

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Oak Harbor

**Preparing to Resume Use of St. Stephen's Facilities
During Phase III of Circulating COVID-19**

Phase III Guidelines

St. Stephen's will not be holding indoor, in-person worship until Island County is declared to be in Phase IV of the COVID-19 response. During Phase III, in-person, outdoor worship services may be held, and community groups may hold meetings or other events in the church buildings following the requirements below.

COVID-19 Guidelines for Outdoor Worship Services

Until Island County has entered Phase IV for the COVID-19 response, any worship service will be conducted outdoors. People will be encouraged to stay at home if they or anyone in the household is unwell, or if they are at elevated risk. A supervisor will be appointed to ensure that protocols below are followed before, during, and after worship services.

To prevent respiratory transmission of the virus:

- Masks will be required for all participants throughout worship services.
- Masks will be provided to those who arrive without one.
- The presider will remain 20 feet from the gathering and will remove mask only when speaking.
- Any reader must remain 20 feet from the gathering when speaking.
- There will be no singing.

Physical distancing will be maintained through the following steps:

- All participants will maintain at least six feet distancing from non-household members before, during, and after the service.
- Markings will be used to ensure placement of seats at least six feet away from other household groups.
- Handshakes, hugs, and other physical contact will be discouraged.
- No receptions or social gatherings will be held after the service.
- All church buildings will be closed except for the restroom closest to the gathering, which will be accessed from the door closest to the service area.
- Signage will indicate that only one person at a time may use the restroom.
- The floor outside the restroom will be marked so that if anyone is standing in line, they can easily distance while they wait.

To prevent COVID-19 transmission from any contaminated surface the following steps will be taken:

- There will be sanitized pens for use before or during the service and a receptacle for used pens will be available. Both "clean" and "used" pen containers will be clearly marked.
- No-touch scanning thermometers will be used for temperature-taking.
- Participants will be encouraged to bring their own chairs. A few sanitized chairs will be available for those who come without one.

- The collection plate will not be passed. There will be a basket for people to drop their contribution into. Attendees will be encouraged to give online or through the mail.
- No bulletins will be distributed. Bulletins will be sent via email for individuals to print out on their own. Participants will have the option to bring their own BCP provided that they do not share it with others.
- Communion will not be offered as part of the outdoor worship services.

Personal hygiene will be encouraged by:

- Providing ample locations of sanitizer for hand cleaning.
- Providing easily accessible face tissues, as well as closed bins for used tissue.

The following decontamination steps will be taken:

- Any church-owned chairs used during the service will be sanitized before and after the service.
- Anything which has the potential to be touched – doorknobs, doors, hallway floor, all bathroom surfaces – will be sanitized before and after the service.
- All surfaces in any open bathrooms will be sanitized before and after each service.

Reminders to practice healthy behaviors will include:

- Ample signage regarding social distancing, sanitizer locations, bathroom access, and seating. Where appropriate, posters from CDC and WASH DOH will be printed and used for these purposes.
- Markers indicating placement of chairs at safe distances.

To ensure that contact tracing can be conducted should any participant in a St. Stephen's service become ill:

- All participants will complete and submit the diocesan consent/contact tracing form that will be maintained in accordance with diocesan and state guidelines. A copy of the consent form is attached as Appendix A.
- Exposure Response Procedures and Post-Incident Recovery Plan. Appendix B includes an explanation of procedures to be taken if a potential exposure to COVID-19 occurs at St. Stephens during worship.

Outdoor services will be cancelled if there is inclement weather.

COVID-19 Guidelines for Groups Meeting at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

When St. Stephen's Episcopal Church (SSEC) closed its buildings for worship due to the spread of COVID-19, meetings of groups who use the church facilities throughout the week were also cancelled. This action was necessary to keep people safe and to slow the spread of the virus. During Phase III it is possible for some groups to resume their activities at SSEC, if they observe the guidelines below. Each time a group meets, there will be an appointed supervisor in charge of seeing that all protocols are followed, and that all paperwork will be collected and kept for at least 21 days.

Groups will discourage persons who are vulnerable or ill from attending events in church buildings by:

- Communicating to potential attendees before the date of scheduled activities that the safest practice is to refrain from public gatherings, especially for those over 65 and those with compromised health.

- Monitoring attendees upon arrival for signs of illness (especially fever, cough, difficulty breathing), and asking anyone experiencing symptoms to leave the building.
- Asking those sharing a household with someone who shows signs of illness, or is known to have been exposed to COVID-19, not to attend activities at St. Stephen's Church.
- Taking the temperature of everyone in attendance upon entering the building. Anyone with a temperature reading of 100.4F or above will be asked to leave.
- Requiring all in attendance to fill out Event Disclosure and Screening Forms (See Appendix A)

Groups will prevent the spread of COVID-19 through respiratory transmission through the following steps:

- Everyone will wear a mask while in the buildings, except when eating.

Groups will ensure physical distancing is enforced by following the steps below:

- Everyone, including staff, volunteers and guests, will be asked not to touch others.
- Every effort will be taken to keep people at least six feet away from each other.
- For each room in the building, there will be a maximum number of people allowed at one time. This will depend on state and diocesan guidelines.

Groups will prevent transmission of disease by decontaminating surfaces:

- Groups using church facilities will sanitize all surfaces used before and after meetings/events. This may be done with a disinfecting cleaner, or a solution of bleach and water. This will include tables, chairs, door handles, door push bars, cupboard doors and handles, light switches, counters, hand rails, etc.
- If there will be people coming and going during an event, surfaces touched by one group must be sanitized before the next group enters.

