



*the* **MUCKLE Family**  
**NORTHERN MANITOBA**

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Greetings from the North!

The shorter days of winter are now upon us! Daylight hours lesson in Northern areas in the winter. Night seems to be longer and longer each day. This is not necessarily new to Canadians, but living this far North does show you the contrast from the summer months where the nights are mostly sunshine.

The Provincial Government of Manitoba began to tighten down further on the restrictions related to COVID in November. The Manitoba Premier was proud to announce on national news that Manitoba was the strictest province in Canada. The restrictions change almost daily. Churches were deemed unessential. This is a struggle to understand, as beer and cannabis stores, Wal-mart, Costco, Home Depot, and various food stores remain open. As we could not open the doors of the church, we conducted a parking lot service.

Our first parking lot service went on with a hitch as someone called the police on us for not 'social distancing' and holding a church service. Church services have been deemed super spreaders, because people sing. As our parking lot service was coming to an end, the police arrived. The officer informed us that we risked a fine of \$5,000.00 for the church and/or organizer and fines for individuals up to \$1,300.00 per person. That was not a real pleasant experience. We were planning on a live broadcast for Wednesday. We did so, but there was a noise outside like an officer on a radio checking to see if the building was secure. We thought it also may have been a blow horn of an office asking us to come out. I kept preaching, and my wife headed to the back. By the time she arrived, there was no vehicle or person. We are uncertain what this may have been but do suspect the police were called on us again.

The Provincial Government then decided the measures were not strict enough and issued requirements to ban parking lot services for churches or religious groups. Several church groups in the province decided that the government was going too far and defied the orders. One such church was fined over \$30,000.00 plus individual fines. There were other churches fined, but the one for over \$30,000.00 is the most egregious. Charter rights and liberties seem inexistent. We have been hosting online services in the meantime and praying on the next steps. It appears as though churches are being targeted.

In an effort to continue to witness, we are becoming creative. We contributed to the local food hamper, but taped tracts to the back of the food items. The children made cards and included tracts for the local long term care residents. We are also awaiting an FM transmitter provided by our home church. This will allow us to effectively reach more of the town.

Serving together,

David, Nadine, Abigail, Paul, & Noah Muckle



