Updated Recommendations and guidance for navigating the next chapter in our pandemic landscape

September 3, 2020
A BOLD NEW WORLD AWAITS US!

- Reimagine how church can look and feel
- Adaptive, innovative leadership
- Embrace this time of fresh expressions of faith
- Connect with each other in new and creative ways
- God is with us and the Holy Spirit is breathing new life into the church

"BEHOLD, I AM DOING A NEW THING; NOW IT SPRINGS FORTH, DO YOU NOT PERCEIVE IT? I WILL MAKE A WAY IN THE WILDERNESS AND RIVERS IN THE DESERT."

ISAIAH 43:19

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HEALTH AND SAFETY IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE

We know more than we did as we first began reopening our churches – original reopening directives and phases are no longer fully relevant.

Behaviors that help prevent the spread of COVID are consistently:

• Physical distancing
• Stay outdoors if possible
• Avoid large gatherings
• Use face coverings when in public spaces
• Regularly wash and sanitize hands and surfaces
UPDATED RECOMMENDATIONS AND GUIDANCE

- Desire to ease up on some things to allow for a more grace-filled and joyful worship experience
- Empowering churches to advocate for their own health and to be entrusted with the care of their congregations
- Compilation of original Covid-19 directives and amendments from March 2020
- Relaxation of SOME things
FACE COVERINGS – CHANGES AND CLARIFICATIONS

- Inside – Speakers may use face shield or plexi-glass if at lectern or pulpit and if 12 feet from other individuals; all others remain masked at all times.

- Outside – Attendees may remove masks while seated or standing in one place if 6’ apart.

- Outside – Speakers still wear masks or shields when speaking.
Maintain a six-foot distance between individual household groups at all times whether inside or outside and in all buildings and ministry contexts.
SAFETY AND CLEANING PROTOCOLS – NO CHANGES

- Continue to practice good hygiene
- Wash your hands, avoid touching your face
- Disinfect frequently used items and surfaces
- Clean between services
- Remove non-essential items
- Post signage
SCREENING – STAFF AND LEADERS – SLIGHT CHANGE

- Staff, leaders and volunteers complete screening document, including temperature check
- Stay home if exposed within 10 days
- Keep logs on file
SCREENING – CONGREGATION/VISITORS

- Keep log of all congregants or attendees at a service, office, meeting or gathering with date, **time**, name and phone number of individual attending.

- Contact or travel outside of state, recommend not coming to church for **10 days**.

- Congregants and visitors are NOT required to complete a screening sheet unless someone is suspected of being ill. Then, temperature will be taken with a touchless thermometer and individual will be asked to complete the screening questionnaire.
VULNERABLE ADULTS

- Advocates for their own health
- Vulnerable clergy must have conversation with Bishop prior to returning to service in leadership capacity
- Lay leaders requested to submit document to vestry stating that they desire to return to leadership position and that they will be advocates for their own health. Vestry approves and files.
- No more restrictions on number of lay, clergy, acolytes to assist in service provided appropriate physical distancing can be maintained – let’s all get back to serving
LAY, CLERGY, VISITING CLERGY GUIDELINES

- Supply to another county or state, communicate with the church’s diocesan staff clergy liaison and obtain permission from the Bishop before presiding at a service – 2 weeks notice

- Clergy or lay leaders in large crowd or confined space where physical distancing and masking not followed are requested to self-quarantine for 10 days after returning to homes
FOOD AND DRINK! COFFEE HOUR AND POTLUCKS

- Must submit a plan to reopen kitchens or serving areas
- All mask, physical distancing, safety and cleaning protocols that apply to church facilities in general are applicable for food service. May remove masks while seated in order to eat.

- Each church shall have at least one staff or volunteer who undergoes training, [https://www.servsafe.com/ServSafe-Food-Handler](https://www.servsafe.com/ServSafe-Food-Handler) before food or drink may be served at a church event or activity.

- That person is responsible for ensuring that all designated servers (coffee hour hosts/hostesses, potluck servers, etc.) are trained to ensure compliance with food handling and serving protocols
FOOD HANDLING AND SERVING PROTOCOLS

- Servers must wear masks and gloves at all times.
- Food contact surfaces, dishes and utensils cleaned and sanitized before and after any food service activity.
- Servers complete health screening protocols.
- Physical distancing maintained to maximum extent possible.
- Food and drinks provided by trained server(s), wearing masks and gloves.
- No self-serve food options are allowed (buffets, cookie trays, etc.) unless food is pre-packaged. Pre-packaged food, bottled water, canned beverages, may be provided and may be self-serve. Coffee cups may be refilled or reused as long as the coffee pot does not touch the cup.
Should anyone become ill or a confirmed COVID-19 case reported, the Bishop’s office shall be notified, the building will be immediately closed and the County Health Department will be called.

Get a bid prior to authorizing Covid-cleaning services!
WORSHIP

- Continue to prioritize worship opportunities that are safe, accessible, invitational, meaningful, and sustainable.
  - We can combat fear with knowledge
  - Church can maintain worship and community life
  - We are showing God’s compassion in community
  - God is with us in the midst of all of this
  - We are God’s hands and feet at work in the world
  - Let us move forward with hope, confidence, grace, courage, compassion – and most of all, love!

Worship With Us

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IN-PERSON WORSHIP EXPERIENCES

- Outdoor if possible
- Maintain 6-foot distancing
- Face covering outside relaxed
- Face shields or plexi-glass if 12-foot away for speakers
- Face mask always at altar
- Contactless collection plates
- No singing yet, except solos 12-feet away and facing away
- Books/bulletins shall be passed out by leaders and not shared or passed – BCP or Hymnals shall remain untouched for at least 72 hours before reuse.
ONLINE AND ALTERNATE WORSHIP EXPERIENCES

- Continue to offer online, digital worship and meetings if possible.
- Explore opportunities to start or reenergize a fresh expression.
- Do not let technical production get in the way of necessary pastoral care attention – keep it simple.
- Adapt worship for digital platform – be creative.
- Reach out across the miles to engage others.
- Experiment with approved alternative services.
- Keep lay leadership engaged.
- Explore best practices.

The Church is not a building. It’s the people.

- Acts 8:3
- Acts 12:5
- 1 Cor. 3:9
- 1 Peter 2:5

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SACRAMENTS

- Communion – may now use wine-infused wafers OR bread morsels – use same protocols to infuse bread
- Baptism – no touch
- Anointing – no touch
- Funerals and weddings – okay
PASTORAL CARE

- Use the utmost caution in deciding whether to make an in-person pastoral visit
- Check with facility before visiting
- Outside at private homes allowed with masks and social distancing
- Facetime, telephone safer
- Eucharist can be provided to shut-ins or the sick, or those who are not comfortable returning to church yet.
  - Deliver blessed wine-infused wafers in sealed plastic bag
  - Person may join on a Zoom Eucharist OR properly distanced home or institution visit
Nursery, Sunday School and/or children’s ministry operations **may reopen** if proper protocols can be maintained.

Consider having children remain with the rest of their household or utilize an outdoor space with proper physical distancing.

Submit a reopening plan through diocesan representative following Wyoming Department of Health guidelines for pre-schools.
OUR FUTURE IS IN FRONT OF US – CELEBRATE THE NEW WORLD WE LIVE IN!

- We are learning from this time as a church
- We are now a new missional community of Jesus Followers – embrace it!

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