

**Statement on Our Response  
To the COVID-19 Pandemic  
- January 2021 -**



As we continue to navigate through the current pandemic, we want to update you about our current response as a denomination. We remain forever grateful for the sacrificial work being done by our front-line medical workers and many others in essential services. We commend our government officials at each level across the country for the leadership they have given. We join our hearts to pray for those who have fallen ill, lost loved ones or who have experienced economic hardship through this time. **We stand as a community of faith ready to do what we can to respond in compassionate ways.** Our Pastors and Churches are doing their very best to adapt to the ever changing environment we find ourselves in. Together we are trusting God to help us find our way as well as listening to each other and trusted advisors. With the prospect of vaccines before us moving into 2021, we look forward to a time when we can return to a somewhat “normal” way of life with the ability to gather and interact.

In March of 2020 all of our church buildings were closed to the public and all in-person public gatherings were suspended across Canada. Since that time, as restrictions eased in the Summer and Fall, some of our churches began regathering following all guidelines to ensure the safety of congregants. Other congregations have elected to keep their services online only and continue to do so. Throughout the pandemic we have worked diligently to care for people and stay connected, given the constraints we are all living with. As a second wave of the pandemic is upon us, all of our public services are currently suspended. We will keep monitoring the situation month by month and await directions from our various provincial governments before moving into any efforts to re-gather in person once again. When we are able to offer in-person gatherings once again, please be assured that public safety will be paramount. We will do our very best to practice compassionate care for all of our people, whether they participate in person or online. We realize that we can all do the simplest things to show we care, like making a phone call or texting someone to check in. We may be apart but we can still stay connected.

As ministry continues, even in a pandemic, we encourage all to remember the financial needs of the church. Most of our churches are now providing online opportunities for giving. Please check church websites/social media platforms for information.

We serve a God who helps us in times of trouble to overcome our fears. May we be instruments of His peace as we seek to understand the times and know best what to do.

Grace and peace to you!

Charles E. Mashinter  
*Executive Director*