SERVING OPPORTUNITIES

**COVID-19 Pandemic Responses**

**The Diocese of Nova Scotia & Prince Edward Island**

**March 18, 2020**

Our ability to be physically present may be limited, yet there are many ways our churches can respond to practical needs in our neighbourhoods. Here is a list of some ideas:

**ERRANDS:** People who are sick, self-quarantined, have family members they are unable to leave alone at home or people with mobility challenges, may require some practical assistance with purchasing groceries, picking up prescriptions, retrieving/sending mail, taking out the trash, etc. Here are some details to consider in your planning:

* COMMUNICATION: It is important to get the message out to let community members know this ministry is available to them. This could be through phone calls to parishioners and potential people in need. Post a notice on your church sign, Facebook page, website, e-mail newsletter, as well as inform the local municipal councillor, the MLA, etc.
* PROVIDE: One central phone number and/or e-mail address for contact. The person (or people) who are attending to this then dispatch the requests. Confidentiality is important.
* RUNNERS: Individuals or teams of two from congregations can help with carrying out these odd jobs, always mindful to keep hands, surfaces touched (ex. plastic bags) disinfected, and attend to proper social distancing. Think about arranging to pick up and leave items in a safe place (ex. door step, newspaper tube, mailbox) to avoid personal contact.

**MEALS ON WHEELS:** A number of individuals and families in our neighbourhoods would appreciate a home-made hot meal or a fresh-baked treat. These could be people who are working long shifts in hospitals, extended care homes, busy pandemic-related workers, have onerous commitments at home or are simply tiring of eating non-perishable goods like canned beans, etc.

* COMMUNICTION: See above.
* PROVIDE: One-pot meals like hearty soups, casseroles, meat pies, etc. are easy to share and reheat. Sweets like cookies, squares are easy to transport and can be individually frozen. Include a list of ingredients and if you’re able, check to see if the recipients have dietary restrictions. Always keep packaging and wrappers sterile. Use containers that do not need to be returned in order to reduce more personal contact.
* DELIVERY: See RUNNERS above.