

Dear Ascension Members,

Church leaders have heard from Bishop Todd Townshend that the suspension of public worship services has been extended indefinitely. In his message, he says:

"A little less than two weeks ago, we decided not to gather for public worship in our churches and to stay home whenever possible. We did this to protect the most vulnerable among us. That has been a sacrifice but I believe it is helping. It has also generated new growth in our beautiful network of care and communication — you are serving in unprecedented ways. Thank you to everyone who has responded in love. . . . We must extend the suspension of all gatherings (according to current guidelines) until further notice. This, unfortunately, applies to the most central celebrations of the year — Easter."

Bishop Todd then quotes from a statement from the bishops of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario to explain further that clergy are also asked to refrain from Eucharist while the church cannot be together -- what they call "fasting from the Eucharist":

"Therefore, the bishops of our province have agreed together that our virtual worship through Holy Week and the season of Easter, or until such time that we can gather in community together, will not include the liturgy of the Eucharist. Sacramental celebrations are the work of the whole People of God and require a gathering of people who can be physically present to one another. That is impossible for most of us at this time. The Great Three Days of Easter, and through the fifty days of the season, we will be fasting from the Eucharist but feasting on the Word. We believe that the Risen One, the Word, by the power of the Holy Spirit, is present and active with us as we hear and receive him in the word of the scriptures, in that word interpreted and proclaimed in preaching, and in the word inwardly digested, by faith, in each person."

Bishop Todd goes on to say:

"In Huron, for clarity, I am also asking our priests to join with me in this Eucharistic fast, in an act of solidarity. (Exceptions to this may be made in order to provide a last Eucharistic meal to the dying.)"

You can read Bishop Todd's entire message here: <https://mailchi.mp/huron.anglican.ca/update-from-bishop-townshend-re-worship-suspension?e=46d6b63cc7>.

Ascension's own Sunday online worship services will continue.

With you in Christ,

Ascension Executive Team

Rev. Canon June Hough, Churchwardens Russ Braley and Mary Grant, Deputy Churchwardens

Sandra Coulson and Steve Holmes, Treasurer Bill McKinstry