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TO: Clergy, wardens, lay readers, and lay pastoral visitors
FROM: Bishop Bruce Myers
DATE: Saturday 7 August 2021
RE: COVID-19 protocols for funerals

There have been a number of recent enquiries about COVID-19 protocols with respect to funerals, so I thought it might be helpful to offer a reminder of the measures we've been asked to put in place by public health authorities:

ATTENDANCE: Depending on the size of the church building, a maximum of 250 people are permitted to attend a funeral. In smaller buildings the maximum number will be the number of people from different households who can be seated while maintaining a distance of two metres if the congregation will be singing. The distance reduces to one metre if the congregation will not be singing. For the receiving of condolences before a funeral, a maximum of 50 people, wearing masks, are permitted in the building at any given time. However, this number may be lower in smaller buildings so as to allow physical distancing.

SINGING: Hymns may be sung by the congregation if they wear masks while singing and individuals from different households are seated two metres apart. Choirs may sing unmasked if the members are two metres apart from one another and at least two metres away from the congregation.

MASKS: Masks must be worn by everyone while moving about in the church building. Individuals may remove their masks once seated in the congregation, unless they are singing. Readers and presiders may remove their masks while speaking, so long as they are at least two metres from the congregation.

REGISTER: A record of everyone attending the funeral, including contact information, must be kept for the purposes of contact tracing.

RECEPTIONS: Receptions may have a maximum of 25 people attend if held indoors, and a maximum of 50 people if held outdoors. Food and beverages can only be shared if they are served to individuals at their seat and/or they are prepared in a self-contained box or wrapper ahead of time.

As always, if you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact me or Archdeacon Edward Simonton.