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Our response to the COVID19 pandemic: An open letter to all members of the EfM Canada community

My dear friends,

Unprecedented events in the last few weeks have led the whole church to difficult decisions. In Canada, some dioceses and parishes are cancelling public worship and even small group meetings including EfM. Mentors and group members need to follow your bishop's directions, EfM is a program that serves the educational needs of your diocese and we and you are accountable to your bishop. I have already written to mentors encouraging experimentation with electronic meeting platforms and even offering access to the EfM Canada zoom program on a temporary basis. Please remember that EfM is an adult education program, so students get from it what they put into it. We trust them to continue learning even when meeting is not possible. Graduation certificates will be sent out at the usual time.

Earlier today we had an online meeting of the EfM Canada Board, joined by 5 of the 6 trainers in Canada. These wise and experienced souls brought their own experience from places across Canada. We reached a consensus that we will **suspend all in-person mentor training through to the end of June**. If the situation permits, we will schedule some trainings for the early fall but we will be asking coordinators to give precedence to new mentors to enable them to start their groups. We will be generous in extending accreditation when necessary, but our policy of annual mentor training remains unchanged. Mentors returning after hiatus and unable to attend a fall training will have their accreditation extended on a case-by-case basis.

EfM in Sewanee has also cancelled training (except for EfM online) events but they are also exploring online training modules as are we, so there may be some interesting news. I encourage you all to stay in touch with each other and to take care of and pray for one another through this time. My cell number and email are at the top of this letter. I encourage you to write me or phone me if you have any questions or concerns.

Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Catherine Hall'.

The Rev. Dr. Catherine Dafoe Hall, Director