



# The Diocese of Rupert's Land

The Right Reverend Geoffrey Woodcroft  
Bishop of Rupert's Land

May 25, 2020

A Bishop's Directive to Corporations of the Diocese of Rupert's Land – May 25, 2020

Dear Clergy, Wardens and Worship Leaders,

Stories of exile permeate scripture. The Holy family lived in exile as the infant Jesus became a toddler in a strange land, and I would not be surprised if gold, frankincense and myrrh sustained their health and safety. There has been profound loss, depression and frustration amongst our community, making our exile from imminent danger; and we have used resources to not just sustain, but to build-up the Body of Christ. Our yearning to gather again, the adaptation of our people, like those who gather by the rivers of Babylon, have been the grounding of hope for a new era.

The Province of Manitoba has loosened the restrictions for gatherings to 25 people inside, and 50 people outside. This is a significant moment after a significant and serious disruption.

I am thankful for all leadership you have exercised through this extraordinary time, well done good and faithful disciples.

As we consider the possibilities of reopening our worship, meeting and rental spaces, please, let us be mindful that this pandemic has yet to reach its final day. The Body of Christ must continue its vigilant protection and care for those who are vulnerable, especially those with limited resources, those with pre-existing health conditions and our seniors over 65, whom I continue to urge to stay at home. We must exercise care as we form plans to reopen that are compassionate, sensitive and inclusive to the best of our ability. Let us also prayerfully consider indigenous communities and persons who are cut off from any of this of planning.

No worshipping community **MUST** reopen at this time; I encourage corporations to enjoy rich conversations about what is best for the community you serve., and to plan accordingly, also urging seniors over 65 to stay home.

Attached, please find Worship in Pandemic Protocols, Questionnaire for Reopening, and signage (c/0 the province. Note that Public Health Protocols apply to all situations regarding reopening. Please use these materials to structure your conversations, reviewing Protocols, answering the questionnaire, preparing your unique reopening plan, and writing your Letter of Application to Reopen. The completed questionnaire and letter of application is to be submitted by email to your Territorial Archdeacon, who will recommend the application to my office for acceptance.

May God continue to bless and prepare you to flourish in ministry and mission.

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