

What to Expect with a Safe Return to Sunday at St. Mark's:

A Quick Snapshot St. Mark's Protocol for Providing Safe Space and Good Online Connection in the Holiness of Community

1) Be assured we will continue to offer online live-streamed services on Sunday Mornings. We have found them to be capable of reaching many people that St. Mark's may have missed along the way. Facebook, the Website, and our E-Communications are critical to our life going forward. This is good evangelism and a loving way to connect with our brothers and sisters in Christ who might not be able or willing to gather in face to face events. This also allows for anyone who is feeling unwell to confidently stay home and worship rather than put others at risk for illness. **If you don't feel well, or aren't ready to come back just yet, you will be able to tune in on Facebook. Both services, the 8am and the 11am, will be live-streamed.**

2) The Vestry has outlined protocol and procedures that will help us maintain safe spacing for those who attend Sunday worship in-person. This protocol necessitates knowledge and appreciation of the many different responsibilities of Sunday leadership. **For now, our space limits us to 50 people per service, plus 15 helpers.** As you know, this is a greatly reduced number of support for worship, so please help us by knowing that all people in attendance will be asked to help in clean-up, spacing, and following the protocols set forth by the Vestry.

3) Due to these limitations, **Reservations are Required to attend a service.** We are utilizing an app (Church by MinistryOne) to facilitate these reservations. Please download the app and make reservations one week at a time. Information about the app will come in a future email. Please be aware that we need to utilize space well, and if you have made regular reservations several weeks in a row, it might be a good idea for you to take into account letting others join the service. We have made provision for visitors and newcomers, and we hope to be able to make room for all that wish to worship as time progresses.

4) **Facial Coverings (Masks) are required at all times during worship.** This means that all masks must be worn over the nose and mouth during the service. We will have masks available for anyone who doesn't have one upon arrival. Since Face Coverings and the Covid-19 often make recognizing each other a challenge, the vestry has requested that we all bring and wear our name tags. If you don't have a name-tag upon arrival, we will have a paper name tag for you to use.

5) Spacing is marked throughout the Church. Pews have been set aside for use and "roped off" for non-use. Markers on the floor will guide spacing for communion. **Please be flexible in finding a seat for worship.**

6) **Please arrive at least 15 minutes early for worship.** This allows for us to "get settled" for prayers and connection. This is very difficult for many of us... please know it is a temporary task to help everyone who is giving their time to serve in these unusual times.

7) **Communion is in one-kind only.** This means bread without wine. The “flow” for communion is also different. Ushers will direct communicants to the altar to receive from the priest. Please make your hands flat to receive the wafer, keep your mask on until you receive communion, and then step away into the middle aisle before consuming.

8) **Fr. Mike is working with the Audio/Visual/Internet component of our weekly worship primarily.** This will allow for many different avenues of technology meant to enhance our connection. This ministry is situated in the choir loft. This is a wonderful intersection of Mike’s gifts and a protective measure for his family. Please understand and respect this boundary.

9) We are utilizing liturgy projections on the wall beside the altar and bulletins that can be found online via the app, the website, or a QR code/Text Message. There are no prayer books in the pews, so if you’re “old school” bring your own BCP. **There are no paper bulletins at this time.**

10) **There is no congregational singing at this time.** I know. We miss it too.

11) **There is no coffee hour or food service at this time.**

12) **Expect to experience a great deal of emotion with safe return.** Please be mindful of the emotions and experiences of others as well. For some, this return is welcome and wonderful. For many, this return is powerful. For all, it is a return to the wider community of St. Mark’s. This requires us to be loving and gracious to all our brothers and sisters. Jesus calls us to love our neighbor, and being a part of a Christian community like ours requires us to be sacrificially loving, generously gracious, and beautifully patient. These Christ-Like values have always guided us, our continued “unusual season” calls us to practice these traits faithfully and with the HOPE that guides us all. Please keep our mission statement “to see Jesus in and be Jesus to others as we are led and empowered by Grace” foremost in your mind as we bravely venture into this next chapter of life together. Thank you for taking the time to read this, and never forget...

YOU ARE LOVED!

Peace,
Ben+