



Regathering for Worship Outdoors

Effective Sunday, June 21, 2020

Great news! We know you have been hungry for chances to be together in worship. By adhering to the following guidelines, you can safely gather outside until such time as your church is ready and able to re-gather indoors.

Here are the guidelines to make this safe as well as joyful:

- 1) **Cloth face masks** keep our germs to ourselves – please do wear one!
- 2) **Six feet apart** – Household groups or solo individuals will be seated six feet apart.
- 3) **Hold the handshakes.** For the time being, we acknowledge each other with waves or other warm gestures, but save the handshakes and hugs for when it is declared safe to do.
- 4) **Paper or projection, yes. Hymnals or Prayer Books, no.** Since we'll be outdoors and since there is still a possibility that books and hymnals will carry germs, there will be paper orders of services that will be recycled at the end of the service, or if it will work in daylight, the order of worship can be projected on a screen.
- 5) **Sound system helps outdoors.** It's more difficult to hear in an open space, so have an amplifying system so that the celebrant can be heard.
- 6) **Bathrooms open with sanitizing.** Let's have a plan to provide access to toilets. While your service may be short, when nature calls, it will not be denied. Bathrooms must be sanitized before and after the service, and should be wiped down between each user. You may need a "bathroom usher" to ensure that people who are waiting keep distant from one another and do not enter before the bathroom is wiped down.
- 7) **Inclement weather?** Have a plan. Perhaps if the weather report is ominous, you won't have an outdoor service, so make sure there's a way to let parishioners know. If it's a sudden and unexpected weather event, going into the church building is not an option, so make sure parishioners know that they will go to their cars if it happens. If it is very hot and sunny, attendees might want to consider if the risk of heat exhaustion or even heatstroke is too high for them to safely participate.
- 8) **Tents open on all sides** - If you are conducting a service under a tent, keep tent flaps up to maintain maximum airflow going. It's so much safer.
- 9) **Solists only, choirs later** - While we can't have choral or congregational singing, there's no reason why a soloist, properly distanced, couldn't sing, with an accompanist.
- 10) **Eucharist, yes! Distribution of the elements, no!** (Sorry, friends. We miss it, too.) Morning Prayer and AnteCommunion are also viable options.

- 11) **Coffee Hours remain virtual.** After the service, go home with a warm glow and have your coffee and muffin there. You might schedule a Zoom virtual coffee hour for when you get back to your own house.
- 12) **Post-service cleaning** - After the service, if persons have not brought their own chairs, please sanitize your chairs using an EPA/CDC-recommended disinfectant.
- 13) **Drive-in services, no. Online worship, YES!** We strongly encourage the continuation of online services to serve the whole of those who have grown to appreciate that option.
- 14) **Permission to use public spaces** - If you are considering using public space like a park for outdoor worship, please do check in with the proper authority that has control of that public space to be sure it's permitted.

Email your plans to the Bishop's Office.

Please discern if this is right for your congregation with your Vestry. If so, please send an email outlining your plans to bishopsoffice@thediocese.net. We will review it, reaching out to you with any questions that may arise, and then send you an acknowledgment