

Reopening Updates | June 1, 2020

As our world begins the slow process of emerging from the stay-at-home sheltering during the COVID-19 pandemic, we as a church family are negotiating the path toward our new way of worshipping together. As Fr. Ripp has stated, we will not return to normal for some time. He spoke about our need to know who plans to return to church when we are able to safely open, and we continue to collect that information.

When we do open, new procedures will be in place to ensure everyone's safety. These procedures have been carefully thought out, are based on recommendations from the CDC and governmental leaders, and are required by the Diocese of West Texas. Fr. Ripp as our Rector and Linda Lund as our Sr. Warden have signed a covenant on behalf of the church stating that we will comply with those procedures. To help prepare you for returning to the St. John's sanctuary, we are listing them here:

- 1. A continual reduction in COVID-19 cases for 14 consecutive days. We are looking beyond New Braunfels since we have people from San Antonio, San Marcos, Seguin and Bulverde/Spring Branch who attend this church.**
- 2. Cleaning and disinfecting supplies needed to ensure that the church is disinfected before and after each service. These supplies can be difficult to obtain, but we are working to build an appropriate inventory to meet our needs going forward.**
- 3. Volunteers who are trained and assigned dates to clean so we know that all spaces are thoroughly disinfected before and after each worship service.**
- 4. Personal safety supplies needed to equip our volunteers who will clean the church before and after services, including gloves, masks, and hand washing/sanitizing products.**
- 5. Creation of a seating chart showing who will be attending each service. Parishioners will have to select a preferred service to attend and understand should they might be asked to attend a different service than their first preference. A list of all who attend each service will be maintained. Should someone test positive in the days following a service, we can aid in advising close contacts of that individual.**
- 6. Creation of a detailed list of all the areas and items to be cleaned after each worship service.**

When we begin to hold public worship again, you will notice some differences. Here are a few: Everyone in attendance will be required to wear a mask; hymnals, prayer books, and Bibles will be removed from the pews due to sanitation issues; the entire service will be printed on a bulletin for each person attending; cushions in the pews will be removed as they cannot be sanitized after each service; communion will be in one kind only and we will not go to the

communion rail.

As required by the Diocese, once all the safety measures are in place and two weeks prior to opening, we will notify all members of the church that we are slated to open on a certain date. This ensures that all people are informed of the reopening plan per the Covenant. Additionally, the Vestry is creating a plan in case we have a major spike in COVID-19 cases and deem it necessary to stop public worship for a while. Please be aware of this possibility, as well.

We know there will be challenges, but we also know these measures will help us get back to church! In the meantime, please stay safe and continue to pray for the St. John's family and all those in our world dedicated to ending this pandemic.

Yours in Christ,

Linda Lund, Sr. Warden

Don Greer, Jr. Warden