

Dear St. Anne's Family,

As announced, we will resume gathering for worship on Sunday, July 26th, St. Anne's Day, at 10:00 AM! As you know, though this is a joyous and important first step, it is not a return to services as usual. Our worship is in vain if it is not done in love so we must take every precaution to safeguard one another's health. I would also like to emphasize again that no one should feel compelled to return for services at this time. Live streaming will continue and participating online is a perfectly acceptable way of expressing your faith. In fact, if you have any preexisting conditions that make you particularly susceptible to COVID-19 I urge you to please not return at this time.

However, if you would like to worship in person at this time, the following precautions will be practiced:

- **20 parishioner maximum:** in addition to the celebrant and worship leaders 20 parishioners may be present during the service. In the near future we hope to equip the Parish Hall to receive a live feed of services which will allow us to accommodate additional parishioners.
- **Registration is required:** parishioners will be invited to register for services in advance using the website, **reopen.church**. In the coming weeks you will receive an email with instructions on how to register for services. Four services will be open for registration at a time—initially July 26th, and August 2nd, 9th, and 16th. This will allow you to select a service that doesn't conflict with vacation or other plans. Once you've registered for a service you will receive an email confirmation from reopen.church. In order to ensure that everyone who wishes to attend has a timely opportunity to do so, parishioners will be asked initially to register for only one of every four weeks. If attendance is light, then you will be permitted to register more frequently. The Inreach Team will contact parishioners who may need assistance registering. *Please note that parishioners who arrive but have not registered will not be admitted, and visitors cannot be accommodated at this time.*
- **Masks will be required:** everyone will be required to wear a mask while indoors, including clergy, ushers, and other worship leaders. Please bring your own mask. Single-use masks will be provided should you need one. Removing one's mask will only be permitted in order to receive Communion. The priest will also wear a mask, except during the sermon and when presiding at the Altar.
- **Maintaining physical distance:** attendees must maintain a physical distance of at least 6 feet from one another. Markers will be placed on the floor in the Church and Narthex, and attendees should utilize them to maintain a safe distance. Ushers will escort attendees to designated seats which will also be marked to ensure a safe and reasonable distance from others.
- **Changes in liturgical practices:** other aspects of the liturgy will be changed as well. For example, there will be no physical contact during the Peace, and rather than passing the offering plate during the mass attendees will place their offering in an alms basin placed at the rear of the Nave. Likewise, there will be no congregational singing until it is safe to resume doing so. These changes will ensure that we are doing our utmost to gather for worship as safely as possible.
- **Communion in one kind only:** the communion will be offered to attendees under the form of the Bread (host). While the Wine will be consecrated it will not be offered to attendees.

Please remember that the teaching of the church is that communion in one kind is communion in full.

- **Other:** there are additional protocols that we will need to follow as we resume in-person worship (e.g. continued diligence in hand washing, refraining from attendance if not feeling well, etc.), and these details will be communicated in advance to those who are registered.

I know that these precautions seem contrary to the oneness that the Eucharist communicates, but the alternative is to not gather at all until there is no danger of spreading the virus, and we have no idea when that will be. Please know that as we have the bishop's permission and the vestry and I discern that it is safe to, we will remove restrictions.

Within the next few days the bishop will be releasing guidance for worship during Phase III (the diocese's version of the "green phase") most likely to be implemented in early August. Most notably, that will mean we are allowed to have more attendees at our services. As soon as those guidelines are released the vestry and I will evaluate how and when we can implement them at St. Anne's. On the other hand, if the infection rate climbs between now and mid-July we may have to pause this reopening. If so, please be patient. This plan will already be in place and we will be able to move forward quickly as soon as is safely possible.

Thank you for your patience and flexibility during this trial. St. Anne's is a special parish and I am blessed to serve you as rector. We will continue to walk this path together, discerning the way forward one day at a time until this pandemic has passed. And it will pass, and I firmly believe we will be a stronger wiser and more Christ-like people on the other side of it.

Sincerely,
Fr. Winston+