



FAQs – Fall Reopening Plans September and October 2020

The heart of Hillside is to go beyond our walls to lead people towards becoming fully devoted followers of Jesus. Our 2023 Beyond our Walls vision has done that way faster than any of us envisioned! We see God's hand in this, inviting us to embrace God's work in our homes, neighbourhood, city, and world. As we launch into our fall season - starting with our Homecoming Pick-Up party on September 11th, here are some questions you are likely asking.

1. What is the vision for Fall 2020?

With things changing so rapidly in our world, our initial plans for the fall are shorter term (September - October 2020). We'll continue to prayerfully reassess the situation with a further update in October regarding any new or expanded opportunities. Consistent with all of our COVID-related decisions, our plans will continue to be based on (i) safety (ii) New Brunswick and Canadian Government regulations and guidelines and (iii) the best experience for Hillsideers and guests.

So here's the plan...

Our fall season will launch with Homecoming. Watch for details and get ready for a drive-thru event – a "Pick Up Party" - on Friday night, September 11, with a surprise party in a box, treats, and music. This will be all offered in a safe way in our various parking lots to kick-off our fall together. This Friday night event is hosted by our staff and they can't wait to see you! The party in box will be used as you join us for Homecoming Sunday on September 13th.

On Homecoming Sunday, we are looking forward to launching a fresh fall initiative with Hillside Huddles. We want everyone to experience church in community. Your party in a box will help you start your Hillside Huddle with a bang! In addition, we will have on-site watch parties (pre-recorded service) at the Hillside building on Sundays, starting on September 13th, at 9:00 and 11:00am with extra protocols in place for everyone's safety. Throughout the fall, we will also continue to work towards having the needed equipment and personnel in place to have simultaneous onsite services and live streaming, but we aren't there yet. So, stay tuned as things continue to unfold in the weeks ahead!

Looking ahead, our first live on-site event is being planned for Thanksgiving Sunday (October 11th, 2020.) We'll invite Hillside Huddles, as well as individuals and families, to safely come together. We'll have additional service times to accommodate our church family with protocols including mandatory masks and physical distancing in place. We know we'll have lots to celebrate and be thankful for as God works through our Hillside Huddles – even during COVID-19 - and in all our joint ministry together.

In summary, let's state the obvious...

Due to COVID-19, our fall will look very different than our typical fall season. We have missed seeing your faces in person each week and it is strange to not to be able to gather as one big Hillside family. We authentically acknowledge the many challenges, frustrations, and disappointments that have marked this season. However, as a church, we're choosing to make the best of the situation by anticipating and believing that God is going to be at work in a powerful way in all our lives as we find these new ways to cheer one another on in becoming fully devoted followers of Jesus.

Our goal for this fall, then, is to invite every Hillside to be fully invested in a growing relationship with God through His community, the Church! Historically, the Church has often grown exponentially, in depth and numbers, when they've been forced by various circumstances to meet in homes. We are praying you use this opportunity for exactly that – growth!

We're in this together and promise to keep you well informed as Hillside plans adapt along the way. So, huddle up, and engage at Hillside on your journey of being a fully devoted follower of Jesus.

2. What are our plans for Homecoming weekend?

Homecoming Sunday will take place Sunday, September 13th.

On Friday, September 11th, Hillside members are invited to a drive-thru event at the church where Hillside Staff will be ready to greet them at three drive-thru stations including a "Party in a Box" pick-up station, a pre-packaged frozen treat station, and a "Praise/Worship" station (with live singing). All of this can be enjoyed from the comfort and safety of your car. Then, on Sunday, September 13th, with your Hillside Huddle/family, or from an onsite "Watch Party", we will be celebrating as a church family with many fun elements packed into the service.

3. What are Hillside Huddles?

It's a group of 10 or less people that gather to watch the Hillside service together. You could gather to watch one of the streaming services at 9am or 11am on a Sunday (<https://hillsidemoncton.online.church/>). Or you could choose to gather at another time all together and watch the recorded service from "Hillside On Demand." (<https://hillsidemoncton.org/on-demand/>) Who are these people you'll gather with in a huddle? Whoever you like! It could be family members, friends, coworkers, neighbours, seniors, people who live alone, newcomers to Canada etc. We challenge you to think of who may have been feeling left out from church, especially during this long COVID season – invite them to your huddle!

4. Why is our leadership strategically prioritizing Hillside Huddles?

We deeply believe Hillside Huddles is the best way to move our mission forward in our current realities of COVID-19. It's our belief that Hillside Huddles will give you a better experience and richer community as you engage in church together. By moving in this direction, we are being innovative and reopening not just in one location, but in dozens of homes across the greater Moncton area – where you can experience worship, hospitality, conversations, and comfy seats as you engage in the Hillside service.

The worship program team will also be making the services more interactive and our pastors will be providing sermon-related questions each week that will further enhance your Huddle experience with others. We believe this is a way better experience of what we've all be longing for lately – meaningful connections with people! Ultimately, our leadership believes it's a practical way to remain both agile and strategic in these uncertain times.

