

**Elgin St. Thomas Site**

Administrative Office  
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**Woodstock Site**

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Woodstock, ON  
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**August 12, 2020**

**From the Office of Dr. Joyce Lock, Medical Officer of Health, Southwestern Public Health**

Dear Faith Leader,

We share a common goal of protecting the health and wellness of everyone in our community. Your members look to you for guidance and advice in all matters, including COVID-19.

Please share these important messages with your congregation to help protect each other from illness:

- COVID-19 is extremely contagious. It can make some people very sick.
- Only have close contact with 10 people – do not hug, sit closely, pass the blessing, or shake hands with anyone outside of those 10 people.
- Stay 6 feet away from everyone else, even when outdoors.
- Wear a face covering in public. You can be fined if you do not wear one. There is no religious exemption.
- Self-isolate if public health tells you to. You can be fined if you do not do this. Self-isolate means no activities at all where you could come into contact with another person.
- Do not sing indoors. Singing can spread virus droplets up to 4 feet. It is less risky to hum, chant or sing outdoors (while keeping 6 feet away from people).
- Get tested if you have any signs of sickness or to check if you have the virus even if you are not sick. Call us at 1-800-922-0096 ext. 9 to arrange testing.

We also updated our [Guidance for Places of Worship](#) with strategies to keep our faith-based communities safe. I am confident that your influence will help us limit the spread of COVID-19 in the communities we serve.

My sincere thanks for your assistance in this matter.

**Dr. Joyce Lock**  
**Medical Officer of Health**  
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