



Friday March 13, 2020.

To all members of the congregation of St. George's Place du Canada,

Yesterday I had several email consultations and phone calls with members of St. George's leadership team, with our wardens and our assistant priest concerning plans for the church services this for Sunday, and after considerable discussion and much prayer, **we have decided to exercise caution and cancel worship services for this Sunday, March 15.** We will keep in touch and revisit that decision on a week by week basis, though I expect that this cancellation will last for at least for two weeks.

Our response to the Covid-19 virus is measured and within guidelines shared by our provincial leaders. At this time, I also believe it is the sensible thing to do, especially considering the number of people in our congregation who will be particularly vulnerable to this virus. We do, however, want to remain very much in touch with each other and continue to pray with each other and for each other, and I believe that that is possible with the tools we have. It is with that resolve in mind that we are proposing the following plans for this week:

The Rev. Deborah Noonan, who is taking the service this week, will set up a link so that a short service of Morning Prayer can be made available over Facebook some time Sunday morning. Because this is such short notice, those plans are still in the works, and you will receive information on when and how to access this Sunday prayer service in an email coming later today or Saturday, when Rev. Noonan has had time to set it up. In addition, materials for children's story and activities will also be emailed out, so that parents can still spend some time with Bible stories and activities during the weekend. For those of you who are more inclined to take the time for personal prayer and reflection, I will ask Carole to send out the bulletins that have already been prepared for this week by email, as they contain this week's readings and prayers. Perhaps there is no better time than right now for the divine reassurance that an hour or two of quiet contemplation might offer us all!

Finally, I believe that this is a very good time to consider setting up a phone chain to connect members of the congregation who might like a check in, or who might need some help with groceries, or other errands or even simply a conversation to relieve boredom or isolation as we heed the advice of our health care leaders and stay at home as much as possible. If you are interested in being a part of this initiative, either as one who makes or receives a call, please let Carole in the office know of your interest, and I will begin to organize this over the next week. We are a community who cares for each other, and I believe that over the next few weeks we will have many opportunities to demonstrate that care and concern.

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This week and weekend, I have been spending my time in Toronto at the Council of General Synod meetings, and throughout this time, I have found myself very much distracted by my prayers for you all. I have prayed both that you remain healthy and strong, but also that you have not allowed yourself to be distracted by fear and anxiety. I will be very glad to be able to come home, and to spend time again with you, even if it must be on the phone, or with short visits. Continue to keep in touch with each other, check in, and take care, for God wants nothing more than we remain strong and steadfast in our love and care for each other.

*Trust in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord God you have an everlasting rock!* Isaiah 26:4

In Christ

Karen+