



ST. TIMOTHY ANGLICAN CHURCH



2 Timothy 3:17

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August 2020

Reopening

17 on the 17th!

Parish of St. Timothy is now seventeen years old. We processed from the Triumph site on the 17th of August. The Lord has blessed and kept us!

Pastoral Letter

My sermon on August 23rd shared what I think is a common sentiment—we are frustrated with not knowing what is happening next. In almost any other year, a letter sent from someone in my office just before Labour Day would be full of excitement and energy as our whole society moves to the fall and the new beginnings in our school and church. September means fresh starts and limitless potential and the promise of new and fascinating experiences. But this year September only means more questions. More uncertainty. And, for many of us, fear. Fear of what's next. Of how to keep ourselves and others safe. And fear of what we still don't know. And these emotions of fear are connected to feelings of loss: that loss of potential, the loss of familiarity, the loss of comfort and assuredness. For some of us there is also the loss of loved ones who have passed and the inability to mourn them as we might in other years.

Many of us have also been grappling with loneliness. We have not been able to socialize as we once did, either at home or at church. We would like to address this loneliness and when we cannot because of the restrictions on us, we deal with the fear and the loss I mentioned earlier. There seems to be no relief.

It has been a difficult few months. Lives have been saved through the efforts we have all made to physically distance from one another, but these efforts have also taken a toll on us: physically, emotionally, socially, spiritually, and financially.



We look with expectation to the future where we can return to some of our former activities but realize that our lives will be forever changed as a result of this experience. The world will never quite go back to where it was.

And so our September return to indoor worship at church also comes with asterisks. We will have the option to worship indoors as of September 13th, though we will continue to worship outdoors as the weather allows. Our move indoors does not signal a return to the old ways either, as numerous restrictions will still be in place to ensure physical distance and minimizing potential spread of the virus. We will still not be singing or sharing communion. And that longed-for social aspect of church will continue to be minimized — we will only be able to socialize outside the building and physical distance will still be recommended (as will the wearing of masks).

And yet, despite all of this disappointing news, we are not without reasons for joy. We *do* get to meet in person again, after months of keeping our distance and the church being closed. We *do* get to worship together and see the faces of those we care about (and not on a screen). We can hear the beloved music of our tradition and songs of praise (albeit without singing).

And we can still do many of the things that we are used to doing, as church. We can study together; there will be Sunday school for the kids (on the second and third Sundays of the month); we can recognize and celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, and other milestones—though all of these will be done a little differently than before.

As we set off on this next stage of our journey together, we all have to recognize how challenging it is for all of us, but also how different it is. Nobody quite knows what to expect.

And that's where your involvement can make a difference. There is still lots of potential in this Fall season—but it's harder than in previous years to know how best to direct the limited energies of the church's resources. I don't know what you need most. You might not have figured that out yourself yet (as this is new to all of us). But I hope you will be honest with me about what your needs are and what you would like to see happen. Do you want to meet

in person for a Bible study? Would you rather stay home and participate by Zoom? Would you prefer to stay home on Sunday mornings but would like to participate, somehow, in the service? I hope most of you have taken the time to complete the [survey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NG9PYKG) (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NG9PYKG>) that went out by email—this information is invaluable in determining the best way forward. If you haven't yet or don't have access to a computer or internet, please call the office (604.299.6816) and we can talk it over with you.

I would be happy to hear about your thoughts and what has been going on with you through this time. Please feel free to call me at the office or email me at any time—but there will also be an opportunity to share your ideas with me (and get to know each other better) in new weekly Zoom chats, “Lunch with the Rev” on Tuesdays at noon (starting September 1). I would love to be able to chat with small groups of people (each lunch will be limited to five participants) and hear your ideas and get to know you—especially those that I haven't had many opportunities to speak to before.

And in case you thought that nothing was happening, your parish council has been busy continuing to meet over the summer (which we normally don't do) trying to find the best ways to continue to function in these trying times. One of the exciting new ventures that has already begun is the Outreach Resources Centre, a pop-up resource for the homeless in Burnaby. They have already set up their centre in our parking lot on three Mondays and begun serving the community. They would be grateful for any in the community to help out—please let me know if you are interested.

So, despite all the uncertainty and challenges facing us, we are still doing our best to continue to be church and continue to faithfully serve our God in where we have been called. It is still an exciting time—just not the kind of excitement that we're used to. The limitless potential is perhaps limited slightly as we now have to consider health requirements at the forefront of our operations. But we “press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called [us] heavenward in Christ Jesus.”

