

Attendance Noted

Prayer was offered by the Rev. Scott Leannah, President of the Standing Committee

The Rev. Leannah thanked the Standing Committee for agreeing to meet for a one item agenda – a review of the Ecclesiastical Authority’s position regarding the current guidelines for public worship, as promulgated by The Way Forward Task Force.

The Standing Committee rehearsed the conversation at the Thursday, February 18 Clergy Call:

The request from some members of the clergy for a relaxation of the guidelines such as to allow for some public worship to resume

The gratitude expressed by some members of the clergy for a diocesan policy that relieved individual clergy from the burden and stress of having to make decisions about reopening

The call for assurance that the guidelines are based on the most current science

The need and desire to protect our parishioners and our clergy from infection

The acknowledgement of the risks associated with reopening to the clergy of the diocese

The need for all that we do to be grounded in theology, science, and common sense

The members of the Standing Committee brought their experiences of living and working, both in the church and in their secular lives and vocations, to the table.

The Standing Committee talked about the concept of “do no harm” and its extension beyond the physical body to the emotional, psychological, and spiritual aspects of our being.

The Standing Committee weighed the concept of “acceptable risk” in light of the roll out of vaccines, what we know about how the virus is spread, and what can be done to prevent the spread of the disease.

The Standing Committee voted unanimously to ask the Way Forward Task Force to evaluate the current guidelines, ask them to:

Move the risk of infection threshold in the Risk Assessment Dashboard from 1% to 3%

Examine the cleaning protocols and offer a model that allows for multiple use of the same space within a 24 hour period

Change the process for submitting plans to regather to the diocese so that parishes are no longer asking permission to open in accordance with the guidelines, but are instead, informing the diocese of their plans.

These requests will be transmitted to the Way Forward Task Force by The Rev. Dave Mowers in a phone call with the Rev. Deacon Bill Dunlop.

The Meeting was adjourned at 3:29pm

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Andy Jones

The Standing Committee