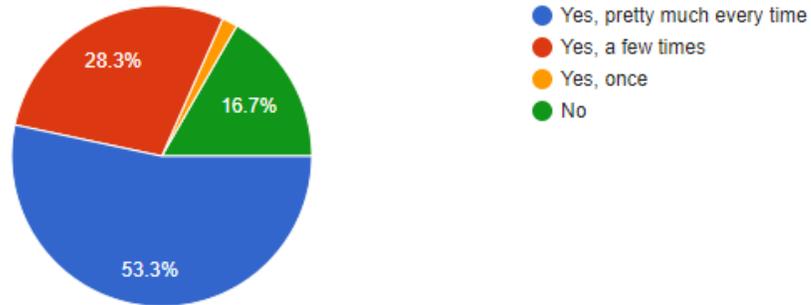


## Merging Waters Spiritual Formation worship survey results – September 2020

1. Have you attended services online since the lockdown started in March 2020?

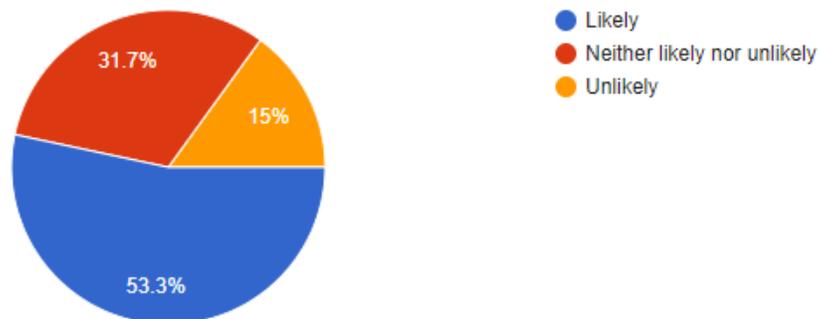
60 responses



Yes, pretty much every time	32 = 53.3%
Yes, a few times	17 = 28.3%
Yes, once	1 = 1.7%
No	10 = 16.7%

2. Would you continue to use online services as an option after in-person services become available?

60 responses



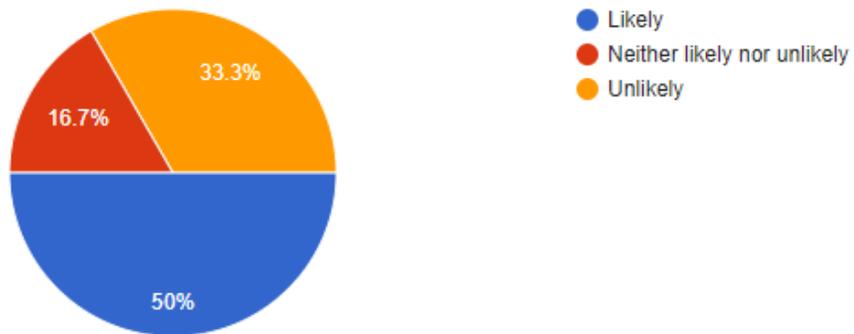
Likely	32 = 53.3%
Neither likely nor unlikely	19 = 31.7%
Unlikely	9 = 15%

3. The approved plan for in-person worship at Union Church includes the following preventive measures:

- Persons must self-evaluate for COVID-19 symptoms and/or contact before planning to attend.
- A maximum of 50 people may attend, entering only through the main entrance to the Sanctuary.
- Attendees must use hand sanitizer and maintain a minimum of 2 metres' separation while entering and exiting and while seated.
- Masks are mandatory while moving about the sanctuary and are recommended at all times.
- Singing and the reciting of prayers will be done silently in the heart, not sung or spoken.
- Volunteers will enforce these guidelines and compile a list of names for contract tracing purposes.
- No social gatherings are permitted in this phase of reopening. After the service, attendees will use the designated exit from the premises.

In view of this protocol, how likely are you to attend in-person worship at Union Church?

60 responses



Likely	30 = 50%
Neither likely nor unlikely	10 = 16.7%
Unlikely	20 = 33.3%

#### 4. What timing do you prefer for returning to onsite worship?

60 responses



As soon as practically possible	15 = 25%
Before the end of 2020	6 = 10%
Sometime in 2021	5 = 8.3%
It depends on how the case rate evolves in Quebec/Canada	30 = 50%
I prefer online worship	4 = 6.7%

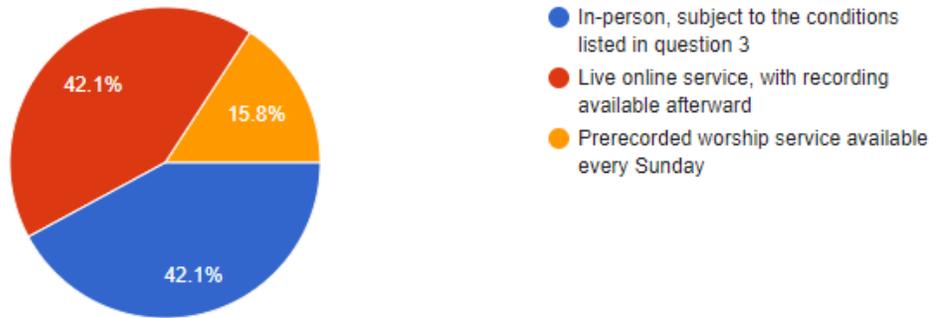
#### 5. What are the most important factors to you regarding worship? Please check a maximum of 3. Some factors may be accommodated either only in-person or only on-line under current restrictions.

