

Thursday, December 30, 2021

Dear friends,

I hope you're having a good Christmas, even if we're not yet able to enjoy the freedom to gather and travel we might have hoped to have by now. I doubt any of us could have predicted that the COVID pandemic would last as long as it has or involve so many changes.

In one of his recent letters to the diocese, Bishop Andrew commented that the response has been a case of 'two steps forward, one step back.' And so it is that we find ourselves yet again needing to take a step back for the sake of protecting the vulnerable and, as we hope, slowing the spread of the virus.

Beginning January 9th, St. John's will once again transition to online worship only. I and a minimal number of participants will continue to stream the service to Zoom and continue to offer the opportunity for the community to make their Spiritual Communion together. Readers, Intercessors, and Preachers (apart from me) will participate remotely via Zoom.

If any of you have not yet made your Christmas Communion and eagerly desire to do so, you will still be able to attend in person this Sunday, January 2nd, which is Epiphany Sunday. If you have already made your Christmas Communion, we urge you to remain at home and worship with us online.

It seems counterintuitive in a way to be asking that we stay apart even as we prepare to celebrate the Epiphany, when we contemplate how the birth of Christ draws us all together. But, it was into a world full of uncertainty and struggle that Jesus was born and caused the light of God to shine in the darkness. Our coming together in Christ is not just a physical act; it's a spiritual reality that enlightens our lives even when we are physically distant from one another. I'm grateful that we continue to be able to gather online and to participate in Spiritual Communion together even as love for our neighbour compels us to suspend our practice of gathering in person. I pray that God will reveal our communion in Christ to us in new ways as we face this challenge together.

Yours in Christ,

Alexandra+