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Dear friends in Christ,

I am writing to you during the joyous season of Easter, the world around us is opening up in bloom as the trees and flowers wake from a long winter, and our society continues to come out of its COVID induced slumber as more and more of our normal activities are returning. While the pandemic is not yet over, and we need to continue to be diligent in monitoring and providing safe space for those who remain cautious it is good news indeed.

Congregational Events

On **Friday, June 3rd at 7 pm**, we will be hosting our next event in our 10th Anniversary Concert Series when we welcome an ensemble from *La Petite Musicale of Toronto*. It will be a pleasure to welcome back the lively Caribbean folk tunes and instrumentals, along with select offerings from the Grace Church Choir and more. This is a fundraiser concert designed to support the ministry of the church, tickets are \$20.00. Please consider coming out to support your church and invite your friends to come along as well.

The Feast of Pentecost is just around the corner on **June 5th** and with that great and joyous day on the Christian calendar, we will be finally entering the Green Stage, after deferring it after Easter. This means that coffee hour and other social events will be returning as well as masks becoming optional rather than recommended in our building. On top of the dropping of our remaining COVID-19 restrictions, Pentecost will also see two people baptized (1 adult and 1 child) as well as the return of our 'Bread of the World' celebration. Each of you is invited to bake or buy a loaf of bread or sweet loaf from your country of heritage and bring it to worship to share.

Congregational Feedback

Over several weeks in April and May our phone ministry team connected with the majority of the parish, checking in with you, ascertaining your feelings regarding re-opening, and discovering your concerns and suggestions as we open up again post-COVID.

I am grateful for your responses and for the volunteers who gave their time to reach everyone in the parish they could. The overwhelming feedback we received was a hesitancy around the removal of masks and sharing of the common cup. While we are moving or have moved already towards both of these items, space will always be provided for those who continue to choose to mask and choose not to receive the wine as part of communion. No one will ever be made to feel less than for wearing a mask

*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

and it is the theology and practice of the Anglican Church of Canada that communion is received fully even if you only receive the bread.

Additionally, many of you expressed the desire to see the return of our social events and coffee hour. These were merely not possible during the height of the COVID pandemic, but as we fully enter the Green Stage on Pentecost Sunday these events will no longer be limited and we hope that we can begin to see the return of our social events over the summer or more likely in the Fall.

Finally, some of you expressed sorrow at being disconnected and not receiving enough phone calls or communication during the pandemic. As a leadership team, we regret that this was the case, and while we cannot change the past we are committed to more regular communication and reaching out to you by phone, email, mail and in-person once you are comfortable with that. Our phone ministry team will be regularly checking up on people throughout the year, and when specific needs arise the clergy and leadership team will be in contact to ensure you feel connected to the church congregation. If you need support, prayers, a pastoral visit or a phone call please do not hesitate to let the office know and we will reach out to you!

Church Finances

Due to some technical issues with our finance computer our treasurer, Godwin, has not been able to provide financial updates regularly. With a new computer purchased and other issues dealt with we expect that we will be able to give a financial update soon.

This year we had hoped to take up a special Lenten offering but due to supply chain issues, we weren't able to purchase Lenten boxes. I am grateful for those who did take up the practice during Lent, even without the congregation-wide effort. In place of a Lenten offering, we are once again encouraging every member to consider making a special Pentecost offering in celebration and support of the ministry of the Church. Enclosed in your letter is a special donation envelope in which you can place your special Pentecost offering. We encourage each of you to consider what makes sense for your circumstances.

As the Easter season comes to a close in the coming weeks I pray that the light of Easter will continue to brighten your lives, that you will continue to know the love and peace of God in your life and that others might come to know God in Christ through the joy which abounds in your life today and forevermore.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Graham McCaffrey

