

Plan for Phased Reopening: Phase 2(b)

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 congregational life**. They were developed to keep us as safe as possible while moving from Phase 2(a) into Phase 2(b) in our worship together and in accordance with Diocesan guidelines. 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 online 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 for Phase 2(b) must be met.
2. The Vestry must approve the Safety Protocols and the Next Phase of Reopening Plans.
3. Permission from the Diocese and Bishop Reed must be obtained.
4. A letter must be sent to the congregation with two weeks advance notice of next phase reopenings.

Phase 2(b) – REOPENING SCHEDULE OF RETURN SERVICES AND EVENTS

1. 9:00 a.m. Children's Eucharist in the Outdoor Prayer Garden – October, 11th 2020
2. Wednesday 10:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study – October 7th, 2020
3. Wednesday Noon Eucharist Service – October 7th, 2020
4. In-person Vestry Meetings – September 20th, 2020
5. Normal Office Operations – September 14th, 2020
6. Communion Under Special Circumstances – October 6th, 2020

A. GENERAL SAFETY PROTOCOLS

1. **If you are sick or if you have developed signs or symptoms of COVID-19, we ask that you stay home.**
2. We ask everyone to sanitize their hands before and after each service. Sanitizer is available in the Narthex.
3. **All people over the age of 3 must wear a mask.** We ask that parents or guardians of children under the age of 3 strongly consider the benefits of their child wearing 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.
4. 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 social distancing. Do not sit on taped areas.
5. During Phase 2(b), according to the Diocese of West Texas guidelines, childcare, nursery, Sunday School, and meetings on campus will enter a modified return. The Vestry, along with the Rector, will discern the order in which all services and activities return to the church's congregational life.
6. The restrooms will open, with one person at a time, or a parent and child together. Please wash hands with soap and water. Hand sanitization locations are located throughout the church sanctuary and office.
7. 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.
8. At no time on campus will food or beverages be served. The kitchen will remain closed at all times.

9. 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.
10. Seating on campus will be limited. **Make a reservation by contacting the church office each week by noon on Thursday.**
11. Maximum occupancy of the Sanctuary with appropriate social distancing is 70 people, including the celebrant, organist, soloist, lay reader, and video technicians.
12. The Chapel will reopen for the Wednesday noon Eucharist. At this time, the Chapel is limited to an occupancy of 20 persons. Therefore the Chapel will remain closed for 8:00 a.m. Sunday Eucharist.
13. As we begin Phase 2(b), the Parish Hall will open for Vestry meetings and the Women's Bible Study. The Parish Hall will remain closed until further notice for all other activities.
14. Offerings can be placed in the offering plate on Sunday or online using the "Donate Now" link, by mail, bank transfer, or other methods.
15. 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 lining up to enter church buildings, worshippers are asked to maintain physical distancing outside of family groups.
2. 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. We will project the bulletin along the walls adjacent to the altar if you would like to enjoy a bulletin free service.
3. 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 Cook, cell phone, or tablet to access the bulletin digitally as an alternative to the paper bulletins.
4. There will be no choir during the service, only a soloist.
5. All worshippers will be asked to sanitize their hands before entering and when leaving the worship space as well as before/after using the bathroom.

6. Sanitizing materials will be available in the Narthex.
7. The Sanctuary, restrooms, interior railings, outdoor railings, doorknobs, pews, and all exterior surfaces will be sanitized before and after each church service.
8. Copies of these safety protocols will be handed out 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 social media.
9. Special Services:
 - o Weddings, funerals, and graveside services are permitted as long as church protocols are followed.
 - o Baptisms may resume for Sunday in-person worship following the protocols laid out by Phase 2(a).
 - o All other worship services must be approved by the Bishop.

C. COMMUNION UNDER SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES PROTOCOL

1. Clergy may offer in-person communion in one kind to individuals or households outside of a public worship service, from reserved sacrament per the rubric for Communion Under Special Circumstances, pp. 396-399 in the Book of Common Prayer. This may take place before a congregation resumes modified in-person worship services and continues to be an option for highrisk individuals or families after in-person services begin again.
2. If you or someone you know requires communion under special circumstances, please contact Renee Cutcher, Fr. Stephen Shortess, or the main office.

D. WORSHIP SERVICE

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

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 at the entrance into 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 social 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 down the center aisle 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.

12:00 p.m.: RITE TWO WEDNESDAY EUCHARIST (Chapel) – starting October 7th, 2020

- All safety protocols listed prior will be observed.
- To limit contact the Offering Plates will not be passed during worship but will be available at the entrance into 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 social 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 down the center aisle 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.

9:00 a.m. RITE TWO SUNDAY MORNING FAMILY SERVICE (Outdoor Prayer Garden) – starting October 11th, 2020.

- All safety protocols listed prior will be observed.
- To limit contact the Offering Plates will not be passed during worship. Attendees may mail their offering, or donate online.
- 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 social 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.
- Attendees are asked to bring their own blankets and chairs for seating and print their service bulletins ahead of time.
- 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.