



**St. Paul's Anglican Church**

10127 145 Street NW

Edmonton, AB

T5N 2X6

780-455-0771

[www.stpauls-anglican.ca](http://www.stpauls-anglican.ca)

Connecting  
people  
with God  
and  
each other

Dear People of St Paul,

I trust that you are each keeping well through the weather changes (and the crazy road conditions!) and the rapid spread of Omicron. I am writing to let you know that Vestry met last evening (Monday, January 17, 2022) and we have decided that **St Paul's will remain open for in-person services**, with some additional restrictions in place (which I will explain below). So, **we will be open for an in-person Service of Holy Eucharist this Sunday, January 23**. We will **continue to livestream services** on the internet so that everyone may participate in worship.

The leadership in our Parish has been very concerned with the rise in COVID-19 cases in our city and province and the corresponding risk that poses to the parish and the burden this places on our health system and frontline workers. We wish to protect the most vulnerable in our community and continue to be a faithful community that witnesses to the grace and love of God in Jesus Christ as we meet together to worship God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We recognize that there is some risk involved in meeting together in-person, but we also recognize the harm caused by restrictions on meeting together. At the end of the day, we have decided that it is best to stay open for in-person services unless there is a significant change to our situation. To our current restrictions - masks must be worn at all times in the church building and social distance of 2m must be maintained - we are restricting congregational singing and the distribution of communion by hand. So, only the worship team will sing (with masks on!) during worship and we will use individual paper cups, placed on a table at the front, to distribute the wafers during Communion.

We have done very well as a parish at following guidelines that keep us safe and stop community spread of the virus, but it is extremely important to emphasize that we continue to follow these guidelines:

- **Get the COVID-19 Vaccine/Booster:** If you have not done so, and you plan to attend services at St Paul's, please consider getting the vaccine and/or the booster if you are eligible. **This is not a requirement to attend**, but it is strongly recommended.
- **Experiencing Cough, Sore Throat, Fever, or Other Symptom/s? Do not attend church** - whether you are vaccinated or not - and please stay home for fourteen days following the end of your symptoms.
- **Exposed to COVID-19?** If you have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, or you yourself has tested positive, **please do not attend church** - whether you are vaccinated or not - and please stay home for the appropriate quarantine period following the end of your symptoms.
- **Keep Us Informed.** Please let the Parish Office know if you have tested positive for COVID-19. There is no shame in this and your identity will not be revealed, but it is very important for us to know this information so that we can properly support you and safeguard the parish.



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- **Wear a Mask.** All parishioners must wear a mask to all services (as per City of Edmonton bylaw 19408). Exceptions to this include children under the age of two and those with a medical condition where wearing a mask is not possible. Masks may be removed when taking communion but must be replaced immediately following. If you do not have a mask, we have cloth masks available in the foyer.
- **Do not Sing.** Please refrain from singing, even when wearing a mask. Only the music team will sing.
- **Maintain Physical Distance.** At all times, please remain a minimum of six feet (three seat spaces) from all other individuals not part of your family unit. You will find tape on the floor six feet apart in multiple locations to help you maintain this distance. Please also maintain physical distance outside.

As our situation continues to remain fluid as we are beholden to circumstances that are out of our control, I ask you to continue to be patient with us and flexible, and keep your eye on your email and our social media, as we will need to communicate with the Parish about changing circumstances. I know that some of you are front-line workers, working tirelessly and no doubt exhausted, others of you are teaching in schools or working in service industries and are daily placed in a vulnerable position and have had the parameters in which you have to work changed back-and-forth many times, and no doubt all of us are feeling the stress and strain of two years of living in a global pandemic. I pray for you all that you each (and all of us together) would be strengthened by the Holy Spirit so that, as the BAS says, "we may give ourselves [each day] in love and service to one another and to [God]."

Grace and Peace,

*Myron+*

**The Rev Myron Penner, PhD**

Rector

The Anglican Parish of St Paul's, Edmonton