

**ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS**

**FIVE PHASE PLAN FOR
RE-ENTERING OUR CHURCH BUILDINGS**

Dear Parish Family,

At St. John's our plan for Re-Entering our church buildings follows the guidelines issued by the Diocese of Chicago in conjunction with Restore Illinois Plan from the State of Illinois and the Illinois Department of Public Health. **Until further notice our church buildings remain closed.** Before returning to the use of our buildings, the following protocol must be observed:

- 1) The Verification of Completion of Plan for Re-Entry must be submitted and approved by the Diocese of Chicago
- 2) The Rector must be informed and give approval before of any individual, group or organization may enter or use the church buildings
- 3) When entrance is permitted, all groups, organizations and individuals using our buildings must adhere to the Verification of Completion Guidelines and Re-Entry Plan Guidelines
- 4) All groups, organizations and individuals must be trained in and adhere to procedures for building use and space sanitization

More specific plans for Re-entry to our church will be forthcoming as the Re-Entering Team completes the *Verification of Completion of Plan for Re-Entry* (see Appendix 3 of the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago "A New Season: Guidelines for Re-Entering Our Church Buildings" – Version 1 – May 26, 2020)

AT ALL STAGES OF REOPENING:

1. Protect staff and congregants who are at higher risk for severe illness by encouraging them to participate virtually.
2. Educate all entities/groups using your facilities about the guidelines and the importance of following them.

June 1, 2020

3. Particularly after June 1, when limited in-person worship is allowed in regions operating in Phase 3 or higher, no clergy, other minister, staff, or volunteers should feel forced to be present. Exercising care and caution for those at risk, or who care for those at risk, is essential.
4. If your congregation offers day care or preschool programs, follow state/local and CDC guidance for such programs.
5. Train all clergy and staff in these new practices.
6. Plan for when a staff member or congregant becomes sick. The Chicago Public Health Department has provided guidance on its website.
7. Within the framework of the guidelines, leaders of congregations should ask: What makes sense for our congregation in our context? No one size fits all.
8. Pay attention to the public health trends and indicators in your own county/region.
9. Following these guidelines and the guidelines of the State of Illinois as they pertain to your region helps mitigate liability. There is no absolute immunity from liability.
10. Seek help and input when you need it.
11. Remember, there is no perfect plan. Yours will evolve and change to adapt to new realities on the ground.

PHASE 1 & PHASE 2

CHURCH GUIDELINES THROUGH MAY 31, 2020

Be aware that we may need to revert to the first five of these guidelines should there be a resurgence of infections in the diocese. You will be notified if this is the case.

- Church buildings remain closed.
- Conduct worship virtually based on your local context and practice
- No in-person pastoral visits.
- Perform essential outreach ministries using safety protocols (social distancing, mask wearing, limited number of volunteers and staff).

- Continue virtual meetings, formation and other programs.
- Begin to make plans for re-opening of church buildings. Cleaning crews or other maintenance workers can enter building. Re-opening steps can be found in Appendix 1 on page 9 of Episcopal Diocese of Chicago “A New Season: Guidelines for Re-Entering Our Church Buildings” – Version 1 – May 26, 2020.

CHURCH GUIDELINES BEGINNING JUNE 1, 2020

Bishop Lee has decided that congregations in our diocese may return to their buildings on June 1. Unless a surge in new cases returns the state, or parts of it, to Phase 1, we expect all congregations to be in regions that are in Phase 2 or 3 of the state’s recovery plan by that date. The state’s guidelines permit gatherings of no more than 10 during Phases 2 and 3, and no more than 50 during Phase 4. However, certain practices should be observed in Phases 2-4, regardless of the number of people assembled. They are as follows:

- Clergy and other liturgical assistants (we urge 5 or fewer if your region is in Phase 2 of the state’s plan, and no more than 10 at any point during Phases 2 and 3) may return to church buildings for virtual worship services no earlier than June 1, 2020 as long as re-opening procedures are completed. All safety guidelines must be followed.
- Follow the worship guidelines in Appendix 2 on page 11 of Episcopal Diocese of Chicago “A New Season: Guidelines for Re-Entering Our Church Buildings” – Version 1 – May 26, 2020.
- No live singing is allowed – congregational, choir, or solo. Continue to use instrumental, except for wind instruments, and recorded music.
- Maintain at least 6 feet between all persons who do not live in the same household.
- Wear facial coverings (e.g. masks, bandanas, scarfs).
- Follow the building re-opening steps in Appendix 1 of Episcopal Diocese of Chicago “A New Season: Guidelines for Re-Entering Our Church Buildings” – Version 1 – May 26, 2020, which include cleaning and sanitizing guidelines.
- Maintain good personal hygiene including hand washing, sanitizing and not touching face.

