# Plan and Protocol for Regathering for Worship

The plan and protocol for regathering for worship will follow the guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control, the Washington State Department of Health, and the Bishop’s Phased-In Plan. This document will be updated and revised as the guidelines change. The Rector and the Regathering Committee will ensure that these protocols and guidelines are followed and make necessary changes as needed or directed by the Office of the Bishop.

Our plan is to begin holding one in-person service at 8:00 am on Sundays starting May 23, 2021, then two services beginning September 2021, depending on State and County guidance.

Capacity at each service will be limited to a maximum of 25% of approved nave capacity (417), which for us is 105 persons, including clergy and worship leaders. Modifications to this number will be made as dictated by the Office of the Bishop.

Online worship will be offered indefinitely. Those in high-risk groups are encouraged to worship at the 10:00 am online worship and not attend indoor services. Video equipment has been purchased and installed so that services can be livestreamed. Therefore, online worship will be offered permanently to serve home-bound parishioners as well as a part of our marketing/evangelism strategy.

1. **Preparing the Worship Space**

* All Bibles, prayer books, hymnals, offering envelopes have been removed from the seating and will not be used until Phase 4.
* The building has been deep cleaned, including floors, seating, tables, liturgical furniture, doors, and door handles.
* The worship space, narthex, restrooms, and nave will be cleaned prior to and after the service by a professional cleaning company.
* Sanitation stations have been set up which will provide hand sanitizer, disposable masks, disinfectant wipes, facial tissue, extra face masks, and disposable gloves. Trash receptacles will be placed by each sanitation station. Hand sanitizer will be placed throughout the seating area for easy access.
* Signs have been posted indicating sanitation and safety procedures and guidelines: wash your hands, social distancing, etc.
* When we go to two services, restrooms and surfaces will be wiped down and cleaned between the services.
* Seating will be arranged based on online/pre- registration, with members of a household and vaccinated members able to sit together.
* Vocal music leaders will be placed at least 20 feet from the congregation and limited to 2 persons unless additional singers are from the same household.

The nave will be set up so that a maximum of 100 worshipers (including 2 ushers and 2 worship leaders), 2 clergy, 1 music leader, and 2 technical video support staff – can observe social distancing of at least 6 feet.

All participants must agree to and abide by the following:

* Register for the service online and agree to the requirements for attending stated on the registration form.
* Facial masks must be worn at all times. Worship leaders may remove masks only when speaking.
* Worshipers must sanitize their hands upon entering the building and refrain from touching surfaces other than their seats.
* Pews will be positioned for worshipers prior to the service to maintain social distancing. Each pew holds three persons – household/bubble/vaccinated. Social distancing of six feet or more with persons outside the household should be maintained at all times.
* Worshipers will agree to have their temperature taken at the church before attending worship.
* If a registered worshipper is sick or has any symptoms of COVID-19 or has come into contact with anyone who has exhibited symptoms or tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 14 days, they will remain at home.
* If an attendee is diagnosed with COVID-19 up to two weeks after attending worship, they should notify the Rector immediately.

1. **Prior to Sunday Service**

* Guidelines, waivers, and online registration for indoor Sunday services will be sent out by Thursday afternoon (3 days before services). Registration will require agreement to abide by the guidelines and protocol, as well as acknowledging that attendance does pose a risk.
* Seating configuration has been established to accommodate families and individuals. There is no pre-assigned seating — first come, first serve.
* Bulletins for the service will be printed and placed in the seats. Gloves will be used for the placement of bulletins.
* Offering stations and two sanitation stations will be set up in the nave. Hand sanitizer will be available throughout the seating area.
* A reminder email to all those who have registered for the service will be sent out Saturday, including reminders about participant guidelines.
* The narthex and restrooms will be sanitized on Saturday evening.
* Paper service leaflets and a small bag with Lysol wipes for post-service cleaning will be placed in the pews.

1. **Sunday Morning**

* The doors of the narthex, nave and restrooms will be cleaned and propped open so that no one will have to handle doors when entering or leaving the building. The side doors of the nave will be cleaned and propped open as well for ventilation as well as for exit. HVAC system fans will also be on.
* The online registration will be printed out and given to ushers so that attendance can be checked. Temperature will be recorded on the print-out.
* Worshipers will enter and move immediately into the nave to be seated. Ushers will check to ensure that everyone is wearing a mask and encourage hand sanitizing.
* Worshipers and worship leaders must be masked at all times during the service, except when a leader is speaking.
* Musical offerings will consist mostly of instrumental music. We will sing one closing hymn.
* Money offerings will be placed in the plates at the offering stations. Worshipers will be encouraged to not touch the plates. The plates will remain at the stations until after the service. The ushers can then remove those and place them in the office once worshipers have departed.
* Liturgical items such as the gospel book, processional cross, etc. will be wiped down before and after use.
* During the Peace, worshipers will only have physical contact with persons in their family.
* Holy Communion will consist of consecrated, pre-packaged single serve communion wafers with hermetically sealed grape juice. See image below. Only the priest will handle the wafers and consume the priest’s host. Ushers will place the Holy Communion packets on the benches prior to the service using gloves. Instructions for receiving Holy Communion will be given at the Offertory.

A group of glasses with liquid in them

Description automatically generated with low confidence

* Worshipers will be asked to remain seated until the conclusion of the Postlude. Then the congregation will be guided to exits and exit through the nearest door.
* The kitchen and meeting space will remain closed during all worship services. No indoor coffee hour or food service will be available until Phase 4. In suitable weather, “social” hour may be conducted outdoors on the front lawn with parishioners maintaining social distancing per CDC recommendations.
* If visitors or an unregistered member show up, they will be asked to answer the health questionnaire and sign the guideline agreement before attending the worship service.

1. **Other Considerations**

* If a worshiper refuses to wear a mask in the building, the person will be asked to remain outside. Ushers and greeters will be instructed on how to handle a situation like this should it occur and be given authority to refuse entry to any worshiper who chooses not to follow guidelines and safety protocols.
* If a worshiper notifies the church that they have been diagnosed with COVID-19 up to two weeks after worshiping at Holy Cross, worshipers attending service with them will be notified by phone. A notice will be sent to the entire congregation via email within 24 hours of the notification. The name of the person diagnosed with the virus will not be disclosed under any circumstances except as required by health officials.
* Attendance records will be maintained at the church.
* Ushers will receive guidance on the greeting procedures, attendance check-in procedures, Communion directions, and sanitation procedures.
* There is no childcare or children’s formation being offered at this time.
* Faith Formation for children, youth, and adults will be provided online until September 2021. Small in-person groups will be allowed by the phase guidelines.