



What you need to know about attending worship in an age of COVID-19

For now, in person attendance will be limited to 50 people at any one liturgy following strict social distancing and very careful guidelines. If you are ready, we would love to welcome you back to worship. Please stay home if you are immunocompromised. It is best for people who are elderly, ill in any way, or have complicating factors to stay away from group gatherings. We continue to live stream and tape worship for later viewing on Facebook and the St. Stephen Website. Here are the most important things to know in the order you will encounter them, if you plan on joining us:

- Please wear your name tag to worship! We haven't seen each other for a while 😊
- When you arrive you will find the doors propped open so you will not need to touch anything. There is a touchless hand sanitizer unit at the door, please place your mask on and sanitize your hands as you enter.
- We will expect everyone to use face masks when in the building. If you forget your face covering, we have extras for you, but no one can enter the building without a face covering and they must be worn at all times except at the moment of communion. Face coverings and water bottles will be available near the entrance to the nave for those who need them.
- Upon entering an usher will ask your full name and write it down. This is for contact tracing purposes should we need to be in touch with you.
- Be aware ushers/greeters will **not** shake hands or pass out bulletins. We will rely on the screen. Some bulletins will be printed and placed on a table for those who need them, or you can print your own off the website before coming. No bulletins or other papers may be left behind in the building. If you use a worship folder, you must take it home with you.
- The nave has been prepared for social distancing in accordance with local guidelines. Every other pew is closed off and designated seating six feet apart in the pews that are open is in place. You may sit next to your "family unit," but there must be six feet between groups in any open pews. Ushers will help you to be seated.

- Offering plates will be placed on a stand as people enter and exit. Greeters will stand behind a table warmly welcoming worshippers from a distance.
- We continue to encourage electronic giving.
- Outside doors and bathroom doors will be propped open, so no one touches a doorknob or handle.
- Initially, following CDC guidelines, **all** congregational singing will be limited to an individual or ensemble who will sing on behalf of the assembly.
- For now, only the verbal greeting of Peace will be exchanged in the liturgy. Sharing the peace for now should be nothing more than exchanging a simple bow to those on your right and left.
- The Common cup is usually the most sanitary means of communion since most germs are on the hands. This virus, however, is passed on by airborne droplets, and so Bishop Suarez does recommend **not using either common cup or intinction** initially. Communing in one kind (only host) is acceptable, recommended, and appropriate. The crucified and risen Christ is fully present for us in, with, and under one element. The chalice will not be reintroduced at St. Stephen until it is once again deemed to be safe.
- There will be one communion station, single file, following the ushers' directions and the markings on the floor to maintain social distancing. At the time of holy communion, exit the pew via the side isles, and go to the rear of the church. As you round the corner to the central isle there will be another touchless sanitizing station. Please sanitize your hands and proceed down the center isle to receive the sacrament following the floor markers. The pastor distributing the host will try to avoid touching communicants' hands as much as possible. Communicants are reminded to come forward with flat outstretched hands.
- Following the Liturgy, the pastor will be present outside the outer doors to greet people, but will remain socially distanced with no physical contact.
- As hard as it is for us, for now please refrain from hugging, shaking hands, or in any way having physical contact with other worshippers. There will be no fellowship time after worship until it is once more deemed to be a safe activity.

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