



PHASED RE-OPENING AMID COVID-19

In accordance with the Diocese of Washington and the state of Maryland, this document outlines parameters for the safe operations and gathering of our church community in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

PHASE I

Suspension of Live In-Person Public Worship Services and Public Use of Property

Civic authorities shut down all public gatherings. Numbers of known infections and deaths rising or near peak levels in Maryland and the District of Columbia

PHASE II

[Charles County entered Phase II on May 29, 2020 and remains in Phase II as of June 30, 2020]

Significantly-limited Live In-person and Public Use of Property

Civic authorities allow for limited numbers of persons to gather. Key Characteristics of Phase 2 include 14 – day consecutive declines in numbers of people testing positive for Covid-19, hospitalizations, and intensive care bed use. In addition, there is widespread testing and contract tracing available on the County level as well as a sufficient supply of personal protective equipment. There must also be evidence that our health care systems are not in danger of being overwhelmed.

PHASE III

Moderately-limited In-person Public Worship Services and Use of Property

Civic authorities continue to ease restrictions on public gatherings. Numbers of known infections and deaths have fallen to near zero in the state. Widespread testing and tracking

PHASE IV

All Live In-Person Public Worship Services Allowed with Few Limitations

Civic authorities have allowed all public gatherings. An antiviral or vaccine has been developed and is widely available. No reported new cases of pandemic infections in the state or District for at least two weeks. Widespread testing and tracking.

PROTOCOLS UNDER PHASE I

- The building will remain closed except for one day a week when the Parish Administrator shall check the mail and complete essential business operations. No other persons are to enter the building at this time.
- All worship will be live-streamed via Zoom and Facebook.
- All other activities, including meetings, book groups, Bible studies, and prayer services will take place online.
- Pastoral care will be done via telephone or online, with the exception of graveside funerals following limitations set forth by civic authorities. Social distancing and the use of masks are required.

PROTOCOLS UNDER PHASE II

WORSHIP

- Due to the size of the church building and the need to maintain a 6-foot perimeter between each household, only 1/3 of the 27 pews can be utilized per service (=9 families). Accordingly, the church building will remain closed for *indoor in-person worship*. The primary service of worship each week, the Liturgy of the Word, will take place online via Zoom and Facebook. This will allow for the greatest number of participants.
- On occasion, the clergy and Minister of Music may stream the Sunday worship service from the church. Up to three additional people may be present to assist with technology. All present will be required to maintain 6 feet apart from one another and wear a mask at all times.

OUTDOOR WORSHIP

- We are tentatively planning an outdoor worship service of Holy Eucharist (bread only) on July 18. Attendance at this service will be limited to 50 people, and everyone will be asked to provide their own chairs. This service will be recorded for those unable to attend in person and will not replace the primary liturgy of the week on Sunday.
- Plans for additional outdoor services in August will be made after the service in July.
- Those planning to attend outdoor worship will be required to register in advance—either online or on the phone by Wednesday, July 15. Attendance will be on a first-come, first-serve basis.

- All those attending the service will be required to have an Emergency Contact Form and Re-Gathering Covenant on file. The Emergency Contact Form will be used only if contact tracing is needed. Extras will be on hand at the entrance point to the outdoor service.
- Worshipers known to be infectious, actively sick, or symptomatic are not to attend. Worshipers with underlying health risks are discouraged from attending services. This point will be included in our weekly bulletin and weekly email.
- Signage will be in place regarding Covid-19 symptoms, hygiene, etc. throughout the building, on the doors, and at the outdoor worship check-in station.
- Upon exiting their cars, everyone will be required to put on a mask and go to the designated Check-In station outside of the entrance to Hamilton Room.
- The Check-In Station will be staffed by four volunteers spaced 6-feet apart who will distribute hand sanitizer, take every person's temperature using no-touch thermometers, and guide families to the designated seating areas. Single-use masks will be available for those without one. Anyone wearing a single-use mask will be required to take them home.
- Bulletins will be available for download two days before the service. A limited number will be available at the entrance for those without smartphones or printers at home. Bulletins are to be taken home and not discarded at church.
- Seating will be marked off with chalk in advance.
- There will be no touching of others except within family units.
- Music will be limited only to instrumental music and a masked soloist. Congregational singing is prohibited.
- The Celebrant will wear gloves while celebrating Holy Communion and will distribute only the bread. Ushers will direct people to the altar to receive communion in intervals to allow for appropriate physical distancing. One altar guild member will set up the outdoor altar using gloves.
- The bathrooms just outside of Hamilton Hall will be open for emergency use only, which people may enter by accessing the doors behind the garage, which will remain open. The hallway beyond the restroom will be taped off to prevent access. Attendees are encouraged to use the restroom at home before coming to the service. Lysol spray will be in both bathrooms as well. Signage will be

placed on bathroom wall asking people to wipe all touched surfaces including flush handle, faucets, doorknobs/latches, toilet seats.

- Online giving is encouraged. An offering plate will be placed at the Check-In station for those who wish to drop off a check/cash offering. If cash is to be used, we ask that it be placed in a sealed envelope to limit potential exposure.
- Worshippers will be dismissed by household in order to maintain proper physical distancing.

ADDITIONAL PROTOCOLS

- The church will be cleaned and sanitized according to CDC requirements before the service on July 18.
- There will be no coffee hours, potluck meals, or after-worship gatherings
- Small groups will be encouraged to meet virtually to be able to include those in high-risk categories.
- Offerings will be stored in the safe and counted twice a month by a rotation of counters. Counters must wear gloves and maintain a distance of 6 feet while counting the offering.
- There will be no use of baptismal fonts during this time. Baptisms will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Masks and gloves will be required.
- Pastoral care will continue to be limited to telephone or video conferencing unless approved by the bishop.
- Funerals will continue to be limited to graveside committals only and all persons must wear masks and maintain a 6-foot distance.
- Official meetings, fellowship activities, and spiritual formation will continue to take place via Zoom and Facebook Live.
- Only the rector, parish administrator, and Minister of Music will have office access to the building for essential functions, and staff will continue to conduct the majority of their work remotely.
- When in the building, staff must wipe down all services with sanitizing wipes after usage. If more than one person is present, masks must be worn.
- The key in the key box will be removed in order to limit access to the building.

- Rental of the Hamilton Room, Breakout Rooms, and Basement are suspended during this time
- Upon approval of this protocol and the cleaning of the building, Alcoholics Anonymous may meet in person as long as everyone agrees to wear a mask at all times, abide by the 6-foot physical distancing requirement, and clean and disinfect the space after use. All restrooms, however, will remain closed. The AA group leader will be required to sign a covenant with St. Paul's acknowledging receipt and agreement with these parameters.
- We will use wipes only once per door knob and surface areas.
- All bathroom fixtures will be disinfected when cleaned, including floors and wall areas, after the service.
- All old mops and brooms will be discarded and new ones will be purchased.
- Prayer Books, hymnals, and pew cards will be sanitized, boxed, and stored in the Break-Out Room.

Protocols for stages 3 and 4 are being developed in accordance with diocesan standards.