

## **The Anglican Church of St. Paul, L'Amoreaux**

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**Diocese of Toronto**  
Anglican Church of Canada

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Dear Friends,

We're now in our third year with Covid! The cloud still hangs over us, and there's uncertainty about what we'll face in the ordinary flu season. Nevertheless, we're reopening the doors and re-starting our programs, and the signs have been very encouraging.

Here is our sense of things.

First and straightforwardly, we are now seeing another cost of Covid. Separation from friends and family and from the ordinary activities of our lives has contributed to a marked increase in mental illness as well as, across the board, a great deal of anger and discouragement.

Secondly, there remains a dangerous war in the Ukraine and ominous signals from China, North Korea and Iran. This has contributed greatly to the rise of inflation, fuel costs and the cost of ordinary groceries.

And all of this at a time in western society of general discouragement about the church, the family, and the nation.

So, how will we respond?

First, we will keep our heads. We've been down this road before, and up against odds far greater than these. In the parish go back to 1935 on the eve of WWII when the church burned to the ground and the bishop and friends of St. Paul's advised packing it in. Respectfully, the priest and people said 'no', and now we look back in astonishment at what would have been lost had they given in.

But as was urged on Back to Church Sunday, go back much further to the early centuries of the church when there was no support in the society at large. In fact, violent persecution was the norm. But in those very circumstances, Christians believed that God was patient, and so they could be patient for how he would use their simple lives, humbly offered.

They believed - with their lives! - that Jesus had been raised from the dead and where all hope was lost, God could bring life.

And they believed that what they had seen and experienced in Jesus Christ was true. That his life, and the pattern it reveals, is dependable. And with these convictions, they challenged the strongest forces of their times with the beauty of the Gospel in their lives. In those circumstances, the young churches grew and thrived.

God being our helper, this is how we will respond!