



St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church

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August 21, 2020

"Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness, let the whole earth tremble before him." Psalm 96.9

Dear friends,

The first half of Psalm 96.9 forms one of the antiphons offered before the Invitatory Psalm at Morning Prayer, and is a fitting call to worship as we prepare to return to our beloved sanctuary on September 6.

As referenced in the July 31 letter, St. John's and the Diocese of Ottawa move into the "Amber" stage of the *In This Together* plan on September 1. Parish leadership has been working hard these past few weeks in preparation for this.

Some of the details about our return to worship were included in the July 31 letter. Further work has been done by the Pandemic Task Force (PTF) and updates have been posted weekly on our website. Enclosed you will find a "Welcome Back" brochure which again outlines what to expect. If you have any questions at all, please feel free to contact me, a member of the PTF, or a member of Parish Council. We will do our best to help. Change is never easy, and change of habit and custom in our place of worship can be challenging. Let us be patient and gentle with one another as we navigate it.

For those who are not comfortable returning to in-person worship, I want to assure you that on-line and recorded services will continue, including nightly Compline. An updated lectionary list is provided here for the short form of daily prayer distributed in the May pastoral mailing. If you require a new copy of that prayer form, please let the office know and we will get one out to you.

We have updated the parish "call-out" tree, and regular calls by our volunteers will continue to members of the parish. If you have not been receiving a call, and would like to be included, please let the parish office know. There is always the chance we've missed someone and we want to ensure everyone has access to a friendly voice and updated information, especially if you cannot access the website for updates. In some cases, we don't have a phone number for you, so please pass it along. You may also sign up for bi-monthly e-mail bulletins which will begin on September 3. Simply e-mail the parish office: stjohns_smithsfalls@bellnet.ca

I am very grateful to members of the PTF, Parish Council, Wardens and phone tree volunteers for their tireless efforts these weeks and months. And I give thanks for you all, the saints of the church, for your prayers, financial support and kindness to one another as we continue to weather the pandemic. I am looking forward to connecting with people in person as we enter this next stage of the plan. It will be so very good to see you again, and to worship the Lord in the beauty of the holiness found in the Church of St. John the Evangelist.

I remain yours in the love of Christ,

The Reverend Canon Catherine Ascah
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