

February 8, 2021

To: Families and Friends of Luther Court Society  
From: Karen Johnson-Lefsrud, Executive Director

Dear Family and Friends,

This note seeks to keep you up-to-date on the status of life at Luther Court and provide you with pertinent and current information as it pertains to the care and well-being of your loved ones.

Beginning last week our staff were called back for their second vaccine doses – which have been bumped to a 42 day follow-up date. Within the next couple of weeks those second doses for staff should be complete. Second doses of the vaccine will follow for our residents of long term care and assisted living within a 42 day timeline of their first dose on January 22<sup>nd</sup>. And, we are hopeful that the Phase 2 vaccination window will open soon, wherein all people over the age of 80 will be eligible for vaccination. This will enable our independent clients to receive the vaccine. We were disappointed that the provincial rules did not allow for our independent tenants to be vaccinated in Phase 1 alongside their long term care and assisted living neighbours. We did advocate with the Health Authority to enable this to happen, but the provincial direction was very clear and did not include anyone who was not in long term care or assisted living. Island Health did not have the latitude to act beyond those parameters and therefore could not provide vaccine for that part of our community at this time. We don't by intention, very often differentiate between the different segments of our community, so it felt particularly painful to do so. In this case it was due to restrictions beyond our control. We will let you know when we have any further information to share regarding Phase 2 vaccinations. And we look forward with anticipation to the time when our community as a whole has had the opportunity to receive a vaccination.

Now that a large proportion of our community has been vaccinated, many people have asked us if that means we can relax our other safety measures. The simple answer to this question is no. Dr. Henry and her team have stated that all prevention measures including good hand hygiene, 6 feet distancing, staying home if you are feeling unwell and the wearing of masks must remain in place. In accordance with this mandate, we have also not resumed our normal activity programs. We continue to provide activities that are tailored to meet the social distancing guidelines.

In this vein, for those of you who are visiting on site at Luther Court we ask you to continue to be vigilant in observing the protocols of social distancing and mask wearing. Our visit staff have noticed a decline in attentiveness to careful mask wearing throughout a visit and we ask you for the safety of our community and your loved one in particular, that you continue to adhere to the masking guidelines. We have done so well for so long – and we need to continue these good practices, particularly with the uncertainty of new variants of the virus appearing, and how they might affect our community. Thank you to all of you for exercising patience and forbearance. I know that it gets harder as the pandemic stretches on. We are weary of all the restrictions. However, we continue to celebrate that a year into this struggle we remain COVID-free, and we endeavour to do what we can to continue this good effort.

Dr. Henry released new provincial orders on Friday that pertain to visits within long term care and assisted living. The guidelines for Essential & for Social Visits were updated on January 7<sup>th</sup>. The order from Dr. Henry today mandates these guidelines be followed by all long term care and assisted living facilities. You can read the guidelines by clicking here: [http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/Visitors\\_Long-Term\\_Care\\_Seniors\\_Assisted\\_Living.pdf](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/Visitors_Long-Term_Care_Seniors_Assisted_Living.pdf) I have also attached a copy of the guidelines to this update. Please read through the guidelines and feel free to reach out to us if you have questions about them. You can communicate with either myself ([kjohnson@luthercourt.org](mailto:kjohnson@luthercourt.org)) or Lori McKenzie ([lmckenzie@luthercourt.org](mailto:lmckenzie@luthercourt.org)) with your questions. As the guidelines have become more inclusive, if you feel that you qualify to be an essential visitor, you can communicate that to us and we will utilize an assessment tool (provided to us by Island Health) to determine with you and your loved one if you meet the criteria to be named as an essential visitor. All of our clients qualify for a designated social visitor, and this continues. For the majority of our residents & tenants this will continue to be the category that their visitors will fall under. However, if there are particular needs that fall within the parameters of the guidelines for essential visitors, we will provide opportunity to work through that assessment process with you and your loved one.

Pastor Ed continues to be a wonderful resource in our community for assisting residents, tenants and staff to identify inner resources to withstand the challenges of this pandemic time. He is also available to connect with families should that support be helpful to you. I attach a message from him in this update for your own reflection. Pastor Ed can be reached by calling 250 477-7241 ext. 23 or by emailing [echell@luthercourt.org](mailto:echell@luthercourt.org).

We are so very grateful for your prayers. You are in our prayers.



*A birthday celebration for a very special resident at Luther Court who celebrated her 107<sup>th</sup> birthday last week. An article about her appears in the Saanich News outlining her experience as the first Luther Court resident to receive the COVID vaccine. Check it out at: <https://www.saanichnews.com/community/saanich-woman-will-mark-107th-birthday-days-after-receiving-covid-19-vaccine/>*

## The day-to-day information:

1. **All visits require an appointment.** Amber is our visit coordinator. Please email Amber at [ahayes@luthercourt.org](mailto:ahayes@luthercourt.org) or call 250 477-7241 ext. 35 to arrange visits – social visits for the designated visitor, window visits or virtual visits for family or friends who are not the designated visitor.