- Direct that any staff or congregant displaying symptoms of COVID-19, as well as people who have had close contact with a person who has symptoms of COVID-19 refrain from participating in any aspect of in-person services or activities.
- Submit checklist to bishop's office using this form in Appendix 3 on page 13 of Episcopal Diocese of Chicago "A New Season: Guidelines for Re-Entering Our Church Buildings" – Version 1 – May 26, 2020.

OTHER GUIDELINES WHILE YOUR REGION IS IN PHASE 2

- In-person pastoral visits are discouraged except with individuals who are dying or critically ill. Continue telephonic and other virtual pastoral care.
- Perform essential outreach ministries using safety guidelines with limited numbers of staff and volunteers.
- Continue virtual meetings, formation and other programs.

Movement from Phase 2 to Phase 3 may occur on a regional basis as directed by State of Illinois officials. Please be aware that criteria for City of Chicago are more stringent than those of State of Illinois, so churches in the city may progress to new phases at a pace different from those in other municipalities.

PHASE 3

OTHER GUIDELINES WHILE YOUR REGION IS IN PHASE 3

- Clergy and other liturgical assistants (10 or fewer) may continue providing only virtual worship from churches using all safety guidelines AND/OR
- Churches may worship on Sundays or any weekday in groups of no more than 10 as long as all safety guidelines are observed. Ten people includes the altar party and congregation.
- Follow the worship guidelines in Appendix 2 on page 11 of Episcopal Diocese of Chicago "A New Season: Guidelines for Re-Entering Our Church Buildings" – Version 1 – May 26, 2020.

- Outdoor worship is also permitted using these same guidelines.
- Virtual worship options should be continued for those who are unable to attend.
- Coffee hour is discouraged and only allowed if safety guidelines can be maintained. No shared communal food or beverages are allowed.
- No live singing is allowed - congregational, choir, or solo. Continue to use recorded and instrumental music, except for wind instruments.
- Weddings, funerals, and Quinceañeras with a total group size of no more than 10 are allowed with observation of all safety guidelines.
- Baptism and Eucharist are allowed with modified rubrics as addressed in guidance on worshipping together (see Appendix 2 of Episcopal Diocese of Chicago “A New Season: Guidelines for Re-Entering Our Church Buildings” – Version 1 – May 26, 2020).
- Churches may be open for personal prayer as long as physical distancing and frequent cleaning and sanitation of space is taking place.
- In-person pastoral visits may resume to low-risk parishioners, utilizing safety practices.
- Church offices may open as long as physical distancing is possible and appropriate cleaning and disinfecting is taking place. Work from home is strongly encouraged when possible.
- Limited day care programs may open with Illinois Department of Public Health approved safety guidance. (The diocese will publish these when available.) Childcare, church schools and youth programs remain closed.
- Perform essential outreach ministries using safety guidelines and limited number of volunteers or staff present.
- Small group ministries or meetings may gather in-person with 10 or few people utilizing safety guidelines.
- Continue virtual options for larger meetings, children’s formation, youth groups and other larger programs.

Movement from Phase 3 to Phase 4 may occur on a regional basis as directed by State of Illinois officials. Please be aware that criteria for City of Chicago are more stringent than those of State of Illinois, so churches in the city may progress to new phases at a pace different from those in other municipalities.

PHASE 4

OTHER GUIDELINES WHILE Y OUR REGION IS IN PHASE 4

- Gatherings of 50 or fewer allowed.
- Face coverings and physical distancing remain the norm.
- In-person worship allowed with gatherings of 50 or fewer.
- As able, continue to offer virtual services for those who can't attend.
- All other gatherings of 50 or fewer allowed.
- Youth summer programs, church school, nursery and preschools may reopen with IDPH approved safety guidance.
- Return to all outreach ministries as long as in line with health guidance.

Movement from Phase 4 to Phase 5 may occur on a regional basis as directed by State of Illinois officials.

PHASE 5

Under state guidelines, Phase 5 cannot begin until a vaccine or highly effective treatment is widely available or until the state has eliminated new cases over a sustained period.

- All size gatherings allowed.
- Continued virtual worship and meetings options provided.

-From Episcopal Diocese of Chicago “A New Season: Guidelines for Re-Entering Our Church Buildings” – Version 1 – May 26, 2020

Click here for the Link to the entire document:

https://episcopalchicago.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Chicago_Reopening_Plan_RV6.pdf