

June 12, 2020

Friends in Living Skies Regional Council,

There are lots of questions regarding the newest changes to the maximum number of people at a worship service in the [Re-Open Saskatchewan Guidelines](#). The updated guidelines state:

- Delivering services virtually or through remote delivery such as drive-in service is recommended.
- The total number of people participating in the services cannot exceed 30 per cent of seating capacity or 150 people, whichever is less.
- To safely support larger groupings of individuals – and where seating area allows adequate physical distancing of two metres between individuals or family units – multiple groups of 30 are permitted. These groups must be separated by five metres.

This new maximum amount takes into consideration that there are some congregations/faith groups with sufficiently large buildings, which would allow for more than the previous maximum of 30 people.

Here's the explanation given by our Health Region Liaisons-

- If your building is large enough to host more than one group of 30 physically distanced people, each group of 30 people must be separated by a minimum of 5 meters, if the groups are in the same large sanctuary. For example, in a sanctuary with three sections separated by aisles, groups up to 30 can be placed on the left and right sections, leaving the middle empty. There are pictures of Westminster United below to give ideas.
- If the sanctuary has a balcony, a group of up to 30 people can also be seated there. Again, make sure that physical distancing of 2 metres is maintained, and entry and exit plans are implemented along with the other guidelines for worship.
- If the church has more than one room, with appropriate entry and exit (preferably two separate doors to allow flow), a group of up to 30 can be seated in each room for live streaming. Please keep in mind that the guidelines around physical distance, directional movement, sanitizing, and registration are required for each room that is used.
- Not all our sanctuaries are able to hold anywhere near this number when physical distancing is in place. Many of our churches will need to maintain one group of 30 people if a decision is made to move back to in-person worship. Please remember, the Regional Council is recommending the continuation of remote services as the main way for congregations to gather for community and worship.

Westminster United Church, Regina (maximum seating capacity 525 people; 157 under COVID)

