

**ST. ANDREW'S
UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX SOBOR PARISH**

9831 - 75 STREET
EDMONTON, ALBERTA
CANADA T6A 2Y8



Слава Ісусу Христу! Слава навіки! Glory To Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!

August 31, 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.

In this letter below are protocols guiding attendance to Sunday Divine Liturgy and other worship services. We continue to be open, encourage worshippers to attend, and welcome those that do attend! However, precautions are necessary because COVID-19 and its variants remain in our community and can still make us sick.

Therefore, we ask and strongly urge you – if you are feeling sick, have any of the symptoms of COVID-19, or have come in contact with a COVID-19 or a variant case (regardless of vaccination status), that you do not attend worship services or come to any other function at the parish. You must follow the AB Government's isolation and quarantining protocols.

With this communication we provide information regarding:

1. A message from Fr. Yuriy
2. Sunday Divine Liturgy at 10am starting September 5
3. Church school registration – September 12
4. Commencing September 5 – St. Andrew's "modified" response to Stage 3 of "Alberta's Open for Summer Plan"
5. Reservations required to attend worship services
6. A call for volunteers to greet and usher worshippers.
7. The office will return to normal – soon
8. A message from the Ladies' Auxiliary
9. Annual Salmon Supper! A message from the Mens Club
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11. Identifying members in this letter who have fallen asleep in the Lord
12. Upcoming SEPTEMBER feast days

A message from Fr. Yuriy

The following text in italics is a 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 brothers and sisters in Christ,

We will start our new Church Year on September 14.

It seems that this year will be not easy in terms of communication and active church life. We all have to think about our safety and in the same way we should take care about our spiritual necessities . Each one of us have ability to pray and support our church community. I would like to remind you about sacraments which are available and I can provide you with using all the restrictions and preventing you to be infected.

I'm always keeping you in prayers during Divine Liturgy as parishioners and members of our Church community. Please send me a message or give me a call when you have a special request for prayers either for health or when someone passed away, or other.

Whether you can come to church or not, I encourage you to be active and supportive, please keep me, your servant in Christ, and my family in your prayers.

Your parish priest,

Fr. Yuriy Sucheuan

Sunday Divine Liturgy Services at 10am starting September 5

Starting September 5 (the first Sunday in the month), Sunday Divine Liturgy services commence at 10am.

Church school registration – September 12

Please be advised that church school registration will occur on September 12.

Commencing September 5 – St. Andrew’s “modified” response to Stage 3 of “Alberta’s Open for Summer Plan”

Starting September 5 (the first Sunday in the month) the new protocol for attendance to worship services at our parish detailed below will be introduced.

However, just yesterday, the City of Edmonton indicated effective September 3, 2021 he donning of masks is mandated and physical distancing should be considered when in all buildings accessible to the public. Further examination of the City’s mandate is necessary and the following protocol may change. Please be patient and flexible as we try and navigate this ever changing environment of COVID related protocols imposed by the Province and the City.

In the most previous letter to the membership dated July 16, 2021, the Board of Management asked you, the members of St. Andrew’s, for your input into how COVID protocols at St.

Andrew's should exist starting in September 2021 regardless of the government's restrictions. Some of you replied – thank-you. As expected, not all of your responses were the same.

Consequently, we have further modified the re-opening plan in an attempt to make a balance between those that continue to want to practice masking and distancing and those that are comfortable without distancing. The re-opening plan now includes both new and already in place requirements. The new requirements are listed below in **bold text** and are so identified. The already in place requirements are unchanged from July 16 and listed below in plain text.

