

A Letter from Bishop Shane Parker

Bishop of Ottawa

Dear Friends in Christ across our Diocese,

As vaccinations continue to meet and exceed key targets in Ontario and Quebec, I am pleased to announce a number of important changes as we continue to move with caution and determination to returning to in-person worship and other ministry activities.

On August 3, we will move to the newly revised Yellow stage of our pandemic plan-noting that each parish can decide whether it's ready to move to in-person worship at that time, according to its particular context.

Please note that our Yellow stage has been revised within Version 3.2 of our In This Together document:

https://www.ottawa.anglican.ca/images/COVID-19/July-21-2021/In-This-Together-V-3_2-July-21-2021-v2.pdf?type=file

and allows sharing of the common cup. The Reverend Michael Garner has reviewed the current research and advises that with distancing protocols in place, people can safely receive bread and wine, if they wish. You can read Michael's paper here:

https://www.ottawa.anglican.ca/images/COVID-19/July-21-2021/Garner-Common-Cup-and-SARS-CoV-2_Infection-Risk-2021-07-15.pdf?type=file

And finally, as stated in my last letter, assuming vaccination rates continue to rise and infections continue to abate, all parishes in our diocese must move to offering in-person worship on September 7. This means everyone has to be ready to offer in-person worship starting Sunday, September 12, according to the stage our diocese is in (it's not possible to know yet what that will be; it will be announced closer to the date).

With each passing week, we are able to look with greater confidence to returning to a wider scope of in-person ministries. However, until we hear word the pandemic has ended, we must remain vigilant and adhere to our protocols at all times. Please take very good care of yourselves and one another -- starting with getting fully vaccinated, and by encouraging others to do the same; those who are unvaccinated are at considerable risk of infection.

Be steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and untiring in love as these pandemic days draw ever closer to ending; and may the calming peace of Christ be with you always.

With kindest blessings,

The Rt. Rev. Shane A.D. Parker Bishop of Ottawa