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TO: Clergy, wardens, and lay readers
FROM: Bishop Bruce Myers
DATE: Friday 18 February 2022
RE: Timeline for lifting of COVID-19 restrictions

The Quebec government recently presented a timeline for the gradual relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions in various sectors of society, including places of worship. Below is how that timeline applies to the churches of the Diocese of Quebec. The government has cautioned that it could modify this schedule with relatively little notice, depending on how the epidemiological situation develops.

AS OF FEBRUARY 21:

ATTENDANCE: Attendance for all services (including funerals and weddings) is restricted to 50% of a church building's capacity, up to a maximum of 500 people. Masks must be worn, a distance of one metre maintained between households, and hand sanitizer made available. Vaccination passports are no longer required.

FUNERALS: If next of kin receive condolences in the church prior to a funeral, no more than 50 people should be present in the church at one time. During the funeral, attendance is restricted to 50% of the building's capacity, up to a maximum of 500 people, not including clergy, musicians, assistants, and funeral home personnel.

SINGING: Congregations may continue to sing if masked. Choirs remain permitted, so long as the members of the choir wear procedural masks while singing and they remain two metres apart from each other and the congregation. However, if all members of the choir voluntarily choose to present their vaccination passports, the distance can be reduced to one metre and masks can be removed while singing.

COFFEE HOUR: Coffee hours and fellowship time after services may resume, so long as masks are worn when not eating or drinking.

VESTRY MEETINGS: In-person annual vestry meetings may take place. Attendance is restricted to 50% of the room's maximum capacity. Masks must be worn and physical distancing (one metre) observed.

HALL RENTALS: Hall rentals may resume. A maximum of 50 people is permitted, and verification of the vaccination passport is required.

AS OF FEBRUARY 28:

ATTENDANCE: Churches may return to full capacity, with no limits on attendance and no vaccination passport requirement. Masks must continue to be worn and physical distancing (one metre) observed.

AS OF MARCH 14:

HALL RENTALS: Hall rentals may continue, with the number of people permitted raised to the building's usual maximum capacity if vaccination passports are required. Without vaccination passports, a maximum of 20 people may attend an activity. This should be made clear those renting a hall, since it will be their responsibility to ensure that the vaccination passport provisions are respected.

It is possible that some of these measures—particularly the application of vaccination passports to hall rentals—will be further relaxed by the provincial government in the coming days. If so, an updated memo will be issued. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to be in touch with me or Archdeacon Edward Simonton (esimonton@quebec.anglican.ca).