60 responses

Hearing the piano or organ played live	38 = 63.3%
Seeing other attendees in person	35 = 58.3%
Seeing and hearing the minister live	28 = 46.7%
Being in a sanctuary	25 = 41.7%
Singing along with music at an online service	14 = 23.3%
Hearing the choir in a recorded selection	14 = 23.3%
Seeing multiple participants in an online service (minister, readers, announcers)	11 = 18.3%
Not having to travel to the church	10 = 16.7%
Interacting with people in an online live platform	3 = 5%

6. What would be your ideal format of worship offered by Merging Waters, assuming the current restrictions remain in place?

57 responses



In-person, subject to the conditions listed in question 3	24 = 42.1%
Live online service, with recording available afterward	24 = 42.1%
Prerecorded worship service available every Sunday	9 = 15.8%

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Because this survey reflected different conditions in Quebec and Canada a month ago, we cannot assume the opinions are exactly the same now. However the main points likely remain the same:

- Many, if not all, would love to worship in a manner they are used to, interacting with others, hearing the minister and music live, and speaking and singing along.
- Concern that our community has a high proportion of people at higher risk due to age.
- Strong support to maintain online worship even when reinstating in-person.
- Suggestions to make an in-person service meaningful under current restrictions, differently from how we used to worship.
- Of the online options, live is preferred over prerecorded.
- More than one suggestion that we offer worship sometime other than Sunday morning (or flexibility of access such as a prerecorded version).

It appears online worship has a permanent place in our community, and a healthy fraction is prepared to continue worshipping in this manner until they are comfortable returning to in-person services.

Comments from respondents (edited to be concise and on topic):

I think it will be hard to maintain protocols.

The demographic at church is skewed to the high-risk category. It would be awful if someone got sick by going to church.

I think both forms of worship would ultimately be required (in person and on-line).

In person with recording available afterwards would be ideal 😊

The majority of the congregation are in the high-risk category so better to wait till a vaccine becomes available. We haven't even started the second wave.

I want to go back to church, but I have enjoyed the online services and I could have ticked all the boxes!

I would appreciate a hybrid version of some in-person worship and online services in any format.

Possibly we could do once a month in person and the other weeks online.

Can we record the in-person services for people to access online when they are able?

Some people would prefer not to take the risk of going to church in person. Others are less worried. So a combination of online and in person services - somehow - would be best. Alternate weeks?

I have missed my church and seeing people each Sunday, but if a church service is only to go in one door and out the other, no choir, no socializing, I would rather keep it online, it's better than getting us all sick.

I can't wait to return to in-person services!

Recorded choir selections, if available, would enhance on-line services.

I probably would come out and check it out in person but without singing or praying aloud, I don't know if I would continue. The online service seems more complete.

In order to accommodate those who are uncomfortable attending in person, the service should be taped and made available on-line.

We cannot reopen until the cases are under control. Why go outside when it can be online. I cannot see going to sit with a mask and not sing and keep still and no talking afterwards and no food and drink.

Reduce it to a shorter service as this way we can enjoy the silence (no songs) as meditation and appreciate the presence of the minister and his words shared with the congregation. Breaking the isolation and a sense of belonging to a community is what being present at church means. On-line has its purpose, but is not a replacement to "feed" the congregation for needed spiritual encouragement.

Music is always important. Ideal might be in-person service with live streaming. Otherwise maybe 2 services/month in-person and 2/mo. online.

I would prefer a combination of live and prerecorded perhaps on alternate Sundays until it is safe to return to the old form of worship.

I leave it to the board's discretion as to how this plays out. You should not be bound strictly by this survey.

I would prefer in-person PLUS the option of live online service

In person services do not need to be every week or even on a Sunday morning. Online services should also continue for those who cannot attend. In person services should be planned to be different from a usual Sunday service. I miss the personal connection with members of the congregation.

I will be happy to return to church when all is over and I don't have to wear a mask and have to stay far away from other people. Until that time, I'll stay home and watch the services online.

Given my age and health, I do not feel comfortable with in-person events yet.

We really appreciate it when the service is posted early on Sunday morning. There are times that I have time constraints and being able to worship at 9:00 fits my schedule.

With the current increase in covid 19 cases in Quebec, I realize my answers could change even though at the time the questionnaire was circulated I was anxious to get back to in-person worship.

Online services are not for me. I like to see and talk to people. I know at this time it is very restricted and I understand this. If I am not up on Sunday in time to go to online as though I am going to church I do not tune in at a later date.

I believe in-person worship is very important to the future of the church as long as it can be done safely. I also believe it needs to be different, we are living in different times. Make more use of the screen with audio visuals, add instrumentals to replace singing, invite others to participate. We have a very creative congregation that can rise to the challenge.

I would appreciate the consideration of the idea of having worship at another time than 10:30am Sunday. I find that online worship is not feeding my spiritual needs. I find it hard to be in the moment online at home.

The bulk of the congregation is over 60 and many probably have health issues that put them especially at risk with this virus. The church should be very careful when scheduling a reopening with these people in mind.

Since singing in the choir in the service is one of the most enjoyable parts of the Service and seeing Ryan and others live it puts me somewhere in the middle.

We have demonstrated remarkable resilience thus far in this pandemic and we have been forced to use our imagination in so many ways. Out of this we can learn that there are things we should keep, things we should discard and new combinations of old and new.