



# The United Church of Canada

## Prairie to Pine Regional Council

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Dear members of Prairie to Pine Regional Council:

On April 1<sup>st</sup> Manitoba is enforcing a Public Health Act order which requires all non-essential businesses to close. Churches fall into this category. The United Church of Canada and Prairie to Pine Regional Council strongly recommend you follow these directives and don't try to find ways around them. We are urging you to assist in flattening the curve. We are now seeing articles in the news about how churches, weddings, choirs, and funerals can be sources of community spread. We don't want you to be the next news story. Lives are at stake.

Following are some important details for you as communities of faith and other ministries.

All church offices should be closed to the public and those who can work from home should.

**Accessing your building to stream worship:** The interpretation in Manitoba is similar to Ontario regarding streaming worship. This can be done from your building as long as social distancing is practiced and the number of people in the building is less than 10. Please see the attached letter from General Council for more detail.

<https://www.united-church.ca/news/clarification-ontario-churches-can-stream-worship-their-buildings>

If you are live streaming worship with other people in the same space, please don't share microphones, keep people at least 2 metres apart, and practice proper hygiene.

Some of the other critical points in the Manitoba Government's new release for churches:

- Public gatherings are limited to no more than 10 people at any indoor or outdoor place or premises. This includes places of worship, gatherings and family events such as weddings and funerals. This does not apply to a facility where health care or social services are provided, including child-care centres and homeless shelters.
- All businesses that are not listed in the schedule of critical services that accompanies the order must close between April 1 and April 14.
  - This closure order does not prevent these businesses from operating on a remote basis.
  - The order does not prevent employees or others from coming into the business to perform repairs, to provide security services or to take out items from the business premises if the business is going to operate on a remote basis.
  - Nothing in the order restricts the operations of delivery of services by the federal or provincial governments or a municipality.

The list of public health orders and the schedule of critical services can be found online at [www.manitoba.ca/covid19/soe.html](http://www.manitoba.ca/covid19/soe.html). Businesses with questions about how the order and schedule of critical services apply to their operations can visit <http://engagemb.ca/covid19-csp> for up-to-date information, and to ask questions that will be answered by government officials. For Ontario Public Health link: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus#section-1>

This CBC article also further clarifies:

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/manitoba-non-essential-business-covid-19-1.5517861>

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/stopping-spread-covid-19>

The Regional Council urges you to continue to contribute to community care, wellness, and safety by following these measures with care.

Shannon McCarthy  
Executive Minister,  
Prairie to Pine Regional Council