

May 26, 2021

Updated Worship Guidelines

Dear Friends in Christ,

We have some important announcements to make regarding changes to our COVID-19 worship guidelines which have been in place, in one form or another, over these last fifteen months. These are big steps forward in our return to corporate worship as we have known and loved. Please take a moment to read these carefully.

On May 13th, the CDC updated their guidance for fully vaccinated individuals making the wearing of masks and physically distancing both indoors and outdoors optional, and the Diocese of West Texas has updated our COVID-19 Guidelines in accordance with these new CDC Guidelines.

To summarize these new diocesan changes:

- Fully vaccinated individuals are no longer required to wear a mask or physically distance indoors or outdoors on church property.
- Unvaccinated people are strongly encouraged to continue to wear a mask and physically distance.
- Clergy, Staff, and Lay Volunteers may not request or require proof of vaccination of any individual.
- Clergy and Lay Eucharistic Ministers are required to wear masks for the distribution of communion.
- Staff and Lay Leadership working with children under the age of 12 must continue to wear a mask and physically distance.
- Communion bread and wine may be served at the altar, with wine by intinction only, no sharing of the common cup.
- Fellowship gatherings may return indoors and include food and drinks.

With the support of our vestry and clergy, we are planning to move forward with these changes in our worship services over the next several weeks. See below the changes coming by date.

- Sunday, May 30th, fully vaccinated individuals are no longer required to wear a mask or physically distance indoors or outdoors on church property. Unvaccinated individuals are strongly encouraged to continue to wear a mask and physically distance. Please respect the physical distancing of all people who choose to wear a mask.
- Tuesday, June 1st, Holy Eucharist resumes weekly in the Chapel at 12:15 p.m.
- Sunday, June 6th, we will open all seating in the sanctuary, resume passing the offertory plates, and return to Holy Communion administered at the altar, with wine by intinction cup only, no common cup.

These are important steps forward for us all. We have done a great job over these fifteen months to balance our ability to continue to worship with the need to keep people safe. We encourage everyone who is able, to be vaccinated. It is now time for individuals to take responsibility for their own unique circumstances. We will support everyone's right to continue to wear masks and physically distance, and ask for mutual respect and understanding by all, for all, as we take these next steps together.

Yours in Christ,

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