



THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST

A NEW SEASON: GUIDELINES FOR RE-ENTERING OUR CHURCH BUILDING

The Vestry of The Episcopal Church of St. John the Evangelist met on June 2, 2020 to agree upon and approve the following guidelines for re-entering our Parish property in accordance with the five-phased plan developed by the Governor's Office and modified and/or approved by the Bishop of Chicago. The general components of each phase, as applies to St. John the Evangelist are:

- Phase 1** All church buildings are closed, all programming is cancelled, and all employees work from home.
- Phase 2** All Parish buildings are closed, all programming is cancelled, and all employees work from home, except for individuals designated by the Rector to periodically check the mail, deposit donations, and mail payments for bills due.
- Phase 3** Parish Buildings may re-open on a limited basis. All gatherings are limited to no more than 10 participants, including clergy. Parish Staff may return to working in the Office on an as-needed basis, otherwise, continue working from home. Face coverings are worn at all times and physical distancing is maintained. In-person worship remains cancelled.
- Phase 4** Parish Buildings may re-open. All gatherings, including in-person worship, may resume, but are limited to no more than 50 participants, including clergy. Parish Staff may return to working in the Office following the regular schedule. Face coverings are worn at all times and physical distancing is maintained.
- Phase 5** In Phase 5 there are no longer any restrictions placed on gathering sizes or worship practices. This will not occur until there is a reliable vaccine, that has been proven effective in preventing COVID-19, is readily available, and a critical percentage of the community has been vaccinated as determined by public health officials.

I. Preparing / Cleaning / Disinfecting

- A. Monica's Cleaning Consultants, the outside cleaning service that the Parish has contracted with over the past year, has been retained to provide a thorough cleaning and disinfection of all Parish buildings on Saturday, May 30, and will resume bi-monthly cleaning services during the month of June.
- B. The Building & Grounds Committee will coordinate with the Ushers to ensure that all high touch surfaces in the Church and restrooms will be cleaned and sanitized between each service and at the end of the day.
- C. To allow sufficient time between services for cleaning, disinfecting, and airing out the worship space, Sunday morning service times will be changed from 8:00 am and 10:00 am to 8:30 am and 11:00 am.
- D. All non-essential items have been removed from all rooms authorized for use, reducing the number of touch surfaces.
- E. The Building & Grounds Committee has complied with EPA recommendations and flushed all water lines in the church (restroom sinks, toilets, kitchen sinks, utility sinks, and water hose connections) in an effort to prevent Legionnaires' Disease.

II. Common Spaces & Furnishings

- A. All non-essential items (prayer books, hymnals, bibles, pens, information cards, pamphlets, etc.) have been removed from the pews and tables at the back of the church.
- B. The use of prayer books and re-usable bulletins will be discontinued at least until we reach Phase 5 of the Governor's Restore Illinois plan. Bulletins will be available on tables located at the designated "Entrance" door at the front of the church. Recycle bins will be located at the designated "Exit" door near the Children's Chapel. All congregants are asked to not leave bulletins behind in their pews, but to place them in the recycle bins on their way out of the Church.
- C. The hallway behind the sanctuary, accessing the sacristy will be restricted to only Clergy who are vesting for the service, Altar Guild members who are serving that day, and those requiring use of the lift to enter the Church, in an effort to ensure safe physical distancing.
- D. Members of the Altar Guild should be completed with their duties no less than 10 minutes prior to the start of the service to ensure safe physical distancing in the Sacristy.

- E. At minimum, every other row of pews will be roped off to ensure that there is at least one empty row between Parishioners seated in the Church. Please note that only family groups may be seated in a row together without there being at least 6 feet of physical distancing.
- F. All restrooms will be limited to one user at a time. When using the restroom, please wipe down the toilet and sink after use with disinfectant wipes, vigorously wash hands with soap and water, and use the hand sanitizer provided at the door before returning to the Church. Signage will be placed in all restrooms to reinforce compliance with this requirement.

III. Supplies and Equipment Needed

- A. Hand sanitizer stations and wastebaskets will be placed at each entrance/exit to the Church and outside each restroom.
- B. Face coverings will be required for every person entering the Church. Parishioners are encouraged to bring your own face covering; however, a limited supply will be provided for those who need them. The Ushers will enforce this requirement.

IV. Member / Visitor Awareness & Communication

- A. During weekend worship, the designated entrance into the Church will be the front door on the Park Drive side of the Church. The designated exit from the Church will be from the door between the pulpit and Children's Chapel and out the door near the Columbarium. The office door will remain locked and not used as an entrance or exit door for weekend worship. The only exception to this policy will be those who require use of the lift to enter the church. Those individuals should park in the alley and use the back door located between the Atrium and the Education Wing.
- B. Ushers will be required to keep a count of the number of people inside the building. During Phase 4 of our re-entering plan, no more than 50 people may be in attendance at any one time. To help facilitate this requirement, an additional service will be added to the weekend worship schedule, which will utilize forms of worship from Enriching our Worship and other authorized liturgical resources, on Saturday evening at 5:30 pm. Additionally, the 8:00 am, Rite I service will be moved to 8:30 am to make it more accessible to some who normally attend the 10:00 am service; and the 10:00 am, Rite II service will be moved to 11:00 am to ensure adequate time to clean, sanitize, and air out the church between services. If you normally attend the 10:00 am service, please consider attending at either 8:30 am or Saturday evening at 5:30 pm. In the event that more than 50 are in attendance, we will maintain an overflow space in

the Resource Room and stream the service to there. If necessary, we will ask members of the Vestry and other leaders to volunteer to move in our effort to remain as hospitable as possible to our visitors and newer families.

