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UPDATE RE: PRIVATE PRAYER IN CHURCH

Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

In my previous letter, I encouraged people to reach out to me and the church to set up times for private prayer in the sanctuary. In a sign of how quickly things are changing during this pandemic, that is no longer safe or allowable.

As many of you know, the Provincial and Municipal governments have both declared a state of emergency which has mandated the closure of all non-essential businesses. Churches were not deemed essential by the provincial government, and as such we are required by law to close. While I strongly believe that churches are necessary and important to the wellbeing of people and society, I also believe in the value and dignity of every human life. We are now indefinitely closed to the public, parishioners and staff for at least the 14 days mandated by the government if not longer.

Additionally, this means that we will no longer be recording Eucharist services from the church, but rather providing morning prayer services recorded from our homes. This also allows us to follow the lead of the Bishops of Toronto and other Anglican Bishops in Ontario who have voluntarily suspended receiving communion in solidarity with everyone who is currently unable to receive the sacrament.

As we get closer to Holy Week and the celebration of Easter, it is getting harder to imagine that we will be able to gather at the church for these important events in the life of the church. As a staff and leadership we are exploring additional options to provide virtual worship experiences and resources in this season. Remember that we do all of this for the because we believe that every person is valued and loved by God – our sacrifices, even the sacrifice of our most holy of celebrations is for the sake of others.

God bless you all in this time of uncertainty and anxiety,

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Graham McCaffrey

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*Our mission is to **worship** God and **proclaim** Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and to **embody** – in word and action –God's reconciling love, justice, compassion and liberation, through which knowledge of God's reign is extended.*

A Parish of the
Diocese of Toronto
Anglican Church
of Canada