

The Anglican Church of Canada



L'Église anglicane du Canada

Office of the Primate

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March 4, 2020

To all Staff,

As you know the world is facing the emergence of a new virus – COVID19. With any new disease we must manage the risks as Information becomes available to us. The uncertainty of the changing situation can be distressing. It is easy to be swept up in the fears about what might happen. We need to support one another in this uncertain time and share in keeping our work space as safe as possible.

I want to assure you that the Management Team are aware of the anxiety this new illness is provoking. We are closely monitoring the risks faced by our staff both in Church House, across Canada and while travelling. In order to assess those risks we are checking the official public health and government agencies for their announcements and risk assessment. If these advisories change we will adjust our response accordingly. Currently the public health risk in Canada is considered low.

You can see these advisories at:

Government of Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>

City of Toronto: <https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/health-wellness-care/diseases-medications-vaccines/coronavirus/>

Travel advisories may be seen at: <https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories>

As of March 4, 2020 our priorities are as follows:

- i) Appropriate hygiene practices in Church House activities:
 - a. Frequent hand washing with soap and hot water - one commentator has said, "Wash your hands as if you have just been cutting jalapeno peppers and are about to put in your contact lenses."
 - b. Cough into your elbow or a tissue.
 - c. Be sensitive when greeting people as to whether a handshake is appropriate or a simple verbal greeting.
 - d. If you are sick - Stay home and follow our normal policy for reporting 'personal days'.

- e. Worship Services:
 - i. Be sensitive in sharing the Peace to ways that reduce risk - a wave or peace sign; a smile and nod; only handshake if comfortable to both parties.
 - ii. Eucharist - it is always appropriate to receive only the bread as the fullness of the sacrament. The common cup is available (until prohibited by Public Health) but optional.
- ii) Travel – we will follow government issued travel restrictions (as noted at the website above). Currently there are no restrictions on internal Canadian travel and cautions for some areas of international travel.

If you have concerns in your particular area of work please speak with your Director and discuss appropriate measures that reduce risk and maintain our capacity to serve the Church.

This situation does remain fluid. Please know that we are monitoring and assessing the needs of staff and work as new information is available. Any changes to Church House policy will be communicated directly as they become available.

Thank you for helping us all serve the Church.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Linda Nicholls". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Most Rev. Linda Nicholls
Archbishop and Primate