



CHRIST CHURCH  
EASTON

Brothers and sisters in Christ,

We welcome and celebrate the recent good news of the positive progress that has been made in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic in the US. As you know, last week Governor Hogan announced a loosening of restrictions in the State of Maryland. This initiated a similar relaxation in practices and protocols in the Diocese of Easton. At its meeting on Tuesday, the Vestry discussed these changes as it pertains to our worship services.

First and foremost, we are eager to reinstitute the best and most important practices of our worship services. Simultaneously we are aware of our opportunity to do more than restore what we were doing in the past and are thinking about how to configure our worship for the future. Now that we can be more dynamic in-person services again, we have some opportunities to explore.

Digital/virtual ministries have arisen in the course of the last year that have important implications for our mission going forward. We will continue to offer Zoom worship and the Livestream, as well as produce music videos. We have experience now in broadcasting live worship services; we are working on ways to continue that practice. We will also find ways to further integrate our live worship with the virtual.

Due to the fact the various music programs have not been able to gather in over a year, there will be a delay before they are ready to be “back in service.” Therefore, this will be phased in over the course of the summer. Current diocesan guidelines require singers to be fully vaccinated and to wear a facemask.

For the immediate time being we are focused on the one in-person service on Sunday morning. There are many ways to rethink the Sunday morning worship schedule, but there are also very real-life limits. In June, we will reintroduce a second Sunday morning in-person service. While it is still under discussion, we may have the typical summer schedule of services at 8:00 AM (time may be adjusted to accommodate ZOOM services) and 10:00 AM. We will also be making adjustments as experience reveals what is working best.

While it may come back earlier, the Saturday “Alive @ 5” worship service team will be working toward a September 11 return (weekend after Labor Day). Although it has had a successful video ministry, the group has not been able to be together in over a year. Therefore, the music leadership team itself needs to rebuild, learn the music, and get back in practice. That takes time. The good news is that over the summer the “Alive @ 5” band will be offering two or three prayer and praise performances (likely outdoors).

The question of outdoor worship, in general, has come up. We have been exploring some options. No firm decisions have been made.

As hopeful as the news is in terms of the diminishment of the spread of COVID-19, we know the epidemic is not over and we are not pretending it is. Therefore, we continue to be vigilant and continue to encourage all to be careful.



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The new in-person protocols as of Pentecost Sunday, May 23:

- Sign-in logs and wellness check-in procedures are suspended.
- Facemasks are optional for those who have been fully vaccinated.
- Facemasks are required for those who have not been fully vaccinated.
- Wearing a facemask is respected as a matter of personal choice, safety and comfort.
- Social distancing practices are suspended; however...
- Respect will be shown to those who still seek to maintain physical distances.
- The peace may be exchanged by handshake, but hugging is not allowed.
- Those who prefer not to be touched during the peace should indicate their preference.
- Communion will be taken at the altar rail (Sundays)
- Communion will be by bread alone; unless...
- Communion is served in individual bread/wine (or grape juice) chalices.

In the coming weeks, the church will be phasing in:

- Singing
- Nursery and childcare
- Receptions
- Additional worship services, as indicated.

We are excited to gather together more fully in person, as well as to continue the ministries we have begun over the past year-plus. Keep us in your prayers as we move forward in discerning and doing the work that God has given us to do.

Peace,

Fr. Bill