1. **NEW – this protocol is effective September 5, 2021 regardless of your vaccination status.**
2. Directional travel into and out of the church is removed – unchanged from July 16.
3. **NEW – The church nave is split into two sections:**
 1. **The north half of the nave (left hand pews while facing the altar) will be reserved for those that want to continue to practice wearing a mask and remaining physically distanced by 2m between separate cohorts.**
 2. **The south half of the nave (right hand pews while facing the altar) will be reserved for those who are comfortable without masking or physically distancing. However, due to City of Edmonton mandated masking, a mask is to be worn and physical distancing should be considered if possible.**
4. **NEW – An usher will meet worshippers at the entrance into the nave to assist seating them in accordance with their masking preference.**
5. Pews are in their usual positions – unchanged from July 16.
6. **NEW – Every second pew will be blocked from use in the north half of the church to ensure physical distancing can be maintained.**
7. All pews will be used in the south half of the church – unchanged from July 16.
8. **NEW – Reservations are required for those who wish to attend Sunday worship services. See the separate section regarding reservations.**
9. Screening of attendees is no longer completed as worshippers come into the facility – unchanged from July 16.
10. Singing is acceptable during worship services – unchanged from July 16.
11. Kissing and touching of icons is allowed – unchanged from July 16.
12. Holding of the wooden candles during reading of gospel and memorials is practiced – unchanged from July 16.
13. Allow use of the memorial candle stands by worshippers with memorial candles available in the vestibule – unchanged from July 16.
14. Final veneration and kissing of the handheld cross at the dismissal is practiced – unchanged from July 16.
15. Antidoron will continue to be prepared and distributed in a sanitized fashion – unchanged from July 16.
16. Open all areas of the facility – unchanged from July 16.
17. Re-establish greeters for Divine Liturgies – unchanged from July 16.
18. The facility is no longer sanitized prior to its use – unchanged from July 16.

The donation box will remain in the vestibule – the collection of donations with passed baskets will not be practiced as long as part of the church is practicing masking and distancing.

The Board will monitor the member response to and evaluate the effectiveness of this new protocol for at least the month of September to determine if both distanced and un-distanced sections are necessary, whether there is confusion over who should sit in each side of the

church, if there is a need for greater seating because of large worshipper turn-out, and the general level of integration of the two sets of worshippers attending each section.

Please note that some worshippers may have received two COVID vaccinations, some may have received only a single vaccination, and some may not have any COVID vaccinations. Despite what we may think personally, the Board feels that we cannot mandate something that causes a restriction of access to the parish by its members.

If there is any concerns or questions regarding this new protocol, please call me directly on mobile – 780-660-0789 or by emailing me president@uocc-standrew.ca.

Reservations required to attend worship services

Starting September 5 (the first Sunday in the month), a reservation is necessary if you wish to attend Sunday Divine Liturgy services.

Because there are members who exercise their complete and absolute right to choose to reduce personal risk from COVID-19 and its variants by continuing to mask and maintain 2 m separation between cohorts, there is an inadvertent reduction on the number of worshippers that can attend any workshop service.

If you want to attend a Sunday Divine Liturgy, please contact Ernest Skakun (780-434-0543; BLUEMALVA@shaw.ca) no later than Thursday prior to the Sunday Service you want to attend. By making a reservation, you ensure the best opportunity to attend the service. Without a reservation, a spot may not be available for you; so you can only hurt yourself without making the reservation.

A call for volunteers to greet and usher worshippers

If you are prepared to serve as a greeter or an usher for Sunday Divine Liturgy service, please contact Ernie Skakun at 780-434-0543 or email at BLUEMALVA@shaw.ca.

The duties of the greeter are simple – welcome worshippers to St. Andrew's. That's it. There is no need to talk about the pandemic at all. These greeters are completing the same welcoming task that was practiced at St. Andrew's prior to March 2019.

The duties of the usher is a little more complicated and to start, a Board member will complete this task. The usher it to explain the new protocol to members as they are about to enter into the nave of the church. Most importantly, to direct the worshippers to their respective sides of the nave if they choose to mask or not.

The office will return to normal - soon

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic when our church hierarchy directed all activities within our facility to cease, the parish office has not been staffed.

Despite the fact that our hierarchy are allowing activities to re-commence and the AB Government's COVID-19 restrictions have relaxed, it is the opinion of the Board of Management to continue to not staff the office, especially during the summer months with typical reduced activity. There have been some inconveniences, but all have survived.

Please join me in thanking Eugene Luchka for frequently being in the office to not only complete his treasurer roles, but he's also monitored general parish emails, phone calls, and messages left on the answering machine.

Thank-you Eugene!

Now that secular activities are returning to normal in the parish commencing in September, we are thinking about re-staffing the office administrator position – soon.

We pray that the delta variant of COVID does not cause a cancelling of activities that could affect office staff employment.

