



Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador

The Anglican Church of Canada

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Dear Friends,

I wanted to write to keep you updated on our current situation and to let you know that I am thinking of each and every one of you as the days go on. I know that for many of you this is a very difficult time, we are in unknown territory and nothing could prepare us for all that we are facing now. In the coming days I will be going through our parish phone list to make connections with you, we have a big list of people and it will take me some time to get to everyone but please know that you can reach out to me at any time. My cell phone number is 709-325-2366 and you can call or text me at that number and also reach out to be via email. I am praying for you and your families and I want you to know how much I miss being with you all in the ways that we are used to. I am trying to offer prayers and services as best I can. Though most of this is offered through our parish Facebook page I can also email you the links to our evening prayer services upon request. Our Facebook page **SJTE Topsail** is a public page and you do not need to be a Facebook user to view our page. Our Facebook page is also available through our website www.stjohntheevangelistnl.com. I know that this is not ideal for some of our people but it is the only option that we have right now to continue to gather together as a family of God.

As of now both Madonna and I are working from home as we have remote access and we will continue to do so until otherwise directed by our Diocesan Bishop. Madonna has been busy in the past week working with our auditors, Madonna does all of our financial work and deals with all of our bill companies, parishioners, funeral homes and more. She is diligently working from home to ensure these tasks are all met during this time. I have my home office set up and am working diligently to offer prayers, services, support and more to each and every one of you even though we cannot connect face to face.

Every day Madonna and I are in contact with our parish treasurer Philip Gavell and dealing with our parish finances. We have made every possible cut to ensure that our costs remain at the lowest possible rates and though services and the normal day to day parish activities will cease in the sense of face to face operations our financial obligations still remain in effect. It costs our parish roughly \$18,000.00 a month to operate and our current savings will only enable us to meet these obligations for a short period of time. I understand that many are struggling right now but if you are at all able to continue with your financial support to our parish we greatly appreciate. We are all looking forward to the day when we can come together in our church building and to continue our normal day to day operations but in these difficult times we need your help to ensure that we will be

able to do just that when this is all over. We give thanks and appreciate your financial support to our parish, it's staff and ministries. Going forward, we have a locked drop box outside of the parish office for you to deliver your weekly offerings. Please note the box is checked constantly by myself or Madonna. We are hoping to do a deposit this coming Thursday, to cover expenses i.e. utility bill etc.

We also are encouraging PAD (pre-authorized givings) - if you have not already signed on! Once this is done, you don't have to worry about getting out to the office and your financial contributions are secured, this is easily done by filling out the attached form with this letter and returning it to the drop box or to the parish email address. We also accept e-transfers and you can do this by emailing contributions to sjitetopsail@nfld.net If you are only comfortable giving contributions in your envelopes and you cannot get to the church where our drop box is located please contact myself or our treasure Philip Gavell at 834-3445 and we will ensure to pick your envelope up for you.

I will still be available for pastoral emergencies and funerals as the need arises as well. Our vestry and leadership teams will still meet via online meetings and we have already done so in this past week.

This is a new way of being the church for all of us and we are taking things one day at a time. As more updates become available, I will be sending out more emails and updating our social media pages. It is important for you, if at all possible, to be practicing social distancing and taking care of your health. We will come through this together as a parish family. Though we have no idea when we will return to our normal operations we will continue to worship and fellowship together in new ways as best we can, and I am already working on a celebration when it is safe for us to all be together again! That day will come, we just do not know when right now. Check on one another, keep in touch via phone calls, emails and social media as you're able to and please keep all those who are affected by this virus at this time in your prayers. Remember our frontline workers who are diligently keeping us all safe and treating this first hand.

Let us pray;

O Lord our God, accept the fervent prayers of your people;
 In the multitude of your mercies look with compassion
 Upon us and all who turn to you for help;
 For you are gracious, O lover of souls,
 And to you we give glory, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
 Now and forever.
 Amen

Yours in Christ,
 Reverend Jolene +
Rector