

March 14, 2020

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

In keeping with the pastoral direction of our Archbishop and the other bishops of the Provincial House, we will be suspending worship services at Gathering Table effective immediately. I expect this suspension will last at least until Palm Sunday.

While we haven't had any known or confirmed cases of COVID-19 here in Thunder Bay, we want to act with proactive responsibility. I have asked the parish wardens to meet tomorrow morning when we would normally be gathered for worship in order to discuss, discern and decide how we will proceed with worship alternatives and other weekly ministries.

Please continue in prayer for our world as we face this latest threat - a threat which carries complex implications and far reaching consequences for all of us.

Godspeed. George+

George M Porter, DPhil



The Office of the Metropolitan of Ontario The Anglican Church of Canada

The Most Reverend Anne Germond
Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario

Friday 13th March, 2020

Dear People of God, Peace be with you, especially in this present moment as the outbreak of COVID-19 in Ontario becomes increasingly real and requires our collective and concerted efforts.

In consultation with the bishops of our province, I am recommending the temporary suspension of all public worship services, effective Sunday, March 15.

Gathering as a people of faith is important, but God also summons us to seek the welfare of the cities in which we live and move and have our being. This extraordinary measure is consistent with the measures put in place by other civic institutions within our province, in an effort to impede the transmission of the coronavirus from person to person. While it comes at a cost, this sacrifice is offered out of a deep and abiding love for our neighbours, particularly those who are most vulnerable to severe repercussions from a COVID-19 infection.

Each diocesan bishop will enact further measures which are appropriate for their particular ministry context and unique circumstances.

Plans are in place for online prayer and worship resources to be posted on the website of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario. As your metropolitan, I encourage you, my dear friends in Christ, to find creative ways to stay connected to God and one another during this time as we continue to observe a holy Lent, through fasting, albeit of a different and unexpected kind; unceasing prayer, and generous almsgiving.

Please join the bishops of our province in holding our province and our whole world in prayer during this time of crisis, especially those who are afflicted with this coronavirus. Pray especially for researchers, policymakers, frontline workers, and for all those who are caring for those who are sick, as well as for those who have died and those who mourn.

In this anxious and uncertain time, may the deep and abiding peace of Christ, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, this day and forevermore.

Faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, starting with a cross symbol and the name "Anne".

Metropolitan and Archbishop of Algoma and Moosonee

On behalf of the Bishops of the Province of Ontario

The Right Reverend Dr. John Chapman, The Right Reverend Michael Oulton, The Right Reverend Susan Bell, The Right Reverend Andrew Asbil, The Right Reverend Dr. Todd Townshend, The Right Reverend Peter Fenty, The Right Reverend Jenny Andison, The Right Reverend Riscylla Shaw, The Right Reverend Kevin Robertson, The Right Reverend Michael Bird, The Most Reverend Fred Hiltz

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