



ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

July 27, 2021

Dear Fellow Parishioner,

We are happy to share some very good news with you! Beginning on Sunday, Aug. 1, St. Mary's sanctuary will reopen for indoor celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Like so many parishioners, we look forward to once again gathering in person in our beautiful church to pray, receive Holy Communion and give thanks for God's many blessings.

Naturally, we still need to take certain precautions to keep one another as COVID-safe as possible. But these minor adjustments are well worth making because they enable us to be together again as one body of Christ.

Parishioners who don't yet feel comfortable worshipping indoors will still be able to view the livestreamed service on our YouTube channel.

Here is some information about indoor worship plans you may find helpful.

Overview

Time: The service will continue to be held at 9 am.

Entry: No reservation or registration is necessary. Please enter through the front, Park Street doors or the handicap entrance on the Church Street side. (Stairs from the parking lot are under construction.)

Service bulletin: Bulletins containing the complete liturgy will be distributed as you enter.

Masks: Masks are optional for fully vaccinated people. Anyone who is not fully vaccinated should wear a mask, as should anyone who is vulnerable because of health issues. If you feel ill that day, please love your neighbor by staying home.

Offerings: Please place your offering in the basket in the center aisle.

Seating: Please sit in any open pew marked by a GREEN dot. Markings ensure social distancing.

Music: Our pianist, Kelly Sharp, will play several pieces during the service. There will not be congregational singing, in keeping with COVID protocols.

Ventilation: Windows will be open, but COVID protocols don't allow the use of fans.

Hand sanitizer: Hand sanitizer will be readily available throughout the sanctuary. Clergy and lay ministers will apply it throughout the service.

Exchange of the peace: We'll greet each other from a distance.

Holy Communion

Elements placed: The bread and wine to be consecrated will be placed on the credence table near the altar before the service instead of being carried forward during the Offertory.

Receiving the Body of Christ: Rev. Ann will stand at the top of the center aisle and distribute traditional Communion wafers. People seated on one side of the church will come forward first, followed by those on the other side. All will walk forward using the center aisle and return to their pews using the side aisles.

Receiving the Blood of Christ: After receiving the Communion wafer, each person will pick up a sealed Communion cup and take it back to their pew for consumption. A receptacle will be provided for depositing empty cups.

Choice: Communion is valid whether received in one form or both. You may choose to receive bread and/or wine (juice) or simply ask for a blessing.

After the Service

Service bulletin: Please recycle your bulletin on the way out. Bulletins are printed each week.

Saying hello: Rev. Ann will greet attendees on the lawn instead of in the narthex. There is no coffee hour for the time being.

Livestreaming

Livestream continues: We will continue to livestream the 9 am Sunday service on our YouTube channel.

Access: To access St. Mary's YouTube channel, click on the link in the weekly e-newsletter OR type this link into your browser:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9GJ2eKFRNdXst_wo6JnHIQ

Spiritual Communion: The Prayer for Spiritual Communion will appear on the screen during the distribution of communion.

Service bulletin: The bulletin will be linked on St. Mary's YouTube page.

The parish office is also reopening. Office hours are Monday through Friday from 8 am to noon. Please wear a **mask** whenever you're in the office. Other building use will be arranged on a case-by-case basis through Parish Administrator Sandy Braman.

We are delighted to be able to open St. Mary's sanctuary for worship. We believe that following safety protocols will keep attendees safe. However, we will continue to monitor COVID-19 rates in the community and follow official recommendations going forward.

We appreciate your patience and understanding over these many months, and we look forward to seeing you in church soon.

Sincerely,
St. Mary's Vestry