

ATTENDING ST. STEPHEN'S DURING PHASE-ONE RE-OPENING

In-person services will re-start on Sunday, May 31st.

The diocese has given us a guideline to re-opening for in-person worship services and we have been working for weeks on a plan that we hope is helpful, workable, and faithful. The following points should give you a good idea of what this plan will look like, but we will all need flexibility and grace as we work through the reality of what it will mean to bear one another's burdens in these unprecedented times. Not everyone will feel ready enough or healthy enough to be in a public setting or attend services right away. And that's ok. But please know that once you are ready to be here, we will be ready.

Please wear a mask.

The diocese has requested that all adults wear masks. Children are encouraged to wear masks at the discretion of their parents, but those under the age of 2 should NOT wear one. Please bring and wear your own mask, but there will be a small supply of disposable masks available if you can't bring one.

Facilities will be disinfected after each use and between services.

Hand sanitizer will also be available as you enter and leave. Everyone is encouraged to use it.

No nursery, Sunday School, or small group meetings yet.

Kids are welcome at any and all services, but will need to sit with families. We will have children's bulletins and disposable crayon packs available every Sunday. VBS is being reorganized and rescheduled for late in the summer.

We will have limited capacity inside the buildings.

We have been limited to the number of people who can attend a service and need to maintain social distancing space requirements inside each building. Therefore, we will be offering three services each Sunday morning to help spread people out. But don't worry! If any one service fills up, we will have an overflow service in the outside chapel available for all three services.

9:00am in the Worship Center (*will still be livestreamed online*)

10:00am in the Sanctuary

11:00am in the Worship Center

It's going to be a little different for a while as we navigate these "phase one" restrictions together. The two services in the Worship Center will have everything—liturgy, prayers, readings, lyrics—displayed on screens so you may continue to participate in the service. We've had to remove cushions, Prayer Books, and hymnals from the Sanctuary, so there will be disposable bulletins in there and outside with the entire service printed for your use.

Help us coordinate our services by reservation.

We've also created an online tool that will allow you to make a reservation for one of the three inside services. Please help us work through our capacity requirements by following the link and signing up for available spots. If you can't access this link, please call the office and we would be happy to make the reservations for you. And remember, if an inside service reaches capacity, there will be an overflow service in the garden at that same time. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0444a8ab2cabff2-sunday>

Wednesday morning at 9:00am

If Sunday mornings still don't seem to be a good option for you yet, we will also be offering a midweek service in the Sanctuary at 9:00am every Wednesday morning.

We will be maintaining social distance guidelines.

Seating will be spaced out and we'll be asking you to help maintain social distancing entering, exiting, and during the service. We need to hold off on handshakes and hugs a little longer, so there will be no greeting lines before or after the service, and passing the Peace will need to be from a distance.

Communion will be Bread only.

The church has taught for generations that we receive the fullness of Christ in either the consecrated Bread or Wine, so when necessary, receiving "in one kind" is appropriate and effective. Because our seating will be spaced out, the clergy will be able to come to you during the distribution of Communion, and there won't be a need to get up or line up in order to receive.

Monthly Drive Thru will continue.

For those who wish to receive Communion but aren't ready to be in groups of people yet, we will continue our monthly drive-thru Communion. Our next drive thru will be Sunday, May 31st from noon-12:30pm.

Giving

Thank you for your continued support and generosity! An open collection plate will be available inside our buildings at each service if you'd like to drop off a donation as you come in or leave. As always, checks may be mailed or dropped off in the church office, your bank can help you set up automatic or bill pay options, and you can donate at any time online through our website or this PayPal

link: <https://www.paypal.com/donate/?token=ZxvahxMngXuEdwgUQtwVEFHTJWsAj8Crmflb7LWs8p11pSyNaCeoBTrirvtRW6ACrIAJm&country.x=US&locale.x=US>