



Parish of St. Mark – Ocean Park Anglican Church

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Dec 30, 2021

Some upcoming changes in response to the Omicron variant

Dear friends in Christ,

As you may have heard in the news, the omicron variant of COVID-19 is highly transmissible. We also know that our provincial government and Public Health Officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry, are still in a period of collecting data concerning the outcomes of omicron variant in terms of potency and long term health effects. Because there isn't enough conclusive data, in consideration of our population we service, the Bishop's letter and in consultation with my wardens, I feel the time is now to add some changes to ensure further safety of our church community while we wait for the science to catch up while protecting each other. Effective Sunday, we are going to continue to offer in person services, but utilizing morning prayer at the 8am, 10am and midweek service (using the respective service formats of Book of Common Prayer for 8am and midweek service and Book of Alternative Services format at the 10am service). We are also going back to physical distancing in our church seating plan. To help us do this well, make sure that there is a empty pew behind you and in front of you when finding a place to sit. We will continue to sing, but masked. Lastly, we will continue to ask people to show their double vaccination cards. I will be available for in person visit by appointment only and the above mentioned protocols, or by phone or ZOOM. In addition, I won't be offering any home visits unless it is an emergency. This means our pastoral care team and home communion visiting teams will be on hold temporarily. In addition, Sunday school, coffee after church, confirmation classes and social groups are temporarily on hold until further notice. Meetings such as trustee meetings and parish council will be done via ZOOM so as to continue the necessary business and function of the church. Of course, our Sunday services will continued to be live-streamed via YouTube.

I know that this is a hinderance, however, because this variant is extremely transmissible, I feel and I have prayed that this is the best course of action given the circumstances. May you and your loved ones have a blessed and safe new year.

May our Incarnate Lord continue to be a sign of hope during Christmastide and in the New Year.

Pax et Bonum!
Br. Billy Isenor+