- C. Signage will be posted throughout the buildings and at each entrance and exit, reminding Parishioners to observe physical distancing, that wearing face coverings are required, and to refrain from shaking hands and hugging as a form of greeting.
- D. Prior to re-entering the buildings for in-person worship, all members of the congregation will be mailed a letter containing this re-entry plan, as well as frequent communication via email, announcements, and signage to reinforce safety and health precautions.
- E. If a member of the congregation is ill or is known to have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, please follow Jesus' command to love our neighbor by not coming to Church. All services will be live-streamed on our website, www.mysje.org.
- F. Ushers will be asked to take attendance at all services, including the names, phone numbers, and email addresses of each person in attendance. In the event you become infected with COVID-19, it will be very important that you let the Church Office or Clergy know as soon as possible so that we can inform those who attended in-person worship with you.
- G. If a member of the congregation becomes ill while at the Church, the ushers will assist them to the Guild Room, if possible. A decision can then be made to either make arrangements to get that member home, or to call 911 if their condition warrants. In the event that an emergency occurs in the Church, the congregation will be invited to remain seated and pray for the affected member while EMS is called. Those seated immediately around that person will be asked to move away from the area, to allow for some privacy and to make way for emergency responders. If a member of the congregation becomes ill during a service and is displaying signs or symptoms of COVID-19, ushers will invite members of the congregation to leave the building, using the designated exit.
- H. In the event a member of the congregation refuses to wear a face covering, the Ushers will politely invite them to participate in the live-streamed service from the comfort of their home. No person will be allowed to remain in the Church building without a face-covering. This is one way that we express our love for each other, by doing our part to protect them from any germs we may unknowingly be spreading.
- I. All members of the Vestry, Church Staff, Clergy, Altar Guild, Greeters, and Ushers will be offered training in these policies and procedures, and will be required to

sign a statement affirming such training before being allowed to return to their duties.

- J. Please note that at this time we are not planning on offering Nursery care or Sunday School until we are in Phase 5. All children will need to sit with their parents so that they can ensure their children's safety and compliance with physical distancing and other pertinent guidelines.
- K. There will not be Coffee Hour or St. John's Table until we are in Phase 5. Both of these activities by nature encourage close gathering and sharing of food, which are restricted until we are in Phase 5.

V. Worship Services

- A. The Communications Committee will be responsible for developing and maintaining live-streamed services through our website, www.mysje.org. Any member who is not comfortable returning to in-person worship, who is ill and should not be around other people, or who is home-bound, is invited to participate with your community of faith through virtual worship. Other opportunities to connect with the community in a virtual manner will continue to be developed and evaluated.
- B. Single-use worship bulletins will include clear instructions for entering/exiting the building, greeting and passing of the peace, receiving Holy Communion, and wearing face-coverings.
- C. Singing will not be permitted at any Church gathering, as this greatly extends the distance that the infectious droplets in our breath can extend. Music may be provided by organ, piano, or other stringed instrument. No wind instruments will be allowed until we enter Phase 5.
- D. All members of the congregation are asked to refrain from greeting one another with a handshake, hug, or kiss. Greetings should be offered from a safe distance. During the passing of the Peace, please turn to those sitting closest to you and offer a sign of peace. Please do not leave your seats, shake hands, or hug.
- E. Communion will be offered through reception of the bread alone, this means that the use of Lay Eucharistic Ministers will not be necessary until we return to Phase 5 of the re-opening plan where there are no restrictions. Ushers will invite members of the congregation to receive communion one pew at a time, and will allow that pew to receive communion and return to their seats before inviting the next pew to come forward. We will refrain from kneeling at the altar rail during Phase 4 of the re-opening plan in an effort to reduce the surfaces being touched. All members of the Congregation will be expected to keep their face-coverings on when receiving communion. You will be invited by the Ushers

to come to a standing station, where the priest will place the host in your hands. Please wait until you return to your seat before lifting your face covering to consume the host.

- F. During the Offertory, the Ushers will not pass an offering plate. Instead a stationary plate will be located at the front door into the Church for members to place their offering when entering, and at the front of the Church where members can place their offering when coming forward for Communion. Please also consider making online donations or mailing a check.
- G. Funerals may resume during Phase 3, with a limit of 10 people, including Clergy, present, or once we enter Phase 4, with a limit of 50 people in attendance. All services will be live-streamed to allow those not able to attend in person to participate in these celebrations of life.