Groups will encourage personal hygiene:

- When people arrive, they must wash or sanitize their hands.
- Hand sanitizer, and disinfecting cleaning supplies, will be readily available.
- Someone will be in charge of making sure that all surfaces touched during the event are sanitized again before leaving the premises.

Groups will facilitate contact tracing in case of illness among group members following a meeting in SSEC buildings:

- Everyone who attends must fill out an Event Disclosure and Screening Form that includes methods of contacting them should a situation arise which requires a tracing protocol.
- The forms will be maintained by the event organizer for at least 21 days.
- All participants will be asked to notify the organizer of the activity in which they participated should they test positive for COVID-19 within 14 days following their presence at St. Stephen's. St. Stephen's would, in turn, contact the Island County Health Department.
- See Appendix B. Exposure Response Procedures and Post-Incident Recovery Plan. Appendix B includes an explanation of procedures to be taken if a potential exposure to COVID-19 occurs at St. Stephens during community activities.

APPENDIX A: COVID-19 EVENT DISCLOSURE AND SCREENING FORM

Church/Organization: St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Oak Harbor, WA
Event/Activity: _____
Date of Event: _____
Name of Participant: _____
Phone Number: _____
Email Address: _____

Considering recent events, the health and wellbeing of our community is our paramount concern. Therefore, all participants at the above event are required to sign one of these forms and agree to voluntarily assume any risk of physically participating at this event.

Before attending, you agree that:

1. I understand my attendance and participation in the above event can pose a risk of COVID-19 or other contagious or infectious diseases to me, and if I am a high-risk person, as defined by the CDC, I should stay home and avoid participation;
2. If I have been recently exposed to COVID-19, I understand that I may pose a risk to others;
3. I agree that none of the following applies to me:
 - a. To my knowledge, I have not been in close or proximate contact with anyone who has had symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days.
 - b. I have not tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 14 days. No one in my household has tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 14 days.
 - c. I have not experienced symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days, including but not limited to fever, fatigue, difficulty breathing, or dry cough.
4. If there is an outbreak, my information may be shared with Public Health officials to engage in an approved contact tracing program. I understand that my information will be saved, and my information may be released to such Public Health Officials in the event it is needed for such a program.
5. I agree to follow all social distancing protocols in place at this event or activity and agree to wear a face mask while attending this event.

Your participating in person at this event is conditioned upon your acceptance and agreement to the above.

Thank you for helping us keep our community safe and healthy, we are all in this together!

Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX B: Exposure Response Procedures and Post Incident Recovery Plan

Exposure Response Protocols

A log of attendees and their contact information will be kept for each service or community activity held at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church (SSEC). (See Appendix A: Event Disclosure and Release Forms). The forms will be retained for at least 21 days. If an outbreak occurs, this information will be shared by SSEC with health authorities for purposes of contact tracing.

All attendees at any worship or community activity at SSEC will be notified that if they test positive for COVID-19, they are requested to contact The Rev. Peter Rood, the Senior Warden Susan Ho, or the organizer of the activity they attended. The identity of the individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 will not be revealed except to the Health Department and only if an official request to do so is received. Activity organizers who learn that an attendee has tested positive will relay the information to the Rector or Senior Warden.

Upon learning that an attendee at a SSEC activity has tested positive for COVID-19 the Rector or his designee will undertake the following:

- Inform the individual who has tested positive that SSEC will be cooperating with the Island County Public Health Department as needed to assist in containing further spread of the disease.
- Identify all instances within the preceding 21 days that the individual who tested positive was in close contact with others at SSEC. Retrieve all Event Disclosure and Screening Forms collected those dates.

For potential exposures occurring at worship services, SSEC will contact all individuals who submitted Event Disclosure and Release Forms from services where the infected person was in attendance. SSEC will let worshippers know they may have been exposed to COVID-19 while at SSEC and recommend they contact their personal physician, Urgent Care center, or Emergency Room to be tested and to self-isolate for 14 days after the exposure.

For potential exposures occurring at community activities held at SSEC, the Rector will contact the activity organizer who will contact all persons in attendance at the activity where the potential exposure may have occurred. The organizer will let attendees know they may have been exposed to COVID-19 while at SSEC and recommend they contact their personal physician, Urgent Care center, or Emergency Room to be tested and to self-isolate for 14 days after the exposure.

Plan for Recovery following a Potential Exposure

The Rector will contact the Diocese to discuss Island County Health Department requirements and next steps for communication, building cleaning, etc.

All areas in the SSEC buildings where worshippers may have entered (bathrooms) or community activities occur will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected including frequently touched surfaces and objects (handrails, doorknobs, light switches, counters, bathroom fixtures, etc.). Decontamination will

be done by using one or more of the cleaners identified by EPA as effective disinfectants against the virus see <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-coronavirus-covid-19>

Worship services and community activities will be postponed until a thorough cleaning of implicated areas can be completed.

Recovery communication plan

Following a potential exposure event, all SSEC worshippers and community event organizers will be informed about

1. the positive test of a person attending an event at SSEC
2. the dates and times of the potential exposure(s)
3. SSEC contact with persons attending on those dates as indicated through the Event Disclosure and Release Forms
4. collaboration of SSEC with Island County Health Department
5. steps being taken to disinfect SSEC activity and worship spaces
6. contact information for testing at Whidbey Health
7. Any cancelled or postponed worship services or community activities

SSEC will use multiple channels to keep parishioners and attendees of community events informed about 1-7: email, telephone trees, and community organization channels.