Please stay tuned.

A message from the Ladies' Auxiliary

The following text in italics is a message from the Ladies' Auxiliary. If you have an questions regarding this message, please contact Kathy Buchanan directly using email – missbu@telusplanet.net.

Hope you are all well and looking forward to our Parish new year in September. We pray that it will be a much better year.

The Ladies Auxiliary is planning on having our 60th Annual General Meeting on Monday September 20th following the Men's Annual Salmon Supper. All ladies of the parish are welcome to attend.

Presentation of years of service awards to our ladies members usually occurs at our AGM, however this will be done at a later date in combination with our celebration of our 60th anniversary.

This is the plan providing there are no restrictions due to COVID.

Take care, stay healthy and hopefully we will see you all at the Salmon supper and our AGM.

*Co chair of St. Andrew's Ladies Auxiliary
Kathy Buchanan*

Annual Salmon Supper! A message from the Mens Club

The following text in italics is a message from the Mens Club. If you have an questions regarding this message, please contact Kathy Buchanan directly using email – bluemalva@shaw.ca.

Salmon Supper Invitation

All members and friends of St. Andrew's Parish and members of the Ladies Auxiliary and Mens Club are invited to attend the Salmon Supper scheduled for Monday, September 20, 2021. Social will begin at 5:30PM with Supper to follow at 6:30. Admission is \$35.00 per person and includes two free refreshment tickets.

*RSVP by September 15 by contacting:
Marshall Boratynec (780-467-2383); bmarsh2@telus.net*

Eugene Luchka (780-919-8863); luchka01@telus.net
 Ernie Skakun (780-434-0543); BLUEMALVA@shaw.ca

The Salmon Supper is being held in anticipation that there will be no further restrictions from Alberta Health Services regarding Covid-19 and its variants. However, if the Salmon Supper is held, then all Covid-19 protocols as of that date should be respected.

The Board of Management and the whole parish needs your help

At the Annual General Meeting, all positions on the Board of Management were not filled. And, most of this year's Board members have been on the Board for two terms. Consequently, the following issues exist:

1. Some activities within the parish are not being completed as thoroughly as they should, as some Board members are pulling "double duty" and completing their usual and additional duties. This is not healthy as volunteer burnout can occur.
2. Decisions requiring broad debate by the Board may only see limited debate because the number of "opinions" is reduced with reduced Board size. And, perhaps some differing points of view are not brought forward and discussed. This is indirectly not healthy for the parish members as appropriate stewardship of the parish's assets could be eroded.
3. New Board members are not learning from experience. The existing procedures and items necessary to manage the parish are not being shown to less experienced Board members and new members are not learning from the mistakes that undoubtedly occur regardless of Board experience.

Without a full complement of Board members, the whole health of the Parish is not only directly and immediately affected, but the longevity of OUR parish is reduced.

Please talk to any of the existing Board members about volunteering to sit on the Board of Management. The parish will only benefit.

Identifying members in this letter who have fallen asleep in the Lord

A question was raised by a member after receiving the letter to the membership dated July 16, 2021 asking why members who have fallen asleep in the Lord are not identified in the letters to the membership. Here is my response...

Initially, I was simply following the previous president's practice – not identifying those deceased members in the letters to the membership. Personally, I felt uncomfortable identifying deceased members by name in a letter to the members of the parish – it didn't seem appropriate so I didn't question the previous president's practice.

However, once questioned I thought more on the topic, I found that more evaluation was necessary because the Outreach monthly bulletin (when it was published previously) seemed to always identify the names of members recently deceased.

The topic was discussed at the monthly Board meeting in August it was discussed that names of deceased members could be published in letters to the membership (likely to carry forward for future Outreach newsletters) if the Board received approval to do so from the deceased member's family.

Publication of names of deceased members may also occur if they appear in the public domain – like in an obituary in the Edmonton Journal.

Upcoming September feast days

Fr. Yuriy indicates that the following feast days will be celebrated with a 10am Divine Liturgy at St. Andrew's:

1. Saturday, September 12 – Beheading of St. John the Baptist
2. Tuesday September 21 – Nativity of the Mother of God
3. Monday, September 27 – Exaltation of the Holy Cross

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