



Parish Update #25 – Phase 5 Reopening
Please Read Carefully!

Oct 2, 2021

Hello to the St. John's Family,

This update will give you the information you need for our **Phase 5 Reopening** beginning on **Thanksgiving Sunday, Oct. 10**. As of Oct. 4, Nova Scotia will enter a revised Phase 5 period. Physical distancing will no longer be required but indoor masking, sanitizing and contact tracing still will be mandated. This means that we will no longer need to worship by invitation only and seating will not be assigned when you come to church. We will continue to wear masks, to sanitize after every service, and to keep lists of who is in attendance. For the time being, we will continue with **one service on a Sunday at 10:00 a.m.** What you can expect:

- 1) You can come to church on any Sunday you want without pre-registration.
- 2) For the time being, we will continue to use the Link doors as the entry point to the buildings.
- 3) You will be asked to sign in on a sheet in the Link foyer with your name and phone number for contact tracing purposes.
- 4) You can sit where you want to. Please respect other people's space and try not to crowd the pews.
5. You can socialize but be mindful of keeping a respectful distance from others.
6. Please refrain for the time being from hugging and touching others.
7. For now, we will receive communion as we used to do at the low altar by lining up. Please be mindful of keeping distance between yourself and others in the line.
8. Please practise good hand hygiene and use the sanitizer provided throughout the buildings. Stay home if you feel unwell. Wear your mask!

We realize that this change may be uncomfortable from some of us. Each of us will have to make a decision about our comfort level and feelings of safety under this new way of doing things. We understand if some feel that they still need to stay away from worship for a time. Please be respectful of each other's needs and choices. For those who cannot be with us on Sunday, we will continue to provide a recorded version of the 10:00 a.m. service each Sunday on the parish website and on YouTube. It is usually available there by mid-afternoon on Sundays.

Proof of Vaccination: Residents of Nova Scotia will be required to show a proof of vaccination record beginning on Oct. 4 for entry into all non-essential events and activities. For the time being, regular worship services are considered essential and so we will not be asking you for

this proof on a Sunday morning. However, weddings and funerals are not considered essential, largely, I believe, due to the fact that they have attendees from many places and are not regular, stable groups. So we will have to ask for proof of vaccination for any weddings or funerals you attend at the church. As we understand it at this time, meetings and activities during the week in our buildings are also considered non-essential and so we will have to ask for proof of vaccination at these events as well. Please help our volunteers and staff by co-operating with these requests.

Common Cup: The future of sharing the common cup at Eucharist is unclear at this time. I'm aware that many of you are missing receiving the wine as part of the sacrament. I also find it profoundly uncomfortable to bless the elements saying "*drink this all of you*" and then proceeding to drink it myself without sharing it with you. This has been a real sadness for me as presider during this pandemic. So, in consultation with your Spiritual Development Committee, I have decided try some other means of administering wine to you. There are several options open to us and we will try each one for a few weeks this fall. Your feedback is welcome about each method. Does a particular method help you to feel that you have received the wine? Is it reverent? Practical? Would you be content with that method if it became our permanent way of delivering the wine to you?

Choir: At this time, our choir is exploring ways to be together safely and to lead us in singing. We expect at least some of them to be with us to give leadership on Thanksgiving Sunday. Hallelujah! You've been missed!

Christmas Index: Our outreach work continues despite the pandemic restrictions. Last year, we managed to meet our Christmas Index commitment in a safe way by receiving donations on Sundays and Tuesdays. So again this year, we will serve 30 families and do our collection in the same way. Items can be brought to church on Sundays and placed in the grocery cart at the back. They can also be brought to the Link door on Tuesdays from 1-3 p.m. (beginning on Oct. 12). Volunteers will be ready to receive your items. Thank you in advance for your help with this project! The list of items we're seeking for 2021 is below:

Christmas Index Needs 2021

Oct 10

Toothbrushes / Toothpaste

Oct 17

Small can of vegetables (398ml)

Small can of baked beans (398ml)

Oct 24

Can of soup / Can of tuna

Oct 31

Bottle of jam (500ml)
Bottle of peanut butter (500ml)

Nov 7

Box of crackers (500 gm)
Box of cereal. (500 gm)

Nov 14

Can of juice (1.8 L)
Small can of fruit (398ml)

Nov 21

Package of cookies (454 gm)
Box of Stove Top Dressing

Nov 28

Can of cranberry sauce/dressing
Box of tea bags (30 count), instant coffee, hot chocolate

Dec 5

3 boxes Kraft Dinner /
Bag of Christmas candy (300 gm)

Dec 12

Tub margarine (454 gm)
Monetary donations toward purchase of potatoes, turnip, carrots

Dec. 19 - Last Sunday for donations

Bishop Sandra's Visit: Our new Diocesan, the Rt. Rev. Sandra Fyfe will be with us on Sunday, Oct. 17 for our 10:00 a.m. worship. At that time, you will have a chance to meet and greet Bishop Sandra and to welcome her. We hope to be able to provide some sort of safe, contactless refreshments after the worship. *Please note: a return to regular coffee hour is being considered but we will need to assess how we are doing with safety measures under this new reality for a few weeks first!

You will have noticed that I have used the phrase "for the time being" quite often in this update. That's because I recognize the very temporary nature of what we are doing and how we are doing it. Any of these plans could change quickly for the worse or the better depending on case numbers and community spread. I know that many are excited to be back together even in these small ways. We are entering a time of rebuilding in our parish. In terms of numbers, volunteers, and worship and service possibilities, we are launching out in faith. But

let's remember that Covid-19 is not over and it is so important for us to be careful in our behaviours. It's up to us to be safe and to help make our church safe for one another.

"Which commandment is the first of all?" Jesus answered, 'The first is, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." The second is this, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." There is no other commandment greater than these.' Mark 12:28b-31

Peace,

Rev. Lori