

## **COVID-19 Guidelines as of October 14, 2020**

The State of Louisiana continues in Phase 3 of the plan to reopen businesses and public spaces. Based upon the Governor's Phase 3 proclamation, as well as the most recent guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and the Louisiana Department of Health. What follows are the Guidelines for Churches in the Diocese of Western Louisiana until further notice.

### **Church Service Guidelines Remain as They Were in September, 2020.**

- Congregations must continue to provide online worship or refer members to the Bishop's virtual worship services in order to serve those in high-risk groups, as well as those who do not feel ready to gather in groups.
- Clergy, in consultation with lay leaders, may continue to opt to offer only virtual worship, whether offered by the local clergy or by the Bishop.
- In-Person worship indoors and outdoors are allowed, provided that mask-wearing, social distancing, and sanitation procedures are followed.
- Clergy, in consultation with lay leaders, may continue to opt for outdoor worship only.
- Masks continue to be mandated for everyone in attendance at any in-person worship service, including the clergy.
- **The Celebrant/Preacher may now remove her/his mask during the service, provided:**
  - **There is 30 or more feet between the Celebrant/Preacher and the congregation, and**
  - **The Celebrant/Preacher is the only person in the chancel/sanctuary during the service.**
- At this point there is no mandate from the Governor. But your Bishop still wants you to discern whether or not attending church is a healthy thing. Therefore, the Bishop suggests that high risk individuals, e.g., those older than age 60, those with compromised immune systems, compromised lung and/or heart function, those with diabetes type II, the obese, those with chronic hypertension, or with other known risk factors, should still seriously consider worshipping online.
- Before and during indoor and outdoor in-person worship services, a person must be appointed to remind people of physical distancing guidelines and to ensure that you do not exceed the maximum number of people who can be physically distanced.
- If someone in attendance contracts COVID-19 within 14 days of attendance, contact the Diocese immediately.
  - The clergy person who administered Communion must be tested and quarantined.

- Worshipers in attendance must be notified of a possible exposure.
- If you are uncertain about anything, call, text, or email the Bishop or Canon Bedingfield.

### **Outdoor Services**

- Individuals must be 6 feet, or more, distanced from each other, before, during, and after the service.
  - This does not include family members who live in the same house.
- The maximum capacity for outdoor services is 250 people, or the number who can be physically distanced, whichever is less.
- Morning Prayer creates less opportunity for person-to-person infection, and therefore it may be used as your principal Sunday worship service. However, Holy Eucharist is still authorized.
- If Holy Eucharist is celebrated:
  - Communion will continue to be in one kind.
  - Only the celebrant may drink from the chalice.
    - Intinction is not allowed.
  - Communicants must continue to come forward in such a manner as to maintain physical distance.
  - Clergy should place the host into communicant's hands without touching hands.
  - Physical distance must continue to be maintained during the passing of The Peace.
- **Congregational singing is now allowed at outdoor worship services, with masks in place.**

### **Indoor Services**

- The maximum number of worshippers at an indoor service is 75% of worship space capacity or the number who can maintain physical distance, before, during, and after the service, whichever is less.
- The guidelines for outdoor worship, above, apply to indoor worship services, except:
  - **Choir and congregational singing are still prohibited.**
  - If a soloist is to sing, he or she must be a minimum of 30 feet from the closest member of the congregation, and physically distanced and facing away from the organist/pianist/musician.

### **Christian Formation and Meetings**

- Christian Formation classes and church meetings may now be conducted in person, provided that:
  - Masks are worn by all in attendance.
  - Six feet distancing is observed by all in attendance.
  - Maximum number of persons allowed is 75% of capacity, or the number who can be properly distanced, whichever is less.

- Such classes and meetings should be limited to roughly one hour, in accordance with CDC guidance against long-time, indoor events.
- Fellowship and/or other events involving shared meals/snacks are still **prohibited**.