

Dear Benton Church Family,

Free to meet in person at 90 Benton:

Many of you will be aware that our provincial government announced on Monday that churches would be allowed to begin meeting again in their buildings starting this Sunday. At the time of the announcement, the provincial government indicated they intended to provide more specific guidelines for church leadership. We are awaiting those guidelines before finalizing our plans and procedures. Our leadership is aggressively seeking to balance the strong desire to meet together with an unwavering commitment to the health and safety of our church family.

We will not be meeting at Benton yet:

We recognize that there will be a variety of reactions to this new development. Some will be eager to meet immediately while others will be feeling that we should be moving far more cautiously. Since the new protocols are expected to be complex and extensive, we are certain that we are not yet prepared to address all of the necessary changes that must be in place to meet together in the next few weeks. We are also certain that programming for children will have to remain online well beyond our return to meeting in the building for Sunday morning worship.

Please respond to the survey coming this week:

We will be emailing a survey to you to get a sense of how many would be comfortable with returning to meeting in the church building for worship. The survey also asks a variety of questions related to the protocols required for us to meet safely. The current re-opening guideline allows for us to have 152 people present (30% of the worship centre capacity). We know that there are many who should not be attending worship services in the building for a variety of reasons. We respect that others will not be comfortable attending services yet. We also recognize that families with small children may want to continue attending online services because we cannot provide child-care at the church. Please respond to the survey to give us a better idea of how we need to prepare for re-opening.

Transitional planning:

We are committed to a careful, safe, and orderly re-opening. As we work toward that goal, we are also working on transitional plans which will be effective for ministry moving into the future. Community Groups have grown and become stronger through these days of isolation. In the coming weeks, we will be focusing on Community Groups both online and in homes for continued spiritual fellowship and nurturing. We will also be developing live streaming abilities for those who are not able to attend the worship service in person.

Please be patient and prayerful as our leadership team works toward a joyful re-gathering of the church family at 90 Benton Street.

With joy and continued peace in Christ,

Your Benton Leadership Team