



## BISHOP OF THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF OTTAWA

July 7, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ,

I am pleased to authorize for immediate use **In This Together – The Anglican Diocese of Ottawa’s COVID-19 Plan (Version 1.0)**.

This detailed diocesan plan is based on the template developed by the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario. Our plan has been extensively reviewed, including by a small pilot group of parish wardens and clergy. I am grateful to the many fine minds and voices that have brought it into being — particularly our two COVID-19 Advisors, the Reverend Michael Garner and Dr. Bill Gardner.

The plan clearly spells out what is possible in each stage of reopening, and its implementation relies on the wisdom and creativity of our talented clergy and parish leaders. This will help to ensure that the particular circumstances of every parish are taken into consideration.

It is very important to realize that this is not a one-directional plan to reopen: it describes different stages of responding to the pandemic as it plays out, acknowledging that we may be required to move back and forth between stages if there is a second wave or other unexpected developments.

As you read, you’ll find the plan lays out all the many details to be attended to as every parish develops its plan for operating safely in its own specific circumstances. You’ll also see what a great deal of work will be involved in reopening our churches safely, which is why we all need the summer to prepare for the possibility of even partially reopening in September.

At the same time, I want to remind you again that it’s extremely important to enable one another to take time for rest and refreshment before we reopen. The weeks since shut-down began on March 15 have been challenging for everyone, and parish leaders and clergy need to be rested and focused on implementing the plan so please collaborate wherever possible to ensure that everyone gets adequate time off.

Clergy and lay leaders will be fully briefed on the plan in a Zoom call on July 15, and a video of the briefing will be posted online afterwards. Details are in the Communiqué.

We will move through the stages together, standing in solidarity with one another and with Jesus, whom we will continue to steadfastly serve. This is a time to summon our collective strength as a diocesan church, and to move with courage and hope toward the day when the pandemic has ended.

May the strong love of God be with you always.

The Rt. Rev. Shane A.D. Parker  
Bishop of Ottawa

SADP/hnp