



St. Margaret of Scotland Anglican Church

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Dear Parishioner at St Margaret of Scotland, Barrie

As the State of Emergency kicks in today I need to inform you that the church office has been shut down for the next 28 days. All of the staff are required to work remotely and we will do our best to keep on top of things as we do so. We will check the mail and the telephone messages on a regular basis and the wardens will check on the building to ensure everything is okay. I would strongly encourage you to stay home and only go out if essential.

As you may be aware, St Giles is up for sale. To this end Doug Court and I attended a short service of deconsecration of the building with Bishop Andrew and our Regional Dean Doug Michael on Wednesday the 6th of January. All of the remaining furniture that can be moved from the building is being moved into storage by the Diocese for us to use as part of Phase Two-the St Giles Ministry Centre. We are, thankfully, that much closer to moving ahead with the architectural work and the pre-construction process and we look forward to sharing some good news in the coming months as to how that will happen.

In light of the State of Emergency and the limits on gathering and travel, I will be recording the Wednesday and Sunday services at home on the farm. I hope you enjoy the change of setting and, weather permitting, I will try to do a number of them outside. In addition, you will receive a full outline of the service with the readings and the text of the sermon included to read at your own leisure. I would encourage you to print these off and give them to folk you know who might not have internet access (but please remember to socially distance when doing so). In the ever-moving targets of this pandemic we are not sure when we will return to in-church services, but we will do our best to continue in our worship irrespective. God is present wherever we are and our worship is valid wherever it may take place.

We have scheduled our annual Vestry meeting for Sunday the 28th of February at midday. Please put this date in your calendar. This meeting will need to be held electronically and we will forward you details of how that will be achieved once we have ironed out the kinks. We are looking at a combination of technologies in order to cover a range of bases.

We will be starting a four week Bible Study on the Book of Philippians next Thursday - the 21st of January - at 7:30 p.m. This will take us up to Ash Wednesday and Lent. Please email me if you wish to be included in the Zoom meetings or to receive the notes. My email is listed at the top of this letter.

A reminder that we send out a daily devotion that uses the set readings each day. I am very grateful to Norm Savill for coordinating this important ministry. If you wish to be included on that listing then please email Norm directly at nsavill@bell.net and he will be sure to respond.

I am profoundly thankful to each of you for your financial contribution to the parish. By the end of November we were staring at a short-fall of around \$25,000 by Christmas. You responded very positively to our financial appeal and we saw our way through Christmas. We had a total income of \$280,915 and a total expenditure of \$286,001 for 2020. This left us with a short-fall of only \$5,086 after what has proved to be a very precarious year. Thank you for your faithfulness.

I would encourage you to keep mailing your support to us or joining PAG or donating to us through Canada Helps online (see our web site).If needed we can arrange to pick up your donation as well.

It is my intention to send out a weekly eblast similar to this. Please feel free to respond to me by email or by calling me at 416 570 6898.

Please know that you are in my constant prayers and thoughts in this difficult time.

God bless.

Simon+