

May 7, 2020

To all members of the diocese of Islands and Inlets

Friends,

Yesterday, the premier and provincial health minister held a press briefing announcing the broad brushstrokes of a four-phased plan for moving forward into a new normal for life in BC. It gave us much hope and confidence that all that we have been doing has been worth our collective efforts.

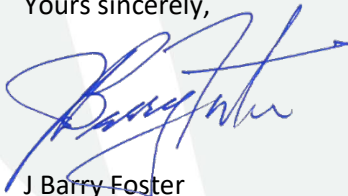
The day is coming when small worship gatherings MAY be possible, but the time is not yet. Yesterday's briefing by the premier was not detailed enough for us as a diocese to make policy decisions. We are awaiting further detailed proposals from the government about religious community gatherings, that are also authorized by the provincial health officer. Our churches will remain closed for the time being.

As a faith community, we always live between the already and the not yet. Our current reality is that churches are closed to support our commitment to public health and safety. Many of the members of our congregations fall into the population the provincial health officer describes as vulnerable. We remain committed to protecting their health and wellbeing by temporarily sacrificing our desire to gather for worship. We have demonstrated over the last two months that we are able to worship virtually and this will be our continuing reality for a while.

When we are able to gather again it will be with a detailed protocol about how to do so safely. In the meantime, we are called to persevere in the face of what is and has been challenging for us.

The Lord be with you.

Yours sincerely,



J Barry Foster
executive officer