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September 23, 2021

Dear St. Paul's Community,

In March 2021, the Re-Gathering Committee established metrics for safely gathering in person. Thanks to your adherence to these standards, we have been able to ensure the safety of our community to the best of our ability. As we enter the fall, we remain committed to our community's safety and the protection of the most vulnerable among us.

We are also mindful that the vaccine was not readily available to the general population when our current guidelines were originally drafted. Today, the vaccine is widely available and an increasing number of people are fully vaccinated. While the Delta variant and 2-week positivity rate affirm the importance of remaining vigilant, practicing social distancing, getting vaccinated, and wearing masks, the decision has been made to update our metrics to account for: 1) the number of eligible people in our congregation who have been vaccinated; 2) our ability to mitigate transmission of the coronavirus through social distancing and the use of masks; and, 3) the increasingly acute emotional and spiritual needs of our community.

Accordingly, beginning October 10, we will add a capacity-limited indoor worship service at 8:00 on Sunday mornings. We will continue to have an outdoor service at 10:15 (weather permitting), as gathering outdoors remains the safest option (especially for families with children). The 10:15 service will also be live-streamed so that those who are not able to join us in person can worship with us virtually. Children and youth activities will continue to take place outdoors. We will consider pivoting to two indoor worship services once the temperature is too cool to worship comfortably outdoors. For complete details, please read the enclosed guidelines in their entirety.

As always, we continue to monitor public health trends and will modify our procedures as necessary. Thank you for your continued cooperation and patience. Above all, thank you for your commitment to loving and caring for our community, especially the most vulnerable among us. Please do not hesitate to contact us directly with any questions.

Faithfully,

The Rev. Dr. Maria A. Kane, *Rector*

Sewell Truite, *Senior Warden*

## PROTOCOLS

3.0-9.99% average positivity rate (14-day average)

*It is our responsibility to inform you that while we are doing our best to maintain everyone's safety, no public gathering is completely safe. In addition, please note that local and national mandates, the cancellation of non-emergent surgeries at regional hospitals, and/or the capacity of local ICUs due to covid-19 cases take precedence over these guidelines.*

### GENERAL GUIDELINES

**Your attendance at any church-sponsored activity signifies your agreement to inform the church office in the event that you or someone in your household tests positive for COVID-19 within 14 days of your attendance at a church activity. This will enable us to notify others of their potential exposure and to conduct the necessary contact tracing. The identification of the person who tests positive will not be shared with the congregation.**

- Indoor worship is permitted, but outdoor worship remains the preferred and recommended option.
- Masks must be worn at all times regardless of vaccination status
- In light of children under the age of 12 being unable to receive the vaccine, children and youth activities will continue to take place outdoors and virtually.
- Pre-Registration is required for indoor activities that may exceed capacity to socially distance.
- For contact-tracing purposes, all attendees must sign in at group gatherings.
- All heating and cooling units have been outfitted with MERV-13 filters, which eliminate at least 90% of particles the size of virus-containing aerosols.
- Select windows must remain open during worship or an air-circulating air purifier with carbon HEPA filters must be in use.
- All high-touch areas (e.g., door handles) will be sanitized after service.
- Those participating in the choir must be vaccinated.
- Small groups will continue to meet virtually unless gathering in person is a necessity.
- Hospitality: When offered for *special* occasions, the serving of food and beverages must be done outdoors provided that social distancing is enforced.
  - Food and beverages must be offered in single-serve units and by distributed by a designated, vaccinated server. Shared utensils and punch bowls are not authorized.

### PROTOCOLS FOR INDOOR WORSHIP

- 6 feet of social distancing between households **must** be observed.
- Masks must be worn at all times **regardless of vaccination status**.
- Fully vaccinated preachers, readers, or intercessors may remove their masks while speaking as long as they are at least 6-8 feet from any person.
- A vaccinated soloist may sing unmasked indoors provided they are 6-8 feet away from the nearest person.
- Wind and brass instruments may be played provided that the instrumentalists are vaccinated and at least 8 feet from the nearest person; bell covers are to be used when possible.
- Communion will be received in one kind.
- Congregational singing is allowed provided that everyone is wearing a mask.
- The nave (church) will be sanitized with a CDC-approved air mist each week.
- To avoid cross-contamination, children and families will have assigned worship bags/bins for indoor use.

## Worship Schedule (effective 10/10/2021)

### **8:00 a.m. (indoors)**

- Nave (church)
- Pre-registration required (*by phone, email or the website no later than noon on the Friday before each service*)
- Capacity: 60 people
- Masks must be worn at all times
- Communion served in one kind
- Social distancing will be enforced
- Selected windows will remain open or an air-circulating HEPA purifier will be in use
- Worshippers must sign in for contact-tracing purposes
- Prayer books will be wiped down after service
- Instrumental music only
- No coffee hour for the time being
- \*Worshippers are asked to bring their own prayer books if they have them. \*

### **10:15 a.m. (outdoors, weather permitting; indoors)**

#### **Outdoors** (weather permitting)

- No Capacity Limits
- Masks must be worn at all times
- Pre-Registration NOT required
- Communion served in one kind
- Service live-streamed to Facebook
- Worshippers must sign in for contact-tracing purposes

#### **Indoors**

- Service live-streamed to Facebook
- Pre-registration required (*by phone, email or the website no later than noon on the Friday before each service*)
- Capacity: 60
- Masks must be worn at all times
- Social distancing will be enforced
- Selected windows will remain open or an air-circulating HEPA purifier will be in use
- Communion served in one kind
- Worshippers must sign in for contact-tracing purposes
- No coffee hour for the time being