

Dear Members and Friends of St. Peters,

July 23, 2020

It is with excitement that we are now venturing on a new part of our journey at St. Peter's during this adjustment period to the coronavirus. Starting Sunday, July 26th, at 9 a.m., we will begin in-person worship outside. The protocols to which we are adhering have been developed by The Episcopal Church in Connecticut as well as the state. In light of the need to adhere strictly to these mandates, the reopening task force has set up specific rules/procedures for our worship service to allow us to celebrate together, while respecting everyone's safety. The information below will be split into different sections for easy reference. Although the document is long, we wanted to be as specific as possible so everyone knows what to expect and what procedures to follow. We also want to make sure you are familiar with how it's going to work. Please plan to arrive between 8:45-8:50 to allow time for the health screening and getting chairs positioned before 9!

It is important to note, however, that at this time some members may not feel comfortable meeting us in this in-person setting. Online worship streaming from facebook will still be available to all.

Here is a list of the topics that will be covered in this letter:

- **At risk members**
- **Our outside worship space**
- **What to bring**
- **Worship buddy: (Do you need help getting/setting up a chair for worship?)**
- **What to expect during the service**
- **What will be provided**
- **Social Distance and Spacing**
- **Physical Health Requirements**
- **Entering and exiting the worship space**
- **Sunday School and Nursery**
- **The offertory collection**
- **Using the restroom**
- **Church Facility Areas that are open**
- **Using our gifts to contribute to the service**
- **Other social gathering**

At risk members:

A critical directive we want to share with our church members is to encourage those who are most at risk to stay home. As per the church document: "Parishioners and clergy 65 years old and older, and/or individuals with health risk factors, should continue to stay home and stay safe." Of course this guideline is familiar to us at this point. However, we completely understand and respect if those at risk choose not to attend. You will not be asked to leave because you are in a high-risk group.

Our outside worship space:

The space we chose for outdoor worship is next to the parking lot beside the entrance to the memorial garden. This space is flat and allows access to the church wifi and power sources needed for technology used in the service. It also allows for overflow if there are many participants. (Currently up to 150 people may gather for outdoor worship.)

What to bring:

Please make sure that all members bring and wear a mask as soon as you exit your vehicle. Please keep the mask on for the duration of the service and until you get into your vehicle to return home. All members, including Rev. Anne, are required to do so. The only exception is that Rev. Anne is allowed to remove her mask when she is leading the service and is at least 6 feet from the nearest church member. Also, please bring your own chairs and printed bulletins/music. If you have a prayer book or hymnal at home, you are also welcome to bring those as well. No member will be allowed to borrow church books for the service.

Worship buddy: (Do you need help getting/setting up a chair for worship?)

If you have any physical difficulties or limitations that prevent you from bringing and/or setting up your own chair for the service, please be in touch with Diane by phone or email (860-644-8548, office@stpeters-sw.org). She will find you a worship buddy to provide a chair. That volunteer will sanitize this chair before and after your use.

What to expect during the service:

At this time the service will continue to be the ante-communion liturgy we have been using. In regards to technology the reopening team has been working hard to make sure there is an adequate wifi signal and power for the equipment needed. Tim will be using a keyboard to provide music, and there will be a microphone so that those in attendance will be able to hear Rev. Anne and the lectors clearly. So as not to diminish the strength of the wifi signal for broadcasting all members will be asked to put their electronic devices (phones or tablets) on airplane mode during the service. Musically, those who are attending in-person worship are invited to hum along with the hymns. Those worshipping at home should feel free to sing.

What will be provided:

There is a strict mandate to limit the distribution of materials. Consequently there will be a VERY limited number of printed bulletins for those who do not have the ability to print materials at home. A gloved greeter will be in charge of handing these out. (Please bring all bulletins home to be disposed of there.) Also, if you have accidentally forgotten your mask, there will be disposable masks available. If you have a need for one of these masks, please take it with you at the end of the service and dispose of it at home. There will also be disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer available as you enter and exit the worship area and bathrooms. When disposing of a wipe, there will be a garbage can for this purpose.

