



Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

The Rt. Revd. Samuel Rose, B.A, M.Div. (Hon)
Bishop of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador

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COVID-19 Update to the Diocese March 14, 2022

My dear Diocesan Family,

Blessings to you in this season of Lent.

Today, March 14, 2022, marks the end of all Newfoundland & Labrador Public Health restrictions, which have been in effect since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic two years ago.

In light of this, the Diocese is also lifting all restrictions imposed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, yet the sharing of the Common Cup, either for consuming or touching, is **not permitted** at this time. The Holy Eucharist is to be administered in one kind using the communion bread as has been our practice for the past two years. I will be seeking further study and consultation with other bishops before resuming the sharing of the Common Cup in our Diocese.

As the Provincial Chief Medical Officer of Health stated, the pandemic is by no means over. COVID-19 is still present and spreading within our communities, and this has to remain foremost in our minds as we move forward. As a Church, we still have a responsibility to maintain and provide safe gatherings. Mask use while gathered is strongly encouraged, primarily when close contact with others will occur, and frequent hand sanitation should be practiced, especially when handling common items and/or food, or when physical contact occurs between people.

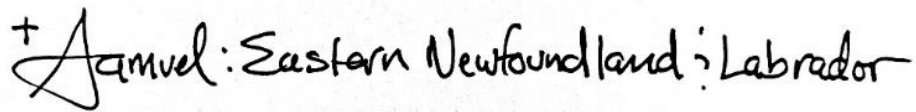
Further, as infants are not vaccinated and are vulnerable as the virus continues to circulate within the community, the Diocese is providing **specific direction** to all parishes concerning **Holy Baptism**. During the administration of Baptism, the officiant should sanitize their hands and wear a mask when blessing the water, holding the infant, and performing the act of baptism. Multiple baptisms are not advised, as the water of baptism should not be shared between candidates. Should parents wish to hold the child and pour the water over the head during the act of Baptism, this is acceptable as was practiced throughout the pandemic.

Given the ever-changing circumstances of the pandemic and how we gather as a Church, I will be appointing a resource person to best advise me as Bishop and serve our Diocese. I am pleased to appoint the Rev. Christopher Fowler to serve as **Archdeacon (non-Chapter) for Liturgical**

Standards and Best Practices in the Bishop's Council for the next three years, effective March 14, 2022. We are indebted to Archdeacon Fowler, who worked tirelessly to put together our Diocesan COVID-19 reopening plans *Many Members, One Body* (2020), and *The New Has Come* (2021) as well as all other guidance around gathering safely in our Church buildings.

As we learn to live in this "new normal" of being Church, we continue to respect and follow the advice of health professionals and will adapt as needed in both worship and fellowship in the Diocese. May we also respect one another in our individual choices regarding COVID-19 as members of God's Family.

In Christ's Love,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Samuel: Eastern Newfoundland & Labrador". The signature starts with a small cross symbol above the letter 'S'.

The Rt. Revd. Samuel V. Rose (He/Him)
Bishop
Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland & Labrador