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## **Covid Protocols in the Diocese of Central Newfoundland**

March 2022

Friends, we all know As of March 14 our government will be removing formal legislations around Covid.

We also know that they recommend caution and a continuation of practices around social distancing, masking, sanitizing, and in our case, worship, rites of passage and our much-loved sacramental practices.

In our Diocese we have been following Government regulations to the letter. We have done well with adopted practices, and have been able to make people feel comfortable and safe during times of worship and gathering. We have a good foundation of our safe practices from which we can carefully and diligently move forward.

I have held many conversations with our clergy and laity around how we move forward, and now provide you with a framework for our Church gatherings as we find ourselves moving forward **After Monday March 14.**

We will remove many restrictions, but will use the time frame of Lent to be patient and observant of ongoing trends in our larger community.

- Each Rector is expected to continue to hold discussions with the bishop in relation to specific needs or concerns that may arise as we care for our people.
- Each rector is responsible for being attentive to local concerns, Covid outbreaks and specific complexities around baptisms, confirmations, weddings and funerals.

- Current sacramental practices around administration of Holy Communion, and baptism will continue.
  - We will continue to work in partnership with funeral homes, but our protocols around gathering are to be observed.
  - There are no longer capacity restrictions in in our diocese, however:
  - We will continue to observe social distancing. Pews will remain marked for distancing until Easter Sunday.
  - We will no longer require a Vax Pas or registration for services.
- **Masks are to be worn:**
  - Until people are seated in their pews.
  - While singing
  - While moving forward to receive the Sacraments of the Church.
  - Clergy will wear masks during the Anaphora (The Eucharistic prayer)
  - Eucharistic assistants will be masked as they carry out their ministry of administrating the elements.
- We will continue to use one microphone per person, or sanitize after each use. Masks can be removed while speaking.
  - Generally during Lent, we do not hold fundraising, so we now have a window to consider meals and food services.
  - Should we provide receptions after parish events, we will continue to prepare all food on site.
  - There will be no “self-serve” or “buffet formats” for distributing food or beverages.

+John: Central Newfoundland.  
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The Rt. Reverend John Watton  
Bishop of the Anglican Church in Central Newfoundland