

March 24, 2020

Dear people of St Paul's Community of Faith:

The pace of life in the previous eleven days is not something that many of us have experienced before in our personal or community life. St Paul's has been adapting to changing guidelines for worship, community of faith activities and employee working conditions as advised by the national church, regional council, provincial and federal governments and health organizations.

I have started making pastoral care calls to people in the congregation. It is normal for people to react in individual manners to the uncertainty and seriousness of the COVID-19 virus. This situation affects all of us, our livelihood, our ability to travel freely, our ability to live out our faith in worship and in the community. I am encouraged that people are able to claim their needs to maintain their mental, physical and spiritual health. As we care for each other, we demonstrate the faith and strength of the St Paul's community.

Let me share the status of various aspects of our community of life to this date:

### **Worship**

Public, face-to-face worship has been cancelled until further notice. The weekly bulletin will be attached to the email announcements, and I will include a written reflection. March 29 we are looking at the last phrases of Psalm 23, our focus for Lent. The email announcements will also include links to online weekly worship services provided by the Moderator and other congregations that are equipped to provide either live streaming or recorded visual services. St Paul's will look at options that would allow us to provide video worship.

### **Church Building**

The church building is closed until further notice. Denis Boulet, our custodian, will work in the building on essential tasks for health, regulatory and insurance compliance purposes. He will not open the door unless he receives a specific request from the Chair of Council or the Minister.

### **Administration**

Administrator, Joanne Lucas, will work from home to the extent possible. Joanne will be available through email communication during regular office hours at [admin@stpaulspertth.ca](mailto:admin@stpaulspertth.ca) Voicemail will be checked periodically and messages will be returned within 24 hours, call 613-267-2973. For time sensitive non-pastoral care matters you may contact Lana March, Chairperson of Council, 613-267-2033.

## **Minister**

I am available by phone at 613-326-0049 or email at [rev@stpaulsperth.ca](mailto:rev@stpaulsperth.ca) . I have been calling parishioners to check in, and would be happy to chat if you need a listening ear mixed with a bit of humour and a strong foundation in the witness of scripture, God's presence with us, and life experience.

## **Council and Ministry Teams**

Council is using ZOOM virtual meeting platform to meet and conduct the business of the congregation in the changing times. Please call Lana March, Chairperson of Council, 613 267 2033, if you have any questions or suggestions for these changing times. UCW units are keeping in touch, and that is a good model for teams and finding new ways to undertake ministries.

## **Children/Youth/Adult Christian Education**

Adult Bible study is now an email group. We follow the lectionary and all are welcome. Send me a note, and I will add your address. I have asked the children to draw pictures of Psalm 23 so that when we gather again, we can see their artwork and hear their stories. Children & Youth team have also given the children some challenges and good ideas to continue their Christian education.

## **Pastoral Care**

With retirement residences and nursing homes closed to the public, our pastoral care via phone is increasingly important. The prayer chain continues its work as does Care and Share. Prayer shawls are continuing with individuals. I encourage you to call and connect with each other and other people in our community as often as you are comfortable.

## **Sustainability**

Finance and Sustainability Teams will continue to share St Paul's financial status with you. We give from the heart of our faith so that ministries can continue. Following are ways that givings can make it to the office:

1. Drop a cheque in the outside locked mailbox at the church
2. Mail a cheque to the church: 25 Gore St. W. Perth, ON K7H 2L9
3. Sign up for PAR - contact the Office Administrator: [admin@stpaulsperth.ca](mailto:admin@stpaulsperth.ca)
4. Click on the Donations link on the website: <https://www.stpaulsperth.ca/donate.html>
5. Work is underway to make E-Transfers possible, transferring funds from your bank account electronically to St Paul's account via e-mail. More to come.