



ST. JOHN'S NORWAY

ANGLICAN CHURCH IN THE BEACHES

Friday, September 4, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ,

As the clergy and lay leadership team of St. John's Norway, we are writing to you with details regarding our re-opening for in-person worship on Sunday, September 13. Thank you to everyone for playing their part these last few months by practicing physical distancing, while also continuing to safely and appropriately check in with vulnerable neighbours, friends, and family. We are also thankful for your continued support of the parish through participation in Sunday morning worship and online programming, as well as for your contributions of time, talent, and treasure.

Sunday Morning Worship Schedule

Beginning Sunday, September 13, we will be offering the following services:

9:00 - Dial-in service of morning prayer (said)

10:30 - In-person service of Holy Eucharist with instrumental accompaniment (no singing)

Please note that we will not be offering an in-person service of Holy Eucharist at 8:30 and there will be no in-person Sunday school at the 10:30 service. To ensure that all are able to participate as fully as possible in the life and worship of the parish, we are continuing the dial-in service of morning prayer on Sunday mornings, but at 9:00. We wish that no one feel obligated to attend in-person if they are concerned for their health or safety.

Health Protocols

At the direction of the Anglican Diocese of Toronto and the municipal and provincial health authorities, permission to resume in-person worship is granted to parishes contingent on their ability to implement the required health and safety protocols. Beginning in late July, the clergy and lay leadership team of the parish met in-person and on the phone to plan for re-opening and to adapt the Diocesan protocols to our parish context. These Diocesan health and safety protocols span seven pages, among which the following are included:

- A maximum Sunday morning attendance of 30% of the space capacity (in our case, this is equal to allowing approximately 85 people to attend)
- Screening of persons as they enter the building to ensure no symptoms of COVID-19
- A requirement that everyone wear masks at all times inside the building
- Registration of all present to assist with contact tracing (including name and contact information for each person)
- Hand sanitizer stations
- Continued physical distancing of six feet and no physical contact (there will be no physical exchange of the peace – smiles and nods only)
- No choral or congregational singing
- Distribution of only the bread at the Eucharist
- Cleaning the space after each service
- Suspension of coffee hour and no serving of food or beverage (water will be available using disposable cups)



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Sunday School

As per the Diocese's protocols, children under the age of ten who are attending on Sunday mornings must remain with their families. Our Sunday School coordinator Elisabeth Westberg will be continuing to offer weekly lessons using Zoom, beginning at 10:00 AM on Sunday mornings. For information about Sunday School, please email Elisabeth directly at youth@stjohnsnorway.com.

How you can help us

It is important to note that the implementation of these health protocols falls primarily on dedicated volunteers, as well as on our small staff. Consequently, we truly appreciate your help and cooperation in ensuring that we can implement these protocols. There are several ways you can help us:

1. If you are able, please pre-register ahead of Sunday morning using the form on the parish website. By pre-registering, we will be able to welcome people into the building more efficiently.
2. To limit the financial cost to the parish of purchasing masks, we ask that you please bring your own (we will also have masks available should you forget – we understand that it happens!)
3. If you are arriving as a couple or a family, please enter and exit the church building together to help expedite the sign-in process.
4. To limit congestion at the entrance to the church, it is helpful if people stagger their arrival times. The best way to ensure this is to avoid arriving at the very last minute.
5. If you plan to make a financial offering, please have it ready to place on the collection plate as you enter the church (we are not permitted to pass the collection plate during the service).
6. Further offers of assistance (time, talent, or treasure) will be appreciated.
7. And finally, your prayers.

Saint Paul writes: "For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love" (1 Corinthians 13:12-13). In these past few months of physical separation, we have seen one another through the "mirror" of online and dial-in connection. Very soon, we shall once again gather as a community and see each other face to face.

As a leadership team, we look forward to re-opening with a mixture of joy and excitement, but also some nervousness as we recognize that many things will feel different. While we continue to face the challenges presented by COVID-19, there is little doubt that we will continue to feel loss, disappointment, and frustration. Yet, in being able to see each other and gather for the Eucharist, we also experience Christ breaking into our midst. It is more important than ever that we reflect on the many ways in which God has blessed us as a parish with faith, hope and love. We look forward to gathering with you.

Sincerely,

Fr. Jeffry Kennedy +
Interim Priest-in-Charge

Fr. Benjamin Gillard +
Assistant Curate

Curt Smith
Rector's Warden

Katya Park
People's Warden