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**TO:** Clergy, wardens, lay readers, and lay pastoral visitors  
**FROM:** Bishop Bruce Myers  
**DATE:** Friday 5 March 2021  
**RE:** Revised COVID-19 restrictions

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Next week the whole of the Diocese of Quebec will fall within the provincial government's orange alert level for COVID-19. Some regions of the diocese have already been in orange zones for several weeks. In either case, at the request of public health authorities, **revised protocols for places of worship in orange zones come into effect on March 8.**

With respect to **Sunday services:**

- Churches in an orange zone may receive **a maximum of 100 people (or 50% of the building's capacity, whichever number is smaller)**. This number does not include clergy, lay readers, or musicians.
- **Masks should be worn throughout the service** and only removed for receiving communion, and if a presider, reader, or soloist is speaking or singing from a place adequately distant from the congregation. Public health authorities are specifically requesting that, if possible, procedural masks be worn.
- **Hand sanitizer should be amply available** and **those from different households should remain two metres apart**.
- **A record of who attends each service should be kept**, along with their contact information, should contact tracing be necessary.
- If the eucharist is celebrated, **the presider should bring communion to individuals at their seats**, rather than individuals coming forward to receive, so as to reduce moving about the church building. More detailed protocols about the administration of the eucharist are attached to this memo.

With respect to **funerals:**

- Even for churches in an orange zone, **the maximum attendance for a funeral currently remains 25**. This number does not include clergy, funeral home workers, or others assisting with the service.
- **Procedural masks should be worn throughout the service** and **individuals from different households should maintain a distance of two metres from each other**.
- **The names and contact details of everyone who attends a funeral must be recorded** for the purposes of contact tracing.
- **Food and beverages must not be served** after the funeral service.
- **Families of the deceased may also receive condolences at the church before the funeral service**, so long as these same guidelines are observed.

As has been the case since our diocese's churches began reopening to in-person worship last September, the choice to offer in-person services under these conditions is left up to each local corporation, ideally in consultation with members of the congregation.

Other guidelines concerning pastoral visiting, hall rentals, and travel between regions—outlined in my previous memo of February 4—remain in effect.

While we can be grateful for this opportunity to receive more people into our church buildings for Sunday worship, we must also continue to be vigilant in our care for one another. Public health officials remain anxious about the potential spread of new COVID-19 variants, and so our return to our usual patterns continues to be measured and gradual.

As ever, if you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to be in touch with either myself or Archdeacon Edward Simonton. Stay safe and well, and be assured of my prayers.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a plus sign followed by the name "Bruce" in a cursive script.

## CELEBRATIONS OF THE EUCHARIST

- Those who normally prepare the bread and wine for the eucharist, such as altar guilds, should do so at least 24 hours before the service. Only wafer bread may be used.
- Only the presiding priest will be present at the altar and will alone distribute holy communion.
- The presiding priest will sanitize their hands immediately prior to the prayer over the gifts, immediately prior to the distribution of holy communion, and again immediately following the distribution of holy communion. Therefore a separate hand sanitizer should be available to the presider.
- After moving into place for the prayer over the gifts and the eucharistic prayer, the presiding priest may remove their mask. The mask must be replaced before the distribution of holy communion.
- Both bread and wine will be consecrated by the presiding priest. They will consecrate a priest's host and a small amount of wine in the chalice, which they alone will both consume in their entirety before proceeding to the distribution of communion to the congregation.
- At the preparation of the gifts, individual wafers for members of the congregation will be placed on the corporal in a covered ciborium or on a paten covered with a purificator (or other suitable cloth).
- The eucharistic prayer is to be said, not sung.
- Only consecrated wafers of bread will be offered to the congregation. Communion "in one kind" is recognized as a full participation in the eucharist, and is a temporary measure until the normative Anglican practice of sharing the common cup can be safely restored.
- Communicants remain in their seats to receive in the following manner:
  - After the presiding priest issues the invitation to communion from the altar, they say, "The body of Christ," to which the congregation responds, "Amen." After sanitizing their hands the presiding priest, wearing a mask, takes the consecrated wafers individually to each communicant at their seat. Those wishing to receive communion should stand in their place with their hands outstretched.
  - The masked presiding priest will silently place the wafer of bread into the communicant's outstretched hand, making every effort to avoid physical contact. If the presider inadvertently touches a communicant, they will pause, place the wafers on the altar, sanitize their hands again, and resume the distribution of communion.

- If an individual wishes to receive a blessing instead of communion, they should indicate this by crossing their arms over their chest. The priest will bless them without physical contact.
- When holy communion is being distributed from the reserved sacrament, the same protocols apply as for a full celebration of the eucharist. Therefore only consecrated wafers of bread will be distributed, and they should remain in the tabernacle or aumbry until the prayer normally said before their distribution is offered by the presiding deacon or lay reader.