We're all in this together.

Yours,
-James.

How best to worship together while staying apart

We have been blessed with good weather, allowing us to worship outdoors, albeit masked and at least an arm's length from each other. The hardest part was not being able to sing, because singing increases viral spread, but Joe McDonald is there almost every Sunday with keyboard and microphone.

Seating is lawn chairs from home because we may not use the church's cloth-covered chairs or the day-care's folding chairs. Shared chairs and the scrounged resin chairs are disinfected after every service as are the greeter's table and offering box. Hand sanitizer, masks and serve-yourself bulletins are at one end of the table; the greeter, taking names and contact numbers, is at the other.

Consensus directs us to continue outdoor worship, weather permitting, well into the fall. If it is not raining, keep bringing your chairs! The building will be ready for indoor services as of September 13.

And how will indoor services look?

- 1) Greeter table indoors; stationary offertory plate on font.
- 2) Hand sanitizing is required; **masks are mandatory indoors.**
- 3) New pattern of entering and leaving the worship space; ushers and signage will assist.
 - a) No lingering in narthex at any time.
 - b) Enter worship space through south door only; leave through north door only.
- 4) Windows open, extra fans on because air circulation is crucial.
- 5) Church stripped of non-essential touch surfaces.
- 6) No Eucharist until Covid-19 risk mediated.
- 7) No pew books, no shared toys.
- 8) Every 2nd pew blocked off with yellow tape.
- 9) Usable pews limited to 2 individuals not of the same household or one family or “bubble” group each.
- 10) Contingency plans exist for attendance greater than 35 but advance registration strongly encouraged.
- 11) Washrooms for emergency use only; must be sanitized after each use.
- 12) No coffee or food service on site.

Kids' Church in this time of Covid-19

- The mats had to be removed. Therefore, each child will have their **own sit-upon** to ensure physical distancing. Heather Parlongo is kindly making these. If you have any old towels, please contact her.
- There can be no shared supplies. Each child will have their **own Ziploc bag** of Sunday School supplies that they can pull out any week, even when there is no Sunday School. They may draw or colour during the service. The kits remain at the church. Caroline Chady will set out the container of kits. Each kit is labelled with the child's name. Guest kits will be available.
- Sunday School will be **once per month** for each age group (two separate groups to ensure manageable numbers).
 - **K - Grade 3: The 2nd Sunday of the month: Sept. 13th, Oct. 11th, Nov. 8th, Dec 13th.**
 - **Grade 4 and up: The 3rd Sunday of the month: Sept. 20th, Oct. 18th, Nov. 15th, Dec. 20th.**
- We will go down after James has said the welcome and will stay downstairs until the end of the service.
- Even if services continue outside during good weather in September, Sunday School will happen inside.
- Consider sending your child with a water bottle and a small snack.
- The focus for this term will be following the readings upstairs: Old Testament readings including Creation, Joseph, Jonah and then finally the Christmas Story.
- If possible, let us know if you will be bringing your child to Sunday School, but no child will be turned away (unless we find ourselves over and above safe numbers). We do have extra supplies ready for new families.
- As always, **please do not bring your child to church if they are exhibiting any symptoms of illness.**

Please contact Caroline Chady if you have any questions. We are looking forward to restarting this ministry and ask for your continued prayers as we do so.

Interim Leadership Team

Parish Council has learned the true meaning of trusteeship this summer. With James on paternity leave for the first months of the pandemic and the resignation of a warden, decisions fell to Maribeth and Vern. James proposed the establishment of a temporary leadership team which turned out to be the remaining members of council. We were able to have our meetings on Zoom, courtesy of Caroline Chady's school access. What a relief!

With James' official return and our move to outdoor services, we just carried on with what was working so well. Attendance at zoom meetings was good; we now have our own zoom account. Attendance at outdoor services averaged 30, with some newcomers joining us.

As we look to move indoors, we face new challenges to keeping our people safe. We are looking at ways to stay connected to those who cannot safely attend indoors, to those we cannot visit in their homes or facilities. We are a team that may be here until next vestry!



Financial Update

The Parish of St. Timothy has experienced both a reduction in income and a reduction in expenses during the pandemic. Our budget is not far off track at this time.

If you would like to make a financial contribution to the church and are not attending Sunday mornings in person, donations can be mailed into the office at 4550 Kitchener Street, Burnaby BC, V5C 3M7, or online at <https://www.sainttimothy.ca/give/> (click on the "donate" button at the bottom of the page).