

Bishop
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THE DIOCESE OF QU'APPELLE

Anglican Church of Canada

August 20, 2020

Dear clergy and church wardens

Grace and peace be with you.

I hope and trust you are enjoying a safe and healthy summer. I have 3 updates to announce in the Guidelines for Place of Worship (from the Re-Open Saskatchewan plan). These are effective immediately, so you may communicate them to your vestry, council or congregation as needed.

1. The 5-meter distance between cohort groups has been removed. There is no reference to groups of 30 now. The guidelines simply read: 'The total number of people participating in the services' (includes weddings and funerals) 'cannot exceed 30 per cent of seating capacity or 150 people, whichever is less. To help ensure safety, individuals must be separated by two metres, unless they are part of the same extended household group.'
2. A minor change was introduced with the above term "extended household group." This is to recognize that there may be members of a household bubble that do not reside together but may now sit together.
3. A further minor change on July 21 is to allow books or items that cannot be disinfected to be removed for 24 hours before returned to use. The previous guidelines specified 72 hours.

Reminders:

- Singing and wind instruments remain high risk. Further studies continue to reveal the level of risk. Congregational singing should be avoided, but where it is desired occurs everyone should wear a face mask.
- Sharing of food is exceptionally risky. The food itself is unlikely to be infected. It is the serving of food and drink that presents the risk. Therefore, except for communion wafers, **Food and drink may not be served in places of worship. This is a public health order and subject to strict enforcement.**
- The "Child and Youth Day Camp Guidelines" also apply to places of worship. These Day Camp guidelines can be adapted as needed for shorter programs such as "Vacation Bible Schools", religious education, Sunday School, children's clubs or youth programs. See: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/health-care-administration-and-provider-resources/treatment-procedures-and-guidelines/emerging-public-health-issues/2019-novel-coronavirus/re-open-saskatchewan-plan/guidelines/child-and-youth-day-camp-guidelines>

See all of the government guidelines at <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/health-care-administration-and-provider-resources/treatment-procedures-and-guidelines/emerging-public-health-issues/2019-novel-coronavirus/re-open-saskatchewan-plan/guidelines>

In conversations with the government representatives over the summer, unless there is a new or increased contagion, it is not anticipated that any substantive changes will be made over the next months. Furthermore, it is anticipated that hand-washing, physical distancing, and wearing masks will continue for at least another year (July 2021).

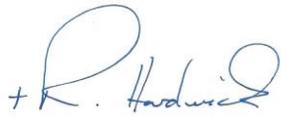
The Faith Leaders group will continue to meet regularly with designated members of the government Covid 19 response team. So please, if you have comments, concerns, or suggestions, please send them to me and I will seek guidance from them.

I hope to publish guidelines for services of Holy Communion early next week.

The Executive Committee and myself urge you to continue to be diligent in preparation, vigilant in prayer, and abundant in the love of the Lord and for one another as you consider or make plans to re-open your churches for worship. If you have not done so already, please let me know your plans for worship post September 1, 2020.

May God bless you all with His love, peace and protection

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "+ R. Hardwick". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

(The Right Reverend) Rob Hardwick
Bishop of Qu'Appelle

Our Father, whose Son came to bring wholeness to the lives of all: we thank you for the wealth of knowledge brought to us through medical research, and for the healing ministry of doctors, surgeons, nurses and all in the health service. We ask, that you bless them in their work; that you would strengthen and protect them in their varied tasks; and that you would know your joy, peace and encouragement in their ministries of healing and wholeness.

Gracious God, to whom alone is known the mystery of suffering, hear our prayers on behalf of those who bear the burden of sickness or pain, or have to undergo an operation. In their weakness and anxiety draw near to them with your comfort and strength, and give them the assurance that, sharing their suffering, you will also share with them your peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty God, you have called your Church to share in your mission to the whole world: give to us and to all your people such belief in the gospel and such faithfulness in service that the life of all may be renewed in the knowledge and love of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, (prayer by James M. Tod