



Burton Avenue United Church



March 17, 2020

We are writing to inform you of new decisions that we have made regarding our church's response to the threat posed by the COVID-19 virus. As you are no doubt aware, yesterday new recommendations were made by health and government officials calling for increased levels of self-isolation and social distancing. As such, we are taking the following steps, until further notice, to ensure we are taking every precaution and measure we can to help contain the spread of the virus.

- Immediate suspension of in-person worship services, including funerals and memorial services, as well as all gatherings/meetings of BAUC church groups or committees whether at the church or another location.
- Closure of the building to all rentals/users/people.
- The church office will remain staffed but will only be open to telephone calls or emails. If someone, other than staff or Property & Administration, needs access to the office or building for any reason, they will be asked to check with the office by phone or email first.
- We are working on possible online worship and group gatherings using available technology. We are grateful that on March 22 at 10:00 AM, Katie Pergau will be providing 30 minutes of reflective music livestreamed from the church on our Burton Ave Facebook private group page. If you are not already a member of this group, send us an email and we will add you to the group. You just need to be a Facebook user to be added, and then you are able to view this either live or later as a post.
- We are creating a friendly phone visitor list for the members of our Church Board to reach out to you. We see this as an opportunity for us to get to know one another better. So, we are also hoping that you will embrace this time to send notes and letters and emails to one another. Let us find meaningful and supportive ways to connect and help in whatever way we can.
- We know that there are many in our own church community and in the wider Barrie community for whom isolation and social distancing will be difficult and may add stress to our health. There are many in our community who will have difficulty getting to the store during quieter times. There are other effects that we are unaware of that you may experience. Remember that you are not alone. We can ask one another for help and need to do so for we are called to care for each other.
- If you are not on PAR for your offering, you may be worried about how to make regular contributions. Don't worry about that for now. We trust that you will catch up when you can. In the meantime, our Treasurer will be giving some thought to options for making donations, in the event that our in-person worship is suspended for longer than we want to imagine.
- We will continue to communicate through our Facebook public page, private group, our website and emails.

Although our building is closed, the church is not, for we will continue to be the church in all the ways we can in this time. In whatever way you can, wherever you are, take all the precautions necessary to ensure we contain the spread of the virus. It is our work to do as we "seek to know God through Jesus Christ and to reflect God's love as the church in a changing community and world."

Alan J. McGee
Church Board Chair

Andrea Wheaton, DLM
Minister of Word, Sacrament & Pastoral Care

¹³ Keep alert, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. ¹⁴ Let all that you do be done in love.
1 Corinthians 16:13-14