

June 29, 2020

COVID Reopening Procedures

St. Mary's-in-Tuxedo

On Sunday, July 5th, we will begin gradually reopening the church buildings, starting with the limited resumption of public worship. Safety must be our first concern. COVID remains a very dangerous disease, and those at high risk due to their age or underlying health conditions are encouraged to worship with us online for the time being. All services will continue to be broadcast online and the act of spiritual communion is a valid way of receiving Christ in lieu of the Holy Eucharist. Parishioners should only attend in-person worship when they feel safe and comfortable doing so.

Initially, the Sunday 10am service in the main church will be the only in-person worship opportunity. There will be no childcare or Sunday School, we will not have coffee hour, and there will be no congregational singing. The music ministry will consist of the organist and one cantor who will be positioned as far away as possible from the congregation (minimum 12 feet). We will consider an outdoor service at 10am on Wednesdays once we see how the reopening is going.

Preparing the Church

The church buildings will be professionally deep cleaned before July 5th, and cleaned regularly thereafter. The main church will be off-limits during the week to allow time for any lingering virus to dry up and die. The air conditioning in the church will be turned on Saturday night to cool down the building and then turned off just before the service so as not to spread any virus particles. We are also looking into using an ionization system to clean the air before the service.

The Chapel

Until further notice, the chapel will not be used for public worship as social distancing is not possible; it will remain open 24x7 for private prayers as it has throughout the pandemic (please only one individual or family at a time, and use the bleach wipes and hand sanitizer provided).

Masks are Required

Masks which fully cover the nose and mouth will be required at all times, for all people (over 2 years old). This includes ministers, servers, parishioners, everyone. Even if you are alone in the building, you should keep your mask handy and put it on as soon as anyone else enters. The wardens and ushers will be responsible for enforcing this rule, and services will not be held if anyone is unwilling or unable to comply with this rule. The celebrant, lector, cantor, and organist

may temporarily remove their mask when speaking, singing, or playing as long as they are more than 12 feet away from anyone else.

Servers

The number of people helping with the service will be limited for the foreseeable future. There will be no altar guild (Father Rick will continue to prepare the altar himself). Pete will continue to serve as the acolyte (only person coming into close contact with the rector unmasked). There will be no Eucharistic Minister (as communion will be distributed in one kind only). There will be one lector who will read the Old Testament, Epistle, and Prayers of the People. There will be one or two ushers at each service; their primary role will be to ensure all safety protocols are being followed.

At the Service

The church doors will open 10-15 minutes before the service begins and close 10-15 minutes after the service ends; please do not linger before or after the service. The usher(s) will greet everyone with a spritz of hand sanitizer and take each person's temperature with a no-touch thermometer. Anyone with a fever or without a mask will not be allowed to enter. Please only use the main entrance. Do not enter through the office or preschool.

Bulletins are available online at www.stmtux.org/events and people are encouraged to bring their own iPads or other devices; a limited number of printed bulletins will be available near the entrance for people to pick up themselves (ushers will not touch or distribute these). The offering plate will be available near the entrance as well; it will not be passed or brought to the altar during the offertory. The offering should not be counted until a few days have passed.

When it comes to seating inside the church, strict distancing must be maintained. For now, we cannot exceed 25% total capacity, but more importantly, we must maintain a six foot distance. Two out of every three pews will be marked off as unusable. People who live in the same home may sit together, but beyond that, everyone must be six feet away from anyone else.

The Peace has been moved to its historical location in the service (right after the Agnus Dei); parishioners should respond with "and also with you" and take no further action (do not wave, greet each other or move about the church in any way). Instead, please say the spiritual communion aloud in solidarity with those online who cannot receive the Eucharist in person.

Communion

Communion in one kind only (the bread) is permitted at this time. The cup will be introduced when we can establish practices which are certain to be safe, and we should all expect that that is going to take some time.

The celebrant will consecrate the priest's host and communion wafers as usual each Sunday. He will also consecrate a small amount of wine that will be consumed by the celebrant alone. Pre-consecrated communion wafers will be reserved in the tabernacle and distributed to the people, ensuring no possible virus transmission.

Each week, after the breaking of the bread, the priest's host and the wine will be consumed by the celebrant. The celebrant will then affix his mask and wash his hands with soap and warm water in the sight of the people. He will then proceed to the tabernacle, remove the reserved Sacrament, and go to the people, who will stay in their pews. People who wish to receive communion will remain standing.

Before the celebrant reaches each pew, an usher will spritz communicants with hand sanitizer. Both the celebrant and all communicants should remain masked throughout the distribution of the Eucharist. People should receive the host on their hands and then wait until the celebrant has stepped away before lowering their mask to consume the host.

In Case of Illness

Anyone experiencing symptoms of COVID, or who has come into contact with someone who tests positive, should quarantine themselves for at least two weeks, and not attend any church service in person until they test negative for COVID or positive for antibodies.

The wardens and ushers will keep track of all attendees at each service in a contact tracing spreadsheet. If anyone who has attended services in person tests positive for COVID, they are to notify the rector or senior warden immediately, who will in turn notify everyone who was at that service (while respecting confidentiality). If this happens, or the rector is exposed to someone who tests positive in any setting, we will immediately suspend in-person worship for at least two weeks; online services will continue.

Church Office and Parish Committees

The church office will continue to operate remotely until the rector and parish administrator determine that it is safe to reopen. Even when we reopen the office, visitors will not be allowed and must call ahead if they want to drop something off in person. A limited number of individuals are allowed in the church buildings during the week for essential tasks that cannot be performed remotely (e.g. processing mail, writing checks, maintaining the building). All meetings of parish committees and the vestry will continue via Zoom. The rector and wardens will decide what is essential and allowed in terms of access.

These procedures may be revised as we receive additional guidance from government and/or diocesan authorities, or learn more from scientists and public health officials.

June 29, 2020

COVID Worship Guidelines

St. Mary's-in-Tuxedo

The 10am Sunday service in the main church will be open to parishioners with the following guidelines:

- Everyone (no exceptions) must wear a mask at all times which fully covers their nose and mouth.
- Please only use the main entrance to the church. Do not enter through the office or preschool.
- Temperatures will be taken by ushers using a no-touch thermometer.
- Hand sanitizer will be available and should be used upon entering the church and immediately before taking communion.
- Only one individual, or family that lives together, per open pew; pews that are marked off with tape should not be used at all. A distance of six feet must be maintained.
- There will be no congregational singing; music will be provided by organist and cantor.
- The celebrant, lector, cantor, and organist may temporarily remove their mask to speak, sing, or play, as long as they are at least twelve feet away from anyone else.
- The celebrant will bring communion (bread only) to each pew; parishioners who wish to receive will remain standing, receive the host on their hands, and then wait until the celebrant has stepped away before lowering their mask to consume the host.
- The wardens and ushers will ensure all safety protocols are followed.
- Anyone who tests positive for COVID and has attended a service in-person should notify the senior warden or rector immediately; we will do everything possible to protect their confidentiality.