanctuary.
 - e. Communion will be served in individual wrapped containers and left on a designated table in the sanctuary for those who desire to take communion.
 - f. For those desiring offering envelopes, we would ask that you contact the office and we will be glad to mail them to you. In the event, a person needs an offering envelope, they will be made available at a designated location in the sanctuary.
 - g. Freestanding, touch-less, hand sanitizer dispensers will be located at the entrances to the sanctuary.
 3. The Café will remain closed until full reopening
 4. We encourage all church family members 65 years of age and older or individuals with a compromised immune system to worship with us at www.niagarafallsfirst.org or on Facebook Live.
 5. If you have had any of the following symptoms over the last 14 days we ask that you worship with us at www.niagarafallsfirst.org or on Facebook Live.
 - Fever of at least 100.4
 - Cough
 - A sore throat
 - Shortness of breath
 - Contact with anyone confirmed with COVID19 (in last 14 days)

- a. Mandatory health screening assessment (e.g. questionnaire, temperature check) for employees, faith leaders, and volunteers (but not attendees), asking about (1) COVID-19 symptoms in past 14 days, (2) positive COVID-19 test in past 14 days, and/or (3) close contact with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case in past 14 days.
6. Access Points / Entrances will be limited. Thus the entrances on the west side and north side of the building will remain closed until we have reached Code Green.
7. Signage of our protocols will also be posted outside and inside the building.
8. Masks or face coverings will be required for entrance into the building.
 - a. In an instance where a person doesn't have a mask, the church will provide one.
 - b. Face coverings are required at all times except during the Sermon
9. We would ask those who attend to respect social distancing guidelines and refrain from hugging and hand shaking.
10. We will also continue to post our services via Live Stream and Facebook live as well as take advantage of creative ways, such as Connect groups, Watch Parties, Drive In Bible Studies, and Zoom Conferences, in which we can gather together while adhering to the CDC, Federal, State and Local guidelines
11. We will be utilizing Planning Center's RSVP to help us to organize and effectively plan for social distancing at each of our services.

Code Yellow: Limited Public Gatherings and Off Site Gatherings with restrictions.

In Code Yellow, Niagara Falls First Assembly will be greatly optimistic and yet remain extremely cautious. We will operate in conjunction with the States Phase III Reopening and limit our public gathering to no more than 50% of our seating capacity.

As in Code Orange, we will continue to encourage offsite gatherings, such as Connect groups, and continue to live stream our services and post them on Facebook Live for those who are unable to attend or wish to wait until we have progressed to Code Green.

- While our seating capacity would have increased to approximately 325, we would still ask those who wish to attend to RSVP through Planning Center.
- We will continue to limit our registrations to allow for guests / visitors that may show up and weren't able to register or didn't register.
- The Pews against the walls will be reserved for those who are serving as ushers and those who have physical limitations.
- Seating will still be staggered to accommodate for social distancing
- Ushers will dismiss each row at the end of the service to prevent logjams upon exiting the church.
- Bridge Kids and Nursery will resume Sunday gatherings with strict personal distancing practices in place.
- Sunday Limitations:
 - Only family / household units may sit together
 - No Youth Ministry (Youth must sit with their family)
 - Restrooms will be made available on a limited basis. No more than one person at a time and will be sanitized after each use.
 - No transfer of materials from person to person.
 - No congregating in the hallways for times of fellowship
- Midweek Events: (Dates and Times may change to effectively run these ministries and accommodate cleaning schedules)
 - No midweek events will be held without the full approval of the pastoral staff and the Board.
 - In person Bibles Studies may resume on a limited basis
 - Momentum Youth Ministry may meet in smaller community groups
 - Children's Ministry may meet in smaller community groups
 - Restrooms will be made available on a limited basis. No more than one person at a time and will be sanitized after each use.