

LETTER FROM THE DIOCESE ON PLANS FOR PHASED REGATHERING - June 5, 2020

Dear Clergy of the Diocese of Virginia:

Our Diocesan Task Groups on Phased Regathering – men and women, lay and clergy from across the Diocese – have done creative, insightful and helpful work to prepare for the day when we will worship in person at our church buildings and properties. I am grateful to them for the great gift they have given to all of us.

Attached are the [guidelines](#) and [checklist](#) for Phase II regathering (in Spanish: [guidelines](#) / [checklist](#)). Please note that **we have not yet set a date for when such regathering may begin**. Our Review Group will begin accepting petitions for regathering when the Bishop's office has confirmed that the locality in which a congregation is located has shown a 14-day decline in the number of new COVID-19 infections and deaths. We celebrate improvement of some of the markers that will help ensure that no in-person worship service will become a super-spreader of this disease, including the increased availability of protective equipment, an increase number of hospital beds, and increased availability of testing.

Although we are not yet accepting petitions for regathering, we send you these materials today so that your congregation may begin planning. Coaches will be trained next week and will be available to you the following week. To seek coaching assistance, please contact your Area Coordinator (see below).

Not all congregations will choose to regather in Phase II. Some have already determined that they will not come together for in-person worship until the entire congregation can gather. Some have recognized that their clergy and other leaders are in high risk categories and regathering publicly would not be safe for them. Some are continuing to keep their focus on online worship and all of the new opportunities for evangelism that it offers. Regardless of your parish's choice, we strongly encourage you to continue to offer online worship. It has been an exciting tool for support of our existing parishioners and for welcoming of new friends. God bless you as you make the best decisions for the congregation you serve.

I look forward to seeing how the Spirit is moving among us in this time.

Faithfully yours,



The Rt. Rev. Susan E. Goff
Bishop Suffragan and Ecclesiastical Authority

The Regathering Task Groups

Guidelines & Checklist: The Rev. Canon Mary Thorpe

Training of Coaches: The Very Rev. Fran Gardner-Smith

Area Coaches: Bishop Jennifer Brooke-Davidson

Area Coach Coordinators:

- **Northern Area** (Alexandria, Arlington, North Fairfax, Potomac, South Fairfax): The Rev. Lynn Ronaldi
- **Eastern Area** (Fredericksburg, Northern Neck, Upper Tidewater): The Rev. Pilar Parnell
- **Western Area** (Upper Piedmont, Southern Shenandoah, Culpeper, Winchester) The Rev. Justin Ivatts
- **Southern Area** (Charlottesville, North Richmond, Central Richmond, West Richmond) The Rev. John (JT) Thomas

Petition Review: The Very Rev. Randy Alexander