



Dear friends,

We hope this note finds you well. The present situation has gone on for longer than we may have anticipated, and many are feeling weary in the wait to resume normal life. As we have said so many times before, please reach out to us through the website if we could bring encouragement to you through a pastoral call. We are here for you!

There is plenty of activity and planning going on here in the ministry, and we wanted to bring you an update on a few matters.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Both the Ministry and Property Corporation boards have approved a plan to move forward with a virtual AGM during the pandemic. The boards weighed the option of delaying the meeting, in order for us all to participate in person, however due to the uncertainty around future capacity limits in our building, it was decided to proceed with a virtual meeting. The date for the AGM is Sunday, June 28 at 4:00pm. Members will be receiving information about the upcoming meeting with all the necessary background information to participate in the meeting, to vote, and to even ask questions. Efforts are underway to make sure every member has access to this event whether through the internet or over the phone line.

Reintegration

We recognize that our faith is nourished through hearing the Word of God and gathering to encourage one another. We are grateful for the opportunities of our digital platforms, but we are eagerly anticipating the day when we can begin in-person ministries. The signs that various restrictions are being eased at the present time give us hope that we may begin some in-person activities again in the foreseeable future. The Pastoral Executive Team is working very hard on sketching out reintegration plans. Any plans will be subject to the Ontario government's emergency orders, of course. We are working on a communication strategy, sanitizing protocols, physical distancing protocols, and a phased approach to ministry and staff reintegration. For the present time, the building remains closed, in keeping with the Ontario government's emergency order. We will keep you updated as the situation evolves.

Giving

We are grateful to the Lord and to our congregation for the generous financial support the Met has received during this COVID-19 pandemic. The response of our contributors has been remarkable, with hundreds of our donors giving online for the first time, and many others mailing in their regular support. The giving in April exceeded that of April last year! There is more good news in that we were able to repay the balance of our bank loan on the Phase 2 expansion project. Praise the Lord for His faithfulness during these difficult days! (Provided by our Treasurer, Lou Ranahan).



Communion

As we shared in a previous letter, the church eldership has given very careful consideration to the important matter of the Lord's Supper during this period of lockdown. Based on a careful study of 1 Corinthians 10-11, we concluded that it would not be possible to attempt the Lord's Supper in a "virtual" context. It is a solemn act of remembrance that happens when we "come together" (1 Cor. 11:18) as a church, and can even invite the Lord's judgment if taken without due care (1 Cor. 11:29). We delight in the opportunity to proclaim God's Word by electronic means, but we feel that this ordinance simply does not work at a distance. As an eldership, we believe that we have a responsibility of care to ensure that this act of remembrance is appropriately administered. All that having been said, we also want to say that we have begun to consider how we might be able to have the Lord's Supper in smaller groups, before the full congregation can gather. We plan that, as soon as services of any type can resume in the building (even if numbers are limited), we will make a very early priority of holding Communion services.

The Word on Wednesday

We are conscious that there is a lot of ministry material and media now available on our website, and we are quite cautious about adding too much more and giving the church family spiritual indigestion! However, we would love to add one more piece of encouragement that could be accessible to the whole church family. Starting on Wednesday, one pastor each week will be providing a brief devotional thought from the Scriptures, just to bring all of us some encouragement in the middle of the week. This video will be available on our virtual church site and social media platforms on Wednesday mornings. We hope you enjoy!

The Sunday Service by Phone

We are aware that not everyone in our congregation has access to the internet to participate in our Sunday service broadcast. We are delighted to announce that these broadcasts are now available over the phone. Simply dial 613-366-2770 to listen to the complete current Sunday service. Our licence does restrict the number of listeners who can access the service concurrently. If you find there's a busy signal, simply call back later. This is available 24/7. We realize that not everyone who could benefit from this service is able to access these emails. Please spread the word to those who may benefit.

Thank you again for your prayerful partnership in the work of the gospel in these strange and challenging days. It is wonderful to see the church family being the church and continuing to minister to one another despite all the restrictions we face.

With thanks and prayers,

Jonathan Griffiths, Chris Shadbolt, and Randy Jost