

Guidelines for the Reopening of the Greek Orthodox Church of Our Saviour

June 21, 2020

Preparation of the Church

Your experience during services will feel different than before the start of the pandemic. There will be smaller crowds, and face-masks will be mandatory for anyone in the Church. Fr. Elias and the Parish Council will be constantly evaluating these directives, and in accordance with the directives of the Archdiocese and state and local government, will modify them as deemed appropriate.

The Church of Our Savior has been complying with all Center for Disease Control (CDC) and government guidelines for disinfecting and sanitizing. Based on these guidelines, the Church will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected prior to reopening. From this baseline, the building will be disinfected and sanitized between each service, including high traffic, high touch areas like bathrooms, doorknobs, and handles, etc.

The congregation size for any service will be limited to the current regulations set by State and local authorities. That limit as of June 16, 2020 is 25% of capacity. Please note that this number includes the priest and chanter as well as any staff / Parish Council members on hand to ensure our compliance with guidelines. Therefore, no more than 55 people are allowed to be inside our church for any service.

Church Attendance

- In order to ensure that all parishioners have the opportunity to attend the Divine Liturgy, advance reservations will be required. Please note that this will likely mean you will not be able to attend every service during this phase of the reopening; your understanding and support of our parish leadership and your respect for the needs of your brothers and sisters in Christ is greatly appreciated in this difficult task of managing attendance.
- Reservations will be on a first come first serve basis and must be reserved online.
- Each week you will receive an email with a link to an online sign up form. There will be 45 slots for each sign up every Sunday. If you are unable to attend on a specific Sunday because the available seats have already been assigned, there will be a second sign up link for the following Sunday for you to sign up to attend.
- We will make every effort to ensure participation of all those who wish to attend and to adhere to a rotating basis.
- The church will be maintaining a list of those who signed up and names will be checked at the door. **IF YOU DID NOT SIGN UP, YOU MIGHT BE DENIED ENTRY.**
- *(If you or someone you know does not have access to a computer or is unable to make a reservation online, you can call the Church office at 914-967-2838, for assistance.)*
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(Church Attendance continued)

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Please click below to
Sign Up and Reserve a Seat
to attend Divine Liturgy
this Sunday, June 21st

June 21, 2020 - Reserve your Attendance

If Sunday, June 21st is filled, please reserve below for Sunday, June 28th

June 28, 2020 Reserve your Attendance

COVID-19 Vulnerability

- Parishioners are to accept the terms of a disclaimer posted at the Church's main entrance to attend as well as an acknowledgement of health and high-risk conditions.
- **By voluntarily entering this church facility, you affirm that you are not currently ill or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms; you acknowledge that while safety measures are being taken by the church, it cannot guarantee the safety of every person present, particularly those persons who are above 65 or who have underlying health conditions; you agree to abide by the social distancing and safety guidelines being practiced in this church; you consent to hold the church harmless against any damages or claims regarding your voluntary presence.**
- The CDC recommends if you are 65 years of age or older and do not have underlying health conditions, especially asthma, diabetes, hypertension, undergoing chemotherapy, or any age with known underlying conditions, current safety recommendations indicate that you should stay home.
- If you are 65 years of age or older without known underlying health issues, you have the option to attend church services with the understanding of the disclaimer above.
- If you have any respiratory symptoms, fever or malaise, whether attributed to COVID-19 or not, ***you must stay home.***
- ***Parishioners who have a temperature greater than 100.4 F should stay home.***
- ***If you or anyone in your household have been exposed to anyone with a positive / confirmed COVID 19 test, please do not attend for at least 14 days from the date of exposure and you can confirm you are free from contagion.***

Arriving at Church

Use of Face-masks

- If you are attending services at the Church, you are required to wear a mask at all times -- except for the moment when you may be receiving Holy Communion.
- If you are under medical instruction not to wear a mask, you must clearly indicate this to the “Greeter” upon entering.
- If you are attending services with a child /children between the ages of 2 and 5, a protective mask is at the discretion of the parent.
- Children under the age of 2 should not wear a protective mask.

