

ST. ANDREW'S UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX SOBOR PARISH

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EDMONTON, ALBERTA
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Слава Ісусу Христу! Слава навіки! Glory To Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!

July 16, 2021

Dear Parish Members,

On behalf of the Board of Management it is once again a privilege for me to communicate with you and provide an update of our parish.

His Grace Bishop Ilarion and Fr. Yuriy continue to pray for the safety and health of you and your families. It is asked that you pray for their health and safety, too.

As time continues, there have been a number of members or their family members who have unfortunately fallen asleep in the Lord since the previous communication from the Board - may their memories be eternal.

As a reminder, summer hours continue for July and August – Sunday Divine Liturgy begins at 9:30am.

With this communication we provide information regarding:

1. UOCC Episcopal assignments
2. A short message from Fr. Yuriy
3. St. Andrew's response to the AB Government's relaxing of pandemic restrictions
4. PLEASE TELL US – are you comfortable with relaxed restrictions or should some remain?
5. Upcoming AUGUST feast days

UOCC Episcopal Assignments

The following text in italics is a copy of some information published by the Ukrainian Self Reliance League in an email regarding the hierarchy of the UOCC. It was already forwarded to all members with email addresses. We provide the same information herein for those without email.

His Eminence Metropolitan Yuriy recently began his retirement after serving for 11 years as Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada (UOCC) since the 22nd Sobor in 2010. We wish His Eminence good health and a peaceful retirement.

*In accordance with the by-laws of the UOCC (s. 5.03,) the next ranking senior bishop, **His Grace Bishop Ilarion** shall serve as Metropolitan on an interim basis with the title of Locum Tenens. This Latin phrase literally translates as "stands in place of". The upcoming 2022 Sobor will officially elect the new Metropolitan of the UOCC.*

*As **Metropolitan (Locum Tenens), His Grace Bishop Ilarion** of Edmonton and the Western Eparchy also assumes responsibility for the Central Eparchy. We pray for your good health, wisdom and success in growing our Church as Metropolitan (Locum Tenens)!*

*We congratulate **His Grace Bishop Andriy** on his recent confirmation by the Patriarchal Synod as **Bishop of Toronto** and of the Eastern Eparchy. May you be blessed with health, wisdom and fruitful work in growing the Eastern Eparchy!*

A short message from Fr. Yuriy

The following text in italics is a short message from Fr. Yuriy. If you have any questions regarding his message, please contact him directly using email ParishPriest@uocc-standrew.ca or his mobile phone 780-885-8143.

Glory be to Jesus Christ!

Dear members and friends of St. Andrews Sobor Parish !

With blessing of His Grace Ilarion bishop of Edmonton and Western Eparchy Locum Tenens of Metropolitan Cathedral we will be coming back to our practices of the sacraments of Holy Confession and Communion following the protocol of using gloves and masks during preparation and distribution.

We all are stressed out with COVID pandemic, our parish life is wounded as life's of other parishes.

Thanks to God we have numbers of the sick people decreased, what makes our Government to take off restrictions, so we are back to our singing, veneration of the icons and crosses.

Even restrictions are taken off, you are more then welcome continue to keep restrictions if you are feeling more safe to do so.

Will be nice to see all of you in near future.

Wish you all a nice summer time.

Always keeping you in my prayers,

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Yuriy Sucheuan

St. Andrew's response to the AB Government's relaxing of pandemic restrictions

The AB Government announced that Stage 3 of "Alberta's Open for Summer Plan" came into effect on July 1, and most of the restrictions required of places of worship have been relaxed. Consequently, we have modified the re-opening plan as follows:

1. Screening of attendees is no longer completed as worshippers come into the facility.
2. Masking is not required.
3. Remove directional travel into and out of the church.

4. Pews are in their usual positions and all pews can be used.
5. Allow as many worshippers into the church as want to attend.
6. Singing is acceptable.
7. Kissing and touching of icons is allowed.
8. Holding of the wooden candles during reading of gospel and memorials is practiced.
9. Allow use of the memorial candle stands by worshippers with memorial candles available in the vestibule.
10. Final veneration and kissing of the handheld cross at the dismissal is practiced
11. Open all areas of the facility.
12. Re-establish greeters for Divine Liturgies.
13. The facility is no longer sanitized prior to its use.

Antidoron will continue to be prepared and distributed as if the pandemic restrictions remain because it is for ALL worshippers, and some may feel uncomfortable receiving it otherwise.

At this time, we are leaving the tape lines on the floor in the church in case we need to revert back to directional travel. For the summer months, we will leave the donation box in the vestibule – the collection of donations with passed baskets will not be practiced.

If you feel the need to continue to practice the restrictions that were in place prior to July 1, please follow them – wear a mask and maintain a two-metre space between you and others not in your cohort. Do not do anything that makes you feel that your safety is being compromised.

Regardless of the above changes, we ask that if you are feeling sick, have any of the symptoms of COVID-19, or are fully or partially vaccinated and have come in contact with a COVID-19 case (or a variant), that you do not attend worship services. You must follow the AB Government's isolation and quarantining protocols.

PLEASE TELL US – are you comfortable with relaxed restrictions in church or should some remain?

Attending and worshipping in our church should be welcoming and comfortable for all members. However, not everyone who attends our church is the same when it comes to their approach to COVID-19.

- Some may like and welcome the relaxed restrictions
- Some may feel that the relaxed restrictions are occurring too quickly and they are still required
- Some may have a compromised immune system; therefore, they need to be more careful and choose to follow masking and spacing restrictions
- Some may have children under the age of 12 who cannot receive the vaccinations and do not want to risk placing their children in an unrestricted environment
- Some may be worried about the delta variant because it is reported to be more transmissible than the original COVID-19 virus
- Some may have only received one vaccination
- Some may not be vaccinated whatsoever because they believe that vaccinations are not helpful

Things that I think most people believe to be true about COVID-19 and its variants:

1. COVID-19 and its variants are still in our communities.
2. Some may get COVID-19 or a variant and not exhibit symptoms – they do not know they are sick.
3. Those that have received two vaccinations may still get COVID-19 or a variant and can still spread it to others.
4. Even though unlikely, those that have received two vaccinations may still get COVID-19 or a variant and may end up sick or in the hospital.
5. Children under the age of 12 are less likely to get or suffer from COVID-19 or its variants but still may be so afflicted.

The Board of Management does not want to impose their thoughts on the worshippers without hearing your opinions. **We want to know if you are fine without any restrictions, or if you want to have the parish maintain some or all of the pandemic related restrictions.** Please email me directly at president@uocc-standrew.ca with your thoughts on this matter especially if you have children under the age of 12. In time for September and the start of the new church cycle, we will try and accommodate all members and provide a place of worship where all who want, can attend safely and comfortably.

Upcoming August feast days

Fr. Yuriy indicates that the following feast days will be celebrated with a Divine Liturgy at St. Andrew's:

1. Thursday, August 19 – Feast of Transfiguration
2. Saturday, August 28 – Feast of Dormition of the Mother of God

If you have any questions regarding this update or otherwise, please call me on my cell (780) 660-0789 or email me at president@uocc-standrew.ca.

Yours truly,

St. Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Sobor Parish Board of Management President

Michael Zukiwsky