

Introduction to St. John's Regathering Plan for Outdoor Worship

August 19, 2020

Our Vestry appointed a committee with the task to write and submit a plan to the Diocese that adheres to their safety standards (and that of the CDC). We ask that you read the plan and then send your comments or questions regathering@stjohnsarlingtonva.org which goes to the Sr. Warden and full Regathering Committee. If you prefer, you can call Sandy Winger (Sr. Warden) at 703-498-6990. We would appreciate as many comments as possible by August 26, however, feel free to provide additional comments at any time.

A single sentence stresses our common sense: do not come if you are symptomatic, have been exposed to a known case of COVID, or have recently traveled to a hot spot. Please determine if this service compromises you in any way and accept our invitation to join us online for a live-streamed service.

In summary, this plan observes familiar safety protocols:

- You will make a reservation with our Senior Warden by the Thursday preceding the Sunday service. Let her know if you do not have your own chair for the service.
- Bring and wear a mask at all times,
- Maintain a safe social distance of at least 6 ft (you will be spaced 10ft apart for worship),
- Bring your own sanitizer (there will be a sanitizer station),
- Use restrooms before you leave home. The church will be open for very restricted restroom use with strict, posted protocol.
- We have basic first aid and a plan for immediate 911 response,
- Weather will be monitored and service cancelled due to weather, and an evacuation plan is in place should threatening weather occur during the service..
- We will not be singing, but we will have recorded or live music (at a safe distance).
- Thank you for following the ushers' instructions.

If you attend worship and come down with COVID within 14 days of the service —please contact our Senior Warden immediately.

St. John's Episcopal Church, Arlington, Va.

Committee for Re-gathering for Outdoor Worship

August 19, 2020

Service Delivery Plan for Comment

SUMMARY

Background:

Episcopal congregations in Virginia have been unable to worship in their churches due to the Corona virus pandemic since March 2020. Several have been holding virtual services. Recently the Diocese of Virginia invited parishes to submit plans for outdoor worship. These plans must adhere to diocesan standards, with some latitude that do not compromise safety measures, but address the unique needs of each parish. The Committee for Re-gathering for Outdoor Worship

was formed by the St. John's vestry to develop a plan and now submits it for outdoor worship in compliance with the Diocese and to address our needs.

Objective

Support a safe, spiritually uplifting outdoor worship service for parishioners. Up to now, services have been held virtually through Zoom.

Operations

The service will be held on the grounds on the 4th St. side of the church, at a date and time set by the St. John's vestry, and last for 45 minutes. Projected first service will be September 13 at 10am. Our usual Sunday attendance is 30; we estimate 15-20 participants to be easily accommodated on our side yard.

Pre-service:

We understand the necessity for advance education and instruction. Send invitation letters (emails) to the congregation at least two weeks prior to service with date and time and emphasizing on health and safety measures.

1. Ask parishioners to bring their own chairs, hand sanitizer, and face masks, and water. Measure seating area for 10' safe distancing.
2. **Thursday 5pm prior to service:** parishioners requested to inform Sr. Warden if they are participating in person.
 - a. Prepare printed bulletins for the service with distribution at safe distancing.
3. **Sunday a.m. prior to service:** set up chairs for those unable to bring them. Set up altar area, sound equipment, People bringing own chairs can set them up at locations marked by small traffic cones set 10 ft apart to guarantee at least 6 ft safe distancing in case a larger than expected crowd attends.
 - a. Prepare signage on seating arrangement, restroom location and procedure, no singing (also cover in vestry invitation to parishioners.)

Service (45 minutes):

1. Music: live at a distance of 25 ft from participants or recorded TBD.
2. No communal singing.
3. Health and safety leader monitors safe distancing.
4. Service begins.
 - a Live stream through ZOOM.
 - b. Celebrant, readers, Prayers of the People – only one person at a time in the altar area.

Post Service:

1. Parishioners can choose whether to remain in their seats fully masked at 10ft separation to chat for 15 minutes.
2. Parishioners leave chairs as they found them for disinfection. Ushers will return chairs to the church by practicing safe social distancing.

Health & Safety

1. **Hydration: participants are invited to bring their own water.** Parish can have a few bottles on hand.
2. **Sanitation:** ask parishioners to bring hand sanitizer. Sanitation stations set up.
3. **Face masks worn at all times.** Parishioners should bring their own mask, per vestry invitation. Parish prepared to supply masks to those without masks.
4. **Social distancing of 10ft** for seating.
5. **Bathroom facilities:** ask parishioners to use facilities at home prior to leaving for service. But provide access to church restrooms while ensuring safe distancing. (Church building open for restroom use only)
 - a. Keep church doors and bathroom doors open; sanitizer spray/wipes, paper towels to clean up after use.
 - b. Put tape down in undercroft to mark social distancing while waiting in line. One person in restroom at a time.
6. **Weather** Strongly suggest that parishioners monitor weather and make own decision about attendance.
7. **First Aid**
 - a. Eileen Tallent will be Health and Safety leader and responds to immediate needs. Bill Pritchard will administer First Aid as needed
 - b. Provide basic first aid for minor cuts, scrapes, and bumps. Anything more serious (examples: unconsciousness, heavy bleeding, suspected broken bones, suspected head or neck injury, chest/abdominal pains, difficulty breathing, fainting, severe vomiting, severe burns, dazed or confused behavior, high fever)
 - c. Eileen Tallent or Bill Pritchard will call 911 immediately without discussion in the event of any emergency beyond basic first aid care. They will instruct the congregation how to clear a path for paramedics while observing safe social distancing.

Weather

1. Provide for evacuating the site if weather suddenly threatens (protocol on signs).
2. Senior Warden makes the call on cancelling the service if the weather threatens. The determination may be made as early as the Friday before the service, but could be as late as early Sunday morning.
Strongly suggest that parishioners monitor weather forecasts.
3. Sr. Warden alerts parishioners about cancellation. Depending on the lead time, the notification may be via e-mail, a special banner on parish website, or calling those who indicated they would participate in person. Parishioners can check the top of the page on the parish website for updates on the service due to weather.

Logistics

1. Any set-up will be done in a group of 5 or less maintaining safe social distancing.
2. Chairs (based on parishioner response), tables, altar accoutrements, video and sound equipment, (keyboard?), First Aid kit, hand sanitizer, paper towels, masking or painters tape, printed copies of the service, (computer video & still photography equipment.) Signage for restroom and service protocols. Place strategically. Bldg

restricted to restroom use. Marker cones for seating locations for people bringing own.

Outdoor Service Frequency:

We will try this one service, modify the plan as necessary, and then schedule others if desired.

Event leaders

1. Cassandra Winger, senior warden, St. John's Vestry.
2. The Rev. Dr. Laurence Packard, long-term supply.
3. Bill Pritchard, Regathering committee chairman – provides overall supervision in carrying out the service plan. Keeps pastor informed on progress of the plan. Assists with other tasks as needed.
4. Eileen Tallent responsible for health and safety
5. Bryan Harbin responsible for overseeing setup and breakdown of event. Recruits parishioners to assist, as needed.
6. Peter Olivere, sound and video manager.