

Plan for Phased Reopening: Phase 2

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church: Seguin, Texas

The Safety Protocols outlined below were developed for St. Andrew's to allow us to begin a modified return to public worship. They were developed to keep us as safe as possible while moving to Phase 2 in our worship together. We look forward to the day when COVID-19 is a thing of the past and can move to Phase 3 with a full return to worshipping, formation, and meetings as we have been accustomed. Conversely, future resurgences of COVID-19 in our communities may require us to revert back to on-line services only, as directed by the Episcopal Diocese of West Texas Guidelines for Phased Reopening of Churches which far exceed the standards set by the State of Texas – see link [Guidelines for Phased Reopening](#).

CRITERIA FOR REOPENING

1. Diocesan Guidelines must be met.
2. The Vestry has approved the Safety Protocols and Reopening Plans.
3. Permission from the Diocese and Bishop Reed must be obtained
4. Notice must be made to the congregation via livestream worship, email or letter two weeks in advance of reopening for worship.

A. GENERAL SAFETY PROTOCOLS

1. We ask everyone to sanitize their hands before and after each service. Sanitizer is available in the narthex.
2. All people of every age, must wear a mask. Handcrafted masks are allowed, but we will have some available as well for distribution. The masks must cover both nose/mouth and be used according to World Health Organization instructions.
3. While at church we will maintain a 6 foot or more physical distancing unless within your immediate family group. Tape on the pew seats will indicate appropriate physical distancing. Do not sit on taped areas.
4. Due to Diocese of West Texas guidelines there will be no childcare, nursery, Sunday School, or meetings on campus at this time. Zoom meetings will continue and expand in the Fall.
5. The restrooms will open, with one person at a time, or a parent and child together. Please wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds before leaving the restroom. (sing “Happy Birthday” twice)
6. We ask worshippers to refrain from touching doorknobs as much as possible around the campus. Doors to the Narthex and Sanctuary will be open to help facilitate this practice.
7. At no time on campus will food or beverages be served. The kitchen will remain closed at all times.
8. During Holy Communion services, only the Host will be distributed, and that will be in a Station. Members will approach the priest, who will drop the Host in your hand. Move back to your seat before consuming.
9. Seating on campus will be limited. **Make a reservation by contacting the church office each week by noon on Thursday.**
10. Maximum occupancy of the sanctuary with appropriate physical distancing is approximately 70 people, excluding the celebrant, organist, soloist, lay reader, and video technicians.
11. The Parish Hall will be closed until further notice. Offerings can be placed in the Offering plate on Sunday, placed in the mail slot to the right of the office door, online using the “Donate Now” link, by mail, bank transfer, or other methods.
12. All employees, ushers, and altar guild members will be trained on appropriate cleaning/disinfection, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and physical contact practices.

Congregation members with the CDC risk factors listed below are strongly encouraged to participate in Sunday service remotely and refrain from volunteering in church activities as noted in the Diocesan Guidelines for Phased Reopening and according to Bishop Reed because of higher risk for severe illness.

Exposure to COVID-19 is an inherent risk in any public location where people are present; we cannot guarantee you will not be exposed while attending services or volunteering at the church. All parishioners should evaluate their own risk in determining whether to attend services or volunteer. People who show no symptoms can spread Coronavirus if they are infected; any interaction with the general public poses an elevated risk of being exposed to Coronavirus. By coming to the church, you acknowledge and agree that you assume these inherent risks associated with attendance and/or volunteer activities.

These risk factors are:

- asthma
- chronic lung disease
- diabetes
- serious heart conditions
- chronic kidney disease being treated with dialysis
- severe obesity
- those 65 and older
- people in nursing homes or long-term care facilities
- immunocompromised
- liver disease

B. SANCTUARY SAFETY PROTOCOLS:

1. When arriving to enter church buildings worshippers are asked to maintain minimum 6' physical distancing outside of family groups.
2. Printed bulletins will not be provided since the service will be projected during the service.
3. Bulletins and Announcements will be sent via E-mail the Thursday before; so, they also may be printed at home and brought for use during the service.
4. All Bibles, Hymnals, and Books of Common Prayer have been removed from the back of the pews. Worshippers are encouraged and invited to bring their own Prayer Book, cell phone, or tablet to access the bulletin digitally as an alternative to the paper bulletins. Be sure to silence electronic devices during the service.
5. There will be no choir during the service, only a soloist.
6. All worshippers will be asked to sanitize their hands before entering and when leaving the worship space. Please wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds before leaving the restroom. (sing “Happy Birthday” twice)
7. Sanitizing materials will be available in the Narthex.
8. The Sanctuary, restrooms, interior railings, outdoor railings, doorknobs, pews, and all exterior surfaces will be sanitized between each church service.
9. Copies of these safety protocols will be emailed to all members with email service, provided at the first reopening services, posted at all points of entry to the church, as well as interior and external bulletin boards. These protocols will also be posted to our website and published via physical media.
10. Special Services:
 - Weddings, funerals, and graveside services are permitted as long as church protocols are followed.
 - Baptisms will not be conducted except in cases of emergency.
 - All other worship services must be approved by the Bishop.

C. WORSHIP SERVICE

8:00 a.m.: RITE ONE (In the historic chapel)

This service will be a Rite One Eucharist with no music.

- All safety protocols listed prior will be observed.
- Every other pew will be closed. Closed pews are marked with a blue tape.
- To limit contact the Offering Plates will not be passed during worship but will be available at back of the worship space.
- To maintain physical distancing, we will Pass the Peace within family groups and to other worshippers with a simple wave or peace sign from 6 ft away in our designated seating areas.
- During communion members will proceed up the center aisle to the altar steps to receive the Host. Worshippers and family groups will need to maintain physical distancing while waiting to receive communion. Masks are to be left on until you return to your seats, at which time you will consume the Host.
- At the Dismissal, the celebrant will release pews one at a time, starting at the back of the church, to maintain physical distancing.
- There will be no greeting line after services; but feel free to wave farewell to other parish members until we meet again the following Sunday.
- Maximum occupancy of the historic chapel with appropriate physical distancing is 20 people.

10:30 a.m.: RITE TWO (Main Sanctuary)

This service will be a Rite Two Morning Prayer or Eucharist with organ and soloist.

- All safety protocols listed prior will be observed.
- To limit contact the Offering Plates will not be passed during worship but will be available in the Narthex.
- To maintain physical distancing, we will Pass the Peace within family groups and to other worshippers with a simple wave or peace sign from 6 ft away in our designated seating areas.
- During communion members will proceed up the center aisle to the altar steps to receive the Host. Worshippers and family groups will need to maintain physical distancing while waiting to receive communion. Masks are to be left on until you return to your seats, at which time you will consume the Host.
- At the Dismissal, attendees are asked to depart beginning with the back pews to maintain physical distancing.
- There will be no greeting line after services; but feel free to wave farewell to other parish members until we meet again the following Sunday.

D. REOPENING

- On Sunday, August 30 we will begin in-person service in the sanctuary at 10:30 only. Live-streaming will continue and all safety protocols will be followed.
- In-person service at 8:00 am in the Chapel will begin at a later date.