Now, given the needed COVID protocols for keeping one another safe for on-site services, we anticipate many of you choosing to enjoy church and community in a Hillside Huddle. In particular those of you with young families, Hillside Huddles gives you a way to engage in services without trying to get your kids to keep the COVID protocols. In Hillside Huddles we can safely and meaningfully help one another become fully devoted followers of Jesus.

Hillside Huddles reflect deeply the DNA of Hillside – building a strong sense of community, even beyond our walls and helping families engage in faith together. The early church was often forced to meet in homes, and they discovered deeper community and it became a way to invite their family, friends, coworkers and neighbours to discover Jesus. May we find the same!

5. Are there other options, beside Hillside Huddles, for participating in services?

Yes! We realize that not everyone will want to participate in a Hillside Huddle, but would prefer an on-site option instead. That's why on September 13th, 2020 we'll be opening the Hillside building to a limited number (by reserving pre-tickets) of people for watch parties (watching the service on the big screen,) with extra protocols (including wearing masks) that must be followed in order to attend. Bear in mind, too, that current guidelines dictate that we can only use about 30% of our seating capacity per service. Watch our Hillside website and social media for further details.

Beyond this, a third option is that you could continue to participate in services online on your own, from your home or cottage - but we all know, church is better with others! Please feel free to do what you are most comfortable with at this time.

6. Schools and even other churches are reopening fully, why isn't Hillside?

We are reopening! In a way that is considering your safety and is in the best interest of our diverse church family and community. Although different churches in our region and throughout North America are dealing with this pandemic in different ways, we are reopening in a way that gives you options to select what you are comfortable with at this time and the best way for you and your family to have a meaningful experience of church – either in Hillside Huddles, onsite with protocols (including masks), or you could continue to watch on your own online. The leadership also wants you to know that although we are working towards it, we do not yet have all the equipment and trained people we need to be able to do a simultaneous on-site service and live streaming service on Sunday mornings at 9am and 11am. This is something we're working on. Stay tuned!

7. Will there be childcare on-site at Hillside during the "watch parties"?

Kids and students are such a priority to us at Hillside, that will never change!

Having said this, unfortunately, there will not be any on-site kids' or students' programming during services. Kids and students are welcome to attend Hillside Huddles. Although they are also welcome at the onsite watch parties, we're recommending Hillside Huddles as the better option for most families. Either way, Kids and students are the responsibility of their parents during these events and are expected to follow the same protocols as adults. During onsite watch parties, the Family Centre will be designated specifically for families with children to engage in the service together.

The reason we're not able to offer kid or student specific onsite programming simultaneously is due to a number of factors including:

- the limits on numbers that allow for physical distancing within our building;
- the extra protocols required to operate kids' and students' programming during COVID that we are not able to accommodate due to the transient nature of both participants and volunteers in these programs.

This is sad to us, but we'll keep looking out for your safety and watching the regulations to see what we CAN creatively do together for our kids and students. For this reason, we believe the on-site watch parties will likely appeal more to certain demographics and not as much to those with younger families. However, both our Kids' and Students' Ministries are planning to continue providing the amazing online experiences and special events (following needed protocols for your and our community's safety) to grow faith in all ages as we journey through this time together.

Our Premier Family Ministry team has been exceptional at offering special events during COVID – the Easter Eggstravaganza Scavenger Hunt, Photo Car Rally, FOCUS virtual family experience, Zoom events, nacho parties for students, hiking adventures, and more. We are so blessed by the commitment, vision, and creativity of our team. Be assured that they will continue to offer kids and students amazing opportunities to grow in their faith and experience community together.

8. What protocols will we need to follow for on-site events at Hillside?

- You will have to pre-register online before any Hillside event.
- During pre-registration, you will be asked pre-screening questions related to COVID.
 - If you don't have access to the online pre-registration, we can help you fill it out.
- When on-site, you'll be required to wear a mask for the safety of yourself and others.
- You'll have to maintain physical distancing from anyone not already in your existing COVID family/friend bubble.
- You can read our whole COVID Operational Plan [here](#), if you're interested.

9. Why are masks required onsite?

Given our priorities of (i) safety (ii) following government regulations and (iii) creating a great experience for you at Hillside and given the current research, wearing masks is the best current way forward to help us keep one another safe, especially in our diverse congregation. In an onsite gathering, it is very difficult to maintain physical distancing at all times. Furthermore, we know activities like singing are considered particularly risky during COVID-19. Therefore, masks help us all care for one another and our community. You can read our full COVID Operational Plan [here](#).

10. What will the onsite experience be like?

For September and October, with the exception of Thanksgiving Sunday, it will be a watch party where you engage in the online service on the our big screens sitting in a room with other Hillsideers. It's a pre-recorded experience with a Hillside leader as host. You will be warmly welcomed by our wonderful Guest Experience volunteers and they will help you find your way through the new protocols. We will be very excited to see you in person and to be able to worship together!

Thank you! Thank you so much for continuing to find fresh ways to become fully devoted followers of Jesus with us. Thank you for joining us in going beyond our walls and finding new ways to celebrate, connect, and contribute. Let's all of us remain optimistic, faithful, and engaged in not becoming complacent in our faith. "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31).