

New Guidelines for our Life Together

We give thanks to God for the continuing decline in COVID-19 cases and for the low transmission rates. This is a result of an increase in vaccinations and our efforts to love our neighbors and respect their health as we give up some of our own freedoms.

The Regathering Team met Wednesday and it was a meeting of serious discussion that presented the pain and fear and deep desire represented in our parish. Our time together allowed us to share continued concerns and also to come up with a revised set of guidelines as we continue to move forward out of the pandemic.

We are committed to providing safe worship and fellowship for all of our members. The team decided to reduce restrictions in phases and the attached new guidelines reflect this. You will be thrilled to know that masks are no longer required if you have been fully vaccinated, per CDC, State, and Diocesan guidelines. We looked at revisions of several other area Episcopal parishes for comparison. We believe that our revisions are what is best for our parish right now, and that these revisions will continue in the months ahead.

We are grateful beyond measure for your patience and your respect for one another. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to a member of the Regathering Team, a Vestry member, or Rev. Robin.

The Regathering Team

Bee Betts, Lee Boisseau, Kemper Brinkley, Marigene Little, Bill Miller, Bill Owen, Jonathan Shockley, Marwee Walsh

Please take time to read the following new guidelines.

Revised Guidelines for Parish Life

- **Following CDC and diocesan updated guidelines, fully vaccinated persons are free to be unmasked in worship if desired.** *Unvaccinated persons are requested and highly recommended to continue to follow CDC guidelines, especially mask wearing and social distancing.* All are requested to stay at home when feeling ill and join in worship online.
- **Please respect and show compassion for those who make different choices than you or who have different health and comfort needs.** Please continue to “remember the least of these” and model Christian charity as we navigate this new phase of reentry. Those leading worship will also make different decisions as we continue to work to be a community that is both welcoming, safe and non-judgmental.
- **Restrooms.** All restrooms are open. Please continue to avoid crowding and please disinfect after use.
- **Children are welcome.** We ask that you bring quiet pew activities and keep your children with you at all times. Masks for children are at the parents’ discretion.
- **Enter and Exit as you choose.** All doors will be open and you may enter or exit any door. Attendance registration is no longer required. We will no longer dismiss by rows, but we ask that you continue to respect the personal space of one another as you depart.
- **Offering plates.** We will not resume passing of offering plates. They will be located at the doors in the nave. This will be familiar if you have attended the Celtic Service.
- **For the time being, we will continue to sit in every other row.** As we move forward and/or as we start reaching capacity, we will then reassess our spacing practices. The balcony/choir loft is closed to all but our AV volunteers.
- **Personal space is a good thing.** When finding a seat, always ask if you may sit next to someone. They may prefer some distancing.
- **Singing.** With masks no longer required, the Regathering Team has made the decision to continue with our practice of no congregational singing at this time.
- **The Peace.** We will continue to exchange the peace from a safe distance for now.
- **Communion.** In this phase we will continue to offer communion in one kind (wafers) at the base of the chancel steps.
- **Service length.** We will continue to offer a service that is shorter in length to keep our time together as safe as possible, considering that we are not all masked and our air handling system is older and without newer filter systems. Additionally, a shorter service is more suitable for our live-streaming worshippers.
- **Fellowship and Formation.** We will soon begin offering refreshments outside after the service, but will wait until September to resume Sunday education activities.
- **Outside Groups.** Outside groups who use our space will be contacted and invited to return, and will be expected to create and follow their own safety guidelines in consultation with the Rector.