



DIOCESE OF KOOTENAY
The Anglican Church of Canada

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The Rt. Rev. Lynne E. McNaughton, *Bishop*

November 18, 2020

Immediate Return to Virtual Worship only

Dear People of the Diocese of Kootenay,

Effective **immediately**, the Diocese of Kootenay will return to only virtual worship. All in-person worship and gatherings are suspended until further notice.

I was on a town-hall meeting this afternoon for Provincial Inter-Faith Religious leaders, with Premier Horgan, Health Minister Adrian Dix, and Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry. They are requiring this immediate return to remote-only worship. As you know, the rates of transmission throughout B.C. are dramatically increasing, and all indoor events must be stopped for now. There will be additional directives coming from Health Authorities tomorrow, and I urge you to read these, but I wanted to alert you immediately so you can make necessary change for this coming Sunday.

Dr. Bonnie Henry said she cannot say how long this order will be in place.

I realize this is very difficult for all of us, especially as we move into our Holy Seasons of Advent and Christmas. I will be working with clergy to support sharing creative resources for meaningful celebrations. You will see, for example, in today's Kootenay Contact an online Advent series, and a Diocesan Lesson and Carols' Service the afternoon of Dec. 13. More resources will come. I have been grateful for the creativity and hard-work of our clergy and lay leaders over the past months in providing worship and pastoral care. I ask you to continue this now and through our Christmas celebrations.

Funerals and Weddings may proceed with a maximum of 10 people. Outdoor events with the appropriate Covid protocols may still happen. Twelve step programs are considered essential services and may continue. More instructions will come from Health Care Authorities regarding essential visiting in hospice and home care facilities.

Living Faith, Proclaiming Christ, Growing Churches, Empowering Mission

I recognize the high level of fatigue and disheartenment right now. Thank you for your endurance through this dark time. We walk in the Light of Christ; may this be a season of supporting and encouraging each other to experience that Light even under these trying circumstances. “The Light shines in the darkness and the darkness will not overcome it.” John 1: 5

May God bless you with courage and compassion, grace and wisdom for this time. May we offer Hope to our people and to the world, in our care for each other and our trust in the One who walks with us.

Yours in Christ,

+Lynne

Bishop,
Diocese of Kootenay