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Dear friends in Christ,

I write this letter to you on the feast of the Epiphany, as we celebrate the fact that God's light and life revealed in Jesus is a light for people from every nation, in every age. The past year has reminded us of the need for Jesus and his Gospel of hope and light. We remain in the throes of a worldwide pandemic that doesn't seem to be letting up even as vaccines roll-out slowly across the globe. While we do place our hope in the doctors and scientists that have developed numerous vaccines to combat COVID-19, our ultimate hope lies in Jesus our Immanuel, the God who chose to be amongst us and live out the totality of our human experience – from the heights of joy to the depths of despair and suffering.

As we continue to experience the consequences brought on by the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, the truth of Jesus as Immanuel should give us hope and sustenance to persevere in whatever we face this year – whether that be a continuation of our lockdown or the long-term societal impacts that will be with us for years to come as a result of the pandemic. God has promised every one of us the enduring presence of the Holy Spirit to guide, direct and comfort us in our walks with Jesus. In prayer and the reading of Scripture, we have the daily opportunity to encounter the Holy Spirit and grow our relationship with God. I commend these practices to you at all times, but especially in this time of social isolation and separation from one another in our church community.

At this time, we do not know how long our current lockdown will be in effect. We do know that case numbers in Ontario, and Toronto more specifically, remain at all-time highs. The possibility remains of increased surges because of holiday gatherings. For the time being, we will continue to worship exclusively online at <https://www.facebook.com/GraceChurchScarborough/live>. A decision will be made regarding how to hold our Annual Vestry Meeting (February 28th 2021) virtually at later date. Please watch for more communication regarding this in the future.

Due to the more stringent lockdown procedures in place, we cannot continue with our mid-week worship on Tuesdays and Thursdays as planned. The Diocese of Toronto released increased guidelines that limited the use of church buildings to live-streaming exclusively. While it is unfortunate that we must discontinue this practice, which was well-received during Advent, we do so because it is the safest thing for us to do.

While we remain in the current lockdown, the office will be closed during regular hours. Appointments are available if you need to drop something off or pick something up. Pauline and I will check the mailbox to ensure mail is collected or offering placed in the safe in a timely matter. Please remember that if you leave your offering in the mailbox, use only cheques.

*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

Upcoming Events

Choir Zoom Call – January 14th, 2021 @ 7 pm

Congregational Hymn Sing – January 28th @ 7 pm

These meetings are open to anyone and can be accessed using a computer or telephone connection. Info about connecting is provided below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85890748468?pwd=dXVOVEw4RVV6WXZ0OW1JcGlnU01SZz09>

Meeting ID: 858 9074 8468 Password: 102011

Dial by your location +1 647 374 4685, +1 647 558 0588

Monthly Community Lunch – Saturday, February 13th, 2021 12-2 pm

During our lockdown, outreach ministries can continue as they serve vulnerable populations. Our monthly community lunch falls under this distinction. We will continue our to-go lunch on the second Sunday of every month, even if we are not worshipping in person. Volunteers are always needed, so please contact the office or Nadia Murray if you can assist any given month.

We do not know what the future holds for us, but I encourage you to remain steadfast in prayer and to persevere in hope as we await better news ahead. I also strongly encourage you to pray for our doctors, nurses, first-responders and other essential workers. While this year has been hard on us all, it has been particularly hard for those who have risked infection in essential-services. They need your prayers now more than ever as we get closer to the first anniversary of the beginning of the pandemic here in Canada. Lastly, I encourage you to pray for long-term care homes – their residents and staff – as outbreaks of the virus spread to more and more nursing homes.

I am convinced that we will be able to worship together again soon. As we await that day, I pray that the love of God would envelop you and strengthen you for whatever may come. Each one of you is in my prayers and, I ask that you would pray for me. God bless you and keep and may God's face shine upon you.

Blessings,

Rev. Graham McCaffrey

