



A Parish of the
Diocese of Toronto
Anglican Church
of Canada



Parish e-News

St Thomas' Anglican Church

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*St. Paul's Anglican Church built in 1837 on Lot 17, Conc. 4
(Drawing by Catherine Dalhaise from her book Cornerstones.)*

Indoor, in-person services have resumed at St Thomas', Millbrook!

This Sunday, September 19th

10.30 am

Morning Prayer

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

Proper 25, Year B

When attending public worship, please...

- Wear a face mask at all times indoors
- Sanitize your hands upon entering the church
- Maintain physical distance of 6 feet from individuals not in your family or “bubble”
- Do not sit in pews or sections of pews that are marked with *red* tape (sit only in areas with *green* masking tape on the top-rear part of the pew)
- Follow seating instructions for physical distancing: two individuals (separated by 6 feet) per pew OR one family or “bubble” per pew

Letter from the Bishop concerning Covid-19 vaccinations

Dear Friends in Christ,

Love your neighbour as yourself.

Over the past 18 months, we have seen tremendous examples of loving one’s neighbour. Our frontline workers have placed themselves in harm’s way from the first day of this pandemic to keep their neighbours safe. In this Diocese, our outreach ministries have found new ways to keep serving the most vulnerable members of our communities. Separated by lockdowns and physical distancing, friends and neighbours have called, Zoomed and Facetimed to check on each other, reaching out across the street and around the world.

Love your neighbour. In reflecting on these words with the Galatians, Paul writes, “And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.” To the Corinthians he writes, “Let all that you do be done in love.”

There is one crucial way we can love our neighbours, and that is to vaccinate ourselves against COVID-19. For the good of our whole community, we can choose to protect those who can’t be vaccinated and those for whom this virus poses the greatest risk. We can protect those same front-line workers from a health care system overwhelmed by new cases.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are committed to loving our neighbours in word and deed, by our witness, and in the very structures that guide us as a Diocese. To that end, we are introducing a policy that requires clergy, diocesan employees and volunteers, and parish employees and volunteers to show proof of vaccination against COVID-19. The full policy will include more details about how we will implement this; we will make it available when it is finalized.

After much discussion, the bishops and diocesan leadership have decided not to require proof of vaccination to attend worship in an Anglican church in this Diocese. I've heard that some of you aren't comfortable returning to in-person worship alongside potentially unvaccinated people, and I know this may disappoint you. We believe we can preserve the health and safety of our communities without denying access to worship, prayer and sacrament. We want our churches to be places where everyone can experience the breadth and length and depth and height of God's love, and we hesitate to bar our doors based on proof of vaccination.

We continue to strongly recommend vaccination for all who are able. Parishes will continue with screening questions, contact tracing and vaccine education, along with rigorous hygiene practices, masking and physical distancing. In the strongest terms possible, I dissuade anyone from knowingly putting others at risk. Before you decide to attend worship, consider how your decisions may affect the person sitting in the next pew.

We know that many parishes are continuing to provide online worship options even as they re-open their doors. If you don't yet feel safe coming to church in person, please know that you are a full and valued participant in our corporate worship if you choose to attend online, even if it is not your first preference.

I also want to mention singing. I know that many of us long to hear voices lifted together in song, and to sing our praises to God alongside friend and neighbour. I hear a yearning across the Diocese to reclaim this deep and holy expression of our faith. I must ask again for your patience. Until we know how the fourth wave of infections will materialize, with the Delta variant and students returning to school, we aren't prepared to make a change to our guidelines. This will be an ongoing conversation over the next month, and I commit to saying more on the subject in the week after Thanksgiving.

As we've seen time and again in the past 18 months, things can and will change. We will continue to follow all public health guidelines. We will tell you about any changes to our guidelines and policies as they're needed, and we will keep sending Q&A bulletins to answer your ongoing questions.

We don't make these decisions lightly, but we make them in the hope that our churches will continue to be places where we can join together safely to worship a God who calls us to love every neighbour, in every place, following the model set before us in Jesus Christ.

**Yours in Christ,
+ Andrew: Toronto**

A Reconciliation Walk: “We were children” - The Deacons of the Parkdale-West Toronto Deanery in the York-Credit Valley Episcopal Area present the second season of “A Reconciliation Walk,” a series of conversations that aims to be open to the voices of Indigenous people through stories, movies, and discussions, so as to guide us in genuine reconciliation. Season two, “Every Child Matters,” begins on Thursday, September 16, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. with a discussion of the film “We Were Children,” co-presented by the National Film Board of Canada. To register, please go to: <https://www.toronto.anglican.ca/events/a-reconciliation-walk-we-were-children/>

Journeys Outreach is tentatively planning a fundraiser to take place in late September or early to mid-October. We are hoping to have a (physically distanced!) deluxe wine-tasting with light refreshments at *Rolling Grape Vineyards* near Bailieboro. Since this is a fundraiser for outreach, tickets would be in the neighbourhood of \$20-\$25 per person. If there is enough interest, we will go ahead. Please speak to the Priest-in-Charge if you are interested.

The Season of Creation: September 1- October 4

The Season of Creation is a time to renew our relationship with our Creator and with all creation through celebration, conversion, and commitment together. Following the initiative of Ecumenical Patriarch Demitrios I of the Eastern Orthodox Churches, and with the whole-hearted support of the (Protestant) World Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church, we are invited to join our fellow Christians throughout the world in prayer and action for “this fragile planet, our island home.” For more information and resources please go to: <https://seasonofcreation.org/about/>

The parish office hours are normally Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 9.15 am - 11.15 am. Call 705-932-2233. For any urgent matter, please call the Priest-in-Charge at home at 705-932-1231. If (and only if) his home voicemail is turned off, please call his cell number (705-313-9002) and leave a message. Your call will be returned as soon as possible.

The Churchwardens continue to be extremely thankful for the generosity and faithfulness of parishioners and friends of our parish who are making a concerted effort to keep up their regular offerings during this on-going pandemic.

In addition to making a weekly offering at church on Sundays, donations (for those who are not already on PAR) can be made in the following ways:

- ***By regular mail*** - to St Thomas’ Anglican Church, P. O. Box 187, Millbrook, Ontario, L0A 1G0. ***(Please be sure to use the post office box number - not just the street address - when sending items by mail).*** Cheques only please--made out to St Thomas’ Church. ***Post-dated cheques, for future contribution periods, would be welcome and very much appreciated.***

- ***By e-transfer from your bank account.*** Please call Gail at the parish office at (leave message) or email her at cavmanparish@nexicom.net to arrange.
- ***By pre-arranged 'drop off' at the parish office (during office hours) or at the parish hall mail box.*** Note: if you wish to leave your envelope in the box at the back door of the parish hall please telephone the Priest-in-Charge to let him know so that he can collect the envelope in a timely manner. Please *never* leave cash in the mailbox!
- ***By Pre-Authorized Remittance:*** If you wish to enroll in PAR, please call the parish office during office hours. An authorization form will be mailed (or emailed) to you.
- ***By using the secure online donations link on our parish website.*** Here is the link: <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/119202950RR0001-st-thomas-church/>



**FOR THE LOVE
OF CREATION**

For more information, please go to:

<https://fortheloveofcreation.ca/>