Entering the Church and Reverencing of Icons

- Only the main entrance and the handicap accessible entrance of the Church will be open. All other entrances will be locked.
- You will be instructed to use hand disinfectant.
- A Parish Council member will guide arriving parishioners to the Pangari/Narthex to ensure appropriate distancing between arriving parishioners.
- Household family unit members may approach the Pangari together.
- Sacred objects, such as Icons, must only be revered by bowing. Please do not kiss any icon or sacred object.
- Greeting fellow parishioners should be done with a bow and social distancing should be observed at all times.

Virtual Donations/Purchase:

Candles, In Memory of a Loved One & Weekly Tray Passing

- Physical exchange of money (or other handouts) is not allowed.
- We encourage our parishioners who attend church and those who will be live streaming church services to make donations/purchases virtually for Candles, Memorials and Weekly Tray Passings prior to coming to church.
- Below are the links for these donations/purchases.

**Please click below
to choose the type of donation/purchase you wish to make
this Sunday morning.**

Light a Candle
& Offer a Prayer
For a Loved One
[Click Here](#)

Light a 7 Day Candle
& Offer a Prayer
For a Loved
[Click Here](#)

Donate in
Memory of
A Loved One
[Click Here](#)

Weekly Online
Tray Donation
[Click Here](#)

Virtual Donations/Purchase continued

If you are not able to make any of these donations virtually:

- The Pangari/Narthex will be staffed by members of the Parish Council to assist you, as much as possible, without contact.
- If you wish to purchase red devotional candles, they will be placed at the iconostasis by a Parish Council member ONLY.
- If you desire to light a wax candle, you may request one from the Parish Council members on duty and the candle(s) will be provided to you to light by yourselves.
- Please bring appropriate change for donations as cash cannot be exchanged and change will not be given.

Seating in the Church

- Social Distancing remains imperative for everyone's health and safety and therefore, we must maintain social distance at all times. Parish Council will be present to seat you at an appropriate distance from other parishioners inside the Church.
- Because we will need to provide for your arrival and direct seating according to established guidelines, you will need to arrive at specific times.
 - 8:00 AM to 8:30 AM – to attend Orthros
 - 9:00 AM to 9:30 AM – to attend the Divine Liturgy
- Please note that entrance will prohibited after 9:30 AM
- Seating inside the Church will be restricted to the standard social distancing measure of 6 feet distance between parishioners (again defined as an “immediate household unit”) to the left and right and front and back.
- Family members who are not part of the same household must, without exception, sit 6 feet apart.
- Many faithful have seats that they regularly sit in during services. You may not be able to sit in your “regular” seats; we ask that you please be patient as we do the best we can to ensure everyone’s health and safety.
- Everyone is required to remain in their seating area throughout the service.
- There will be markers throughout the Church to help assure appropriate distancing and direction of flow!
- All children between the ages of 1 and 17 must remain and stay seated with their parents.
- The First floor restroom will be open for use.

Receiving Holy Communion

Receiving Holy Communion

- When Father Elias is prepared to offer Holy Communion, ushers will direct parishioners row by row, enforcing social distancing, directing parishioners to follow single direction aisles to the Solea.

Holy Communion will be administered as follows:

- Tissue napkins will be available for individual use.
- Holy Communion will be administered using individual, sterilized and sanitized Communion spoons.
- After receiving Holy Communion, the communicant places the napkin in the sacred receptacle on the solea and takes the individually packed piece of Antidoron.
- Upon completion of the Divine Liturgy, the used Communion spoons will be washed, boiled and sanitized.
- Pieces of Antidoron will be wrapped separately in small white paper bags and taken by the parishioners as they depart.

Exiting the Church

- At the conclusion of the Liturgy you will exit as directed by the Parish Council members to receive Antidoron row by row, standing at the appropriate distance.
- Please be sure to keep your mask on until you are inside your car.
- The final hands-free collection offering will be set up as you are about to exit the Narthex. Please be ready to make your offering into the collection basket.
- Please note there will be no Coffee Hour served.
- Please do not congregate in the parking lot or in open areas .
- The foregoing rules for attending Divine Liturgy and other services at our Church were taken from State directives, local guidelines, and the direction and guidance of the Archdiocese. By following these directives, all of us can help ensure a safe and comforting experience at the Church of Our Saviour.

We want to see you, we want to pray with you, but above all, we want you all to be safe, healthy and able to worship in a manner that is respectful of everyone's personal safety. We look forward to the days when we can resume our services with full attendance and our joy filled coffee hours as a Church family. May God continue to bless you and your families and keep you safe!