

St. James' Anglican Church, Vancouver, BC

Returning to Public Worship: a Note from Fr. Kevin

As you may know the Archbishop has issued Guidelines and Protocol for all parishes considering a return to Public Worship. These detail a large number of practical requirements, and permission will need to be given by the Archbishop. The earliest date churches in the Diocese of New Westminster may re-open will be 14 June 2020. It is stressed in the document that each parish is to make its own decision when it is ready, and that no parish will be pressured into re-opening at this time.

After Liturgy at Home on 24 May, the congregation will be divided into breakout rooms (technology permitting!) to enable small-group conversation around how we feel at St. James'; there will then be an opportunity for a spokesperson from each group to offer feedback. This will inform the Trustees in making the decision about how St. James' moves forward in the next few months.

Whenever we choose to re-open, in the foreseeable future our use of the building will be very different:

- the maximum number of people permitted will be <50
- 2 metres physical distancing will be observed
- the wearing of masks will be strongly recommended
- regular sanitization of surfaces in the building
- use of bathrooms kept to a minimum; regular sanitization
- no coffee-hour/sharing of food and drink

- for the first few weeks at least, no receiving of Holy Communion
- no congregational singing; there may possibly be a soloist
- no physical contact, including the exchange of the Peace
- initially no in-person Formation/Guild meetings or pastoral contact

Topics to be considered in the break-out groups (10 mins):

1. How have you been finding the Zoom Liturgy at Home? Even when St. James' re-opens would you like something similar to continue (possibly at a different time)?
2. How are you feeling about the relaxing of "stay at home" guidelines? How do you feel about St. James' re-opening for public worship?
3. Are there other ways we might use virtual technology to support our community? (Already a small group is planning to say the Daily Office; Clergy; Trustees; Wardens; the Choir, and the Mothers' Union are all meeting via Zoom.)
4. Any other concerns.

In addition to this discussion, please feel free to contact Fr Kevin (fr.kevin@stjames.bc.ca or 778-984-3208) and/or the Wardens (wardens@stjames.bc.ca) with your feedback and concerns.

Over the next few weeks Trustees will be considering the best way forward for St. James'. We will keep everyone informed.

Fr. Kevin, Rector
23 May 2020