**All visitors must enter and exit the building by the main entrance. No exceptions.**

- **Designated social visits with residents in long term** care occur at one of four visit stations – 3 on our main floor, 1 outside in a covered area by the library. You must wear a mask for the entirety of these visits.
  - **Designated social visits with our tenants** occur in the tenant's apartment. You must wear a mask for the entirety of these visits.
  - If you have not yet established a designated social visitor for your family member, please contact Carolyn Hoekstra, who is coordinating that process. She can be reached by emailing: [choekstra@luthercourt.org](mailto:choekstra@luthercourt.org) or by calling 250 477-7241 ext. 28.
  - **Window visits** occur outside our main entrance with the resident/tenant inside in the Cedar Room. Please wear a mask. If you do not have a mask, we will provide you with one.
  - **Essential visits** will be allowed at the critical times of end-of-life, at critical decision points where family input is deemed essential and in situations of care that meet a set of established criteria. There is an assessment that must occur to determine if the criteria for an essential visit have been met. Essential visits occur in the resident's room or the tenant's apartment and one visitor at a time is allowed into the room/apartment.
2. Tenants in our assisted living and independent apartments do have the ability to leave Luther Court. However, in keeping with the concern around variant strains that are circulating, we highly recommend that you keep these ventures to a minimum. Dr. Henry continues to mandate us to not gather people indoors beyond our household bubble at this time. A reminder that as you do not live with the Luther Court tenant, they are not part of your household bubble. We recommend masks for any times off-site, and we provide them to allow for the greatest measure of safety.
  3. Deliveries of groceries and other items can be dropped off at the main entrance for delivery to your loved one. The hours for drop-off are **9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.**
  4. We continue to practice safe-distancing, wearing of masks when within 2 metres of the seniors, rigorous cleaning protocols, screening for symptoms of both residents and staff, and of course absolutely key – frequent and thorough hand-washing. Our residents in long term care have their temperature taken daily, all tenants who leave the building have their temperature taken at time of leaving and returning, and our staff temperatures are checked twice daily. We maintain regular and frequent contact with the health authority and the public health team, in order to be as current as possible on the best strategies to keep our community safe.

## Diversity is a Blessing

The regular news is often filled with COVID related information and can be overwhelming. You might like to feed your spirit by following one of the many events that have been flagged as a focus for the week or month. The goal here is not to overwhelm but offer an invitation to look at one or two that might speak to you. Listed below are some examples of things happening this month. I have added a link for each if there is interest to find out more:

- Week of prayer for Christian Unity just past – Annually, Christians find ways of worshipping together to acknowledge and celebrate their united spirit.  
<https://www.weekofprayer.ca/week-prayer-christian-unity>
- Recently a queer affirming worship service at Lutheran Church of the Cross took place.  
<https://www.lutheranvictoria.ca/collections/lgbtq2>



- Last week was World Interfaith Harmony Week. We are called to gather around a common theme of Loving God and Loving Neighbour (more info at: <https://worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com/>) I posted some interfaith quotes from notable people next to my office door for residents to read. More quotes are available in this resource of 200 quotes [https://www.scarboromissions.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Quotation-document\\_Dec14.pdf](https://www.scarboromissions.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Quotation-document_Dec14.pdf) . Here are a few examples of quotes:

“We not only need to understand one another, we need one another to understand ourselves.” Dr. Jean Halperin

“God must like diversity because God sure has created a lot of it.” Source unknown

“When we lose the right to be different, we lose the right to be free.” Nelson Mandela

- Moosehide Campaign – Fasting day on Feb 11<sup>th</sup>. <http://moosehidecampaign.ca/> This campaign has a First Nations connection around violence against women.
- February is Black History month - <https://lutheranvictoria.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=66dac301bb1f455eb43113ce5&id=4e7a716b4c&e=eff8ba78b3>

I was also told that it is also Therapeutic Recreation Month, Heart Month and Random Acts of Kindness month. You may be aware of more. As I said these give us something to ponder other than COVID.

These celebrations all bring to mind the diversity of the world we live in. When I look at each emphasis, memories of meeting people is stirred for me. In each case of meeting, conversing, listening and being with these people my life has been enriched. The stories are often marked with pain or struggle but also joy and meaning as life experience is shared. As I survey the numerous opportunities listed I realize that diversity has been a blessing for me.

Enjoy the month immersed in the diversity that blesses us all,

Chaplain Ed