



To All Clergy and Lay Leaders in the Diocese,

Please know of my continuing prayers for all of you as we start to move toward the light at the end of the dark tunnel of this pandemic. Things are starting to change within our province and for that I am grateful to God, giving thanks as well to those who have given leadership in British Columbia, those who developed the vaccines, those who are health care and other front-line workers, those who have followed the protocols, and all of you for your diligence in keeping your congregations safe.

I have just received the updated COVID-19 Safety Plan for the Province of British Columbia, that came into effect on June 15. There are a number of changes that will affect us. Here are the highlights:

INDOOR WORSHIP:

- There can be 50 people (including weddings, funerals, baptisms) **OR** up to 10% of the capacity of the church (e.g. if the church can hold 1,000 people then 100 people can attend), whichever is the larger of these two numbers. In addition, there can be up to 4 people to help others follow the protocols (these 4 are not included in the 50 in attendance).
- People attending only need to be 2 metres apart.
- There can be up to 5 musicians, but just one soloist who can sing or lead music. They must be 3 metres from each other and 3 metres from the congregation. There is **NO** congregational singing at this time.

- You may have services of Holy Eucharist (as long as you continue to follow the protocols put in place as part of Phase 3 of the Diocesan COVID Plan). Please note that this will be Communion of one kind only (the bread/body of Christ) and the priest consumes all of the wine/blood of Christ on behalf of the community.
- All COVID protocols must continue to be in place (all must wear masks, maintain a 2 metre distancing between all in the congregation, contact tracing, all must assess their health before attending, hand sanitizer available, cleaning and disinfecting protocols in place, etc). Please note that leaders and musicians can remove their masks while speaking or singing.
- Wherever possible, windows and doors should be opened to increase ventilation.
- No socializing before or after the service.

OUTDOOR WORSHIP:

- There can be 50 people and up to 50 additional vehicles (if people are remaining in their vehicles). This includes weddings, funerals, baptisms.
- People must maintain 2 metres distancing apart.
- Up to 5 musicians can be present, and one soloist who can sing or play. They must be 3 metres apart from each other and the congregation. There is NO congregational singing at this time.
- You may have services of Holy Eucharist (as long as you continue to follow the protocols put in place as part of Phase 3 of the Diocesan COVID Plan). Please note that this will be Communion of one kind only (the bread/body of Christ) and the priest consumes all of the wine/blood of Christ on behalf of the community.
- All COVID protocols must continue to be in place (all must wear masks, maintain a 2 metre distancing between all in the congregation, contact tracing, all must assess their health before attending, hand sanitizer available, cleaning and disinfecting protocols in place, etc).
- Please note that leaders and musicians can remove their masks while speaking or singing.
- No socializing before or after the service.

I am delighted to share this good news with you that there are fewer restrictions for in-person worship in British Columbia. Please also know that it is expected that even more of these restrictions will be lifted on July 1 (at the earliest), so that we will soon be moving back to almost pre-pandemic times in terms of worship and gatherings in our province. I will update you all when that comes into place.

Please note that NO parish (or other place of worship) must change their opening plans because they feel pressure to do so. It is very important that each parish plan for the best time to return to in-person/onsite worship in their situation. Many parishioners may be hesitant to

return to in-person/onsite worship and so I encourage you to be pastoral, patient and flexible in how you transition your worship services.

I give my permission for parishes (and other places of worship) in the Diocese of New Westminster to follow these new restrictions as laid out by the Provincial Health Officer for June 15. You must, however, inform the Diocesan COVID Safety Team ([the Reverend Tellison Glover](#), [the Reverend Philippa Segrave-Pride](#) and [me](#)) to describe your updated plan but you do not need to resubmit a plan that was previously approved.

Thank you all so very much for your hard work and attention to detail in response to this pandemic. You have helped save many lives. May God bless us and guide us as we move into a time of reduced restrictions but still cognizant of how to protect and care for one another.

BLESSINGS & PEACE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. ...', with a small cross symbol above the first letter.