

November 11, 2020

Dear Good People of St. Joseph of Nazareth,

On Monday night, I had a zoom meeting with the wardens. We have decided to close the church for a time after this Wednesday's midweek service. As of Wednesday, November 11th, the church will be closed because of the growth in the number of cases of Covid-19, especially in Peel Region. We will keep a close eye on the Covid-19 numbers and when Peel Public Health indicates it is safer, we will jump at the chance to reopen again.

We knew the second wave would come. We know it will be potentially worse than the first wave. We believe this is the right step for the people of St. Joe's and the people of the Peel Region.

We do this with a heavy heart of course, and I personally find this very sad as we have had such a safe and happy time worshipping together. St. Joe's is a wonderful community. And 'community' is the word. St. Joe's is a very healthy and wholesome expression of the body of Christ in Brampton. As I've heard Bp. Jenny say, Covid-19 has a lot to answer for.

Our concern is for all but particularly the vulnerable. We believe if we act and close now, we will help prevent a full lockdown in Brampton. We see this as a civic responsibility first for the well-being of individuals and the reduction of viral spread. Secondly, we do this for the local economy so that businesses might possibly remain open.

Our plan moving forward is to continue to:

- live-stream Sunday morning and then post the service on YouTube
- Tuesday evening zoom Evening Prayer
- Tuesday evening zoom Poetry Reading starting December 1st
- Friday zoom Happy Hour
- Have staff work from home

We are aware that the sacrament particularly will be deeply missed- all I can say is I am so sorry. I will miss sharing it with you. I have been in touch with the Bishop to ask about what a 'Spiritual Communion' service would look like and I am exploring resources.

Again, the wardens and I personally find this a very sad decision to make. But God is good. We'll thrive and we are committed to making sure St. Joe's continues to thrive in spite of this awful pandemic.

Every blessing, and do not hesitate to contact me or any of the wardens with your thoughts, needs or concerns. On behalf of Andre Lyn, Janet Bertollo, Josette Sandy and Brian Laffey, your wardens, Grace and Peace,

Fr. Stephen +

Stephen Drakeford, your Interim-Priest-in-Charge