
From: Anglican Diocese of Toronto <bishopoffice@toronto.anglican.ca>
Sent: Friday, July 10, 2020 12:01 PM
To: cw-stgeorgememorialoshawa@toronto.anglican.ca
Subject: Letter to the Diocese from Bishop Andrew, Friday July 10

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]



Dear Friends in Christ,

For Christians, Wednesday's headline in the New York Times was sobering: "Churches Were Eager to Reopen. Now They Are a Major Source of Coronavirus Cases."

Since the release of our own [reopening guidelines](#) on June 30, I have been gratified that there has been so little resistance to the extensive safety precautions and the measures outlined that will make gathering for worship possible. Although we are pining to return to our buildings, there is a real sense that all of us want to be responsible, to protect our vulnerable and elderly, to care for our frontline workers who have worked so tirelessly, and to support society generally in getting us to this place where re-opening is possible. How we re-engage is truly an act of "[loving our neighbour](#)".

The College of Bishops has determined that we will enter our Amber Stage, and our church buildings may re-open for corporate worship, on **Sunday, September 13**. For those parishes that wish it, and can demonstrate that they meet the requirements and restrictions as outlined in our guidelines, services may resume on that date. Of course, we will rescind this decision if necessary.

We expect that the Amber Stage guidelines already released will not change substantially, and we hope that parishes are starting to prepare. We will issue a finalized, up-to-date version of Amber Stage guidelines on **Wednesday, August 19**. Presented as a checklist, it must be completely reviewed, each item initialed, and the document signed and submitted to the Regional Dean and

Area Bishop, by **Wednesday, September 9**, in order for a parish to re-open the following Sunday.

A video is being produced that will be released the week of August 24. We hope that you will widely share it with your worshippers to prepare them for the changes that they will find, and the protocols that they can expect, when they return.

The phrase “unprecedented times” has been used exhaustively over the past four months. We continue to journey through this anxious and unknown chapter of our history. Yet we can be confident: confident in the ongoing love of God for this world, confident in the healing power of Jesus Christ to conquer sickness and death, and confident in the strength and wisdom of the Holy Spirit to guide the Church carefully towards re-opening. Let us continue to support each other in this endeavour, for as scripture reminds us, in bearing one another’s burdens, we fulfil the law of Christ (*Galatians 6:2*). Thank you for your ongoing prayers.

Yours in Christ,

+ Andrew Toronto

The Rt. Rev. Andrew Asbil
Bishop of Toronto

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