Social Distance and Spacing:

All spacing between individuals or families must be at least 6 feet apart. Worship space rows will be clearly marked to assist in maintaining distance. If for example, you have a family of 4, the family will sit together and the next person or family would be 6 feet from the last person in the “row” of the other family. Also, please be aware that touching others is not allowed at any. This may sound a bit harsh, as we all miss each other. Some people may want to greet or hug/shake hands, but please understand that at this time we are asked to refrain from physical contact.

Physical Health Requirements:

In order to attend the service you must be cough and fever free. There will be a masked volunteer that will use a contactless thermometer to take everyone’s temperature before individuals may set up their chairs in the worship space. The volunteer will also ask you if you are feeling well so that we responsibly screen members. If these health requirements are not met it may be suggested that you not attend the service.

Entering and exiting the worship space:

After getting your temperature checked you will walk to the greeter who will be there to help you with any questions, such as where you can/should sit. Please keep in mind that traffic patterns should allow for at least 6 feet of distance, and minimize contact. At the end of the service we will exit row by row to maintain a social distance.

Sunday School and Nursery:

At this time there is no in-person Sunday School or an option for nursery care. Parents, please feel welcome to bring little ones to the service, masked if they are able. Young children may not be passed to others who are not members of your household.

The offertory collection:

As passing a basket is against guidelines, we will have a stationary container that will be used for contactless deposit of offerings. It will be placed on a table or cart as you enter the worship space. Please make an effort not to touch the box itself.

Using the restroom:

We encourage you to use the restroom at home before coming to the church to minimize the need for church bathroom use.

The non-gendered restroom across from the kitchen will be open during the service. If you use the restroom it is your responsibility to disinfect the bathroom before and after use. Wipes will be provided for you to disinfect the door handle of the church and the door handle of the bathroom on the way in. Bathroom etiquette signs will be posted in the restroom. There will be more wipes in the bathroom to wipe the handles on the way out.

The path to the bathroom will be clearly marked inside the church as we will disinfect that pathway after the service. Enter the back door by the parish hall and use the hallway to the left to reach the non-gendered bathroom across from the kitchen. Please make sure to wear your mask at all times in the building in consideration of those cleaning the church after the service.

Church Facility Areas that are open:

The bathrooms are the only areas of the church that will be left open for access unless you are assisting in the set up or break down of worship. If you need to retrieve an item from another area of the church facility please ask Rev. Anne for assistance with this after the service.

Using our gifts to contribute to the service:

Since we are not allowed to sing during our service at this time (as it greatly increases the likelihood of spreading the virus), are there ways you would like to volunteer your time and share your gifts with our church and the Lord? For example would you like to: play an instrument to accompany Tim or play a hymn or other song, recite a poem or prayer (either creating your own or reading a favorite), or do you have another idea?

Other social gathering:

Due to current regulations, after the service there will be no coffee hour, social gathering, or other receptions. We are strongly encouraged to return home directly after the service. There will still be virtual coffee hour, and as time goes on we will adjust to each new set of guidelines and revise this procedure.

Thank you for your cooperation and your attention to this letter. Please reach out to one of the members of the reopening committee if you have any questions. We are here to make this new worship format as easy and as welcoming as possible. We will get the hang of this together as our St. Peter's family!

Faithfully,

The Reopening Task Force: Mark Bell, Danielle Bennett, Ken Davidson, Anne Fraley, Diane Fornuto, Karen Kubica, Tim Mascarinas, Bill Myers

Cheat Sheet

Please stay home if you don't feel well, or feel that your health may be at risk

Please Bring:

- A chair for each member of your family
- The printed Order of Service and music
- A mask
- Hand sanitizer and wipes
- Bug spray (optional)