

## **In-Person Worship is Set to Resume! Sunday, May 16, 2021 at 10:15 AM**

Even though in-person worship is resuming, no one is required to return until they are comfortable doing so. We leave it up to individuals as to whether they return to in-person worship. We ask that you do not come if you are not feeling well or have any symptoms (cough, sore throat, etc.). We also ask that you do not come if you have recently been in contact with someone who is sick.

For everyone's safety, there will be some procedures we will have to follow before entering the church. To ensure social distancing, only 50% of our normal attendance can be accommodated. Please arrive at least 15 minutes early as attendance will be on a first come, first serve basis, and there will be a "check-in" procedure prior to entering the church that will take several minutes to complete. The basic procedures will be:

- Please wear your mask. There will be extra masks available for those who don't have one.
- Your temperature will be taken at the door and you will be asked some health questions.
- We will need to take down your name and phone number in case contact tracing becomes necessary.
- You will need to use hand sanitizer before you enter the church.
- You will be provided with a bulletin at the narthex door.
- An usher will escort you to a seat prior to the service. We will not be able to accommodate requests for specific seats. Per CDC recommendations, only family groupings will be seated together.

We are doing our best to make the overall worship experience as close to what you are used to as possible. However, there will be a few differences. We will have a minimal choir, but the congregation will not be singing. At the Peace, the congregation is asked not to shake hands or hug; just nod or wave. Offering will be collected, but the offering baskets will not be passed; they will be available just inside the Sanctuary doors. Communion will be available, but will not be distributed at the altar rail. We will have a single communion station at the bottom of the steps to the chancel. Only bread will be distributed. And at the end of the service, the congregation will be dismissed in an orderly manner by the ushers.

All these protocols are our local adaptation of guidelines identified by the CDC, local jurisdictions, and the Diocese of Los Angeles, and are designed to keep us all as safe as possible.

We look forward to seeing you in church on May 16<sup>th</sup>. For those of us who aren't quite ready to worship in the church, we will continue to live-stream the service every week on the parish Facebook page as we have been doing for the past year.

For your information, the detailed reopening protocols for Sunday Worship are attached and are also available on the parish website.

Thank you for adhering to these protocols.

# ST. GREGORY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, LONG BEACH

## REOPENING PROTOCOLS

*Revised April 21, 2021*

### SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

#### In-Person Worship

- A single service will be held each Sunday at 10:15 AM. The service will also be live-streamed.
- Attendance will be first-come, first-served. At 50% of capacity, attendance limit for the sanctuary and adjoining chapel is 175, which exceeds our pre-shutdown single service attendance. It is important to note that the functional capacity will be dictated by minimum social distancing requirements (currently designated at six feet).
- If more space is needed, we will return to our regular 8:00 and 10:15 service times.
- Families with small children are responsible for keeping their children in the family pew. Children need to be instructed to avoid contact (i.e., hugging) of non-family members.
- The altar party will consist solely of the priest and a single lector, who will enter and exit the sanctuary via the sacristy hallway (i.e., there will be no processional or recessional). The organist and a reduced choir (no more than 6 people) will be present. The choir will must wear masks at all times and maintain minimum distancing of 8 feet, per Diocesan guidelines.
- The Presider will sit in the Presider's chair. The lector will sit in the LEM's chair nearest the ambo. The Presider and lector will adhere to social distancing requirements at all times.
- There will be no congregational singing or chanting.
- During the Peace, congregants will stay in their pews. There will be no shaking of hands or hugging, just a nod or a wave.
- Offering baskets will not be passed during the Offertory. Baskets will be available on each side of the main Sanctuary doors in the narthex.
- The votive candle station will not be available at this time.
- There will be no Sunday School or nursery care during worship services.

#### Admission/Access Protocol

- Arriving worshipers will be directed to a single access point on the east side of the Sanctuary patio. Access points on the north side will be blocked with tables and direction signs, and gates will be closed on the west and south sides (i.e., into courtyard and classroom areas).
- Markings will be placed on the ground to indicate social distancing (i.e., six feet).
- Two admission stations will be available, staffed by parish volunteers. Each station will have 'mask required' and health check signage posted. Attendees may visit either station to confirm and provide the following verifications:
  - They are wearing and will continue to wear a mask. Bagged masks will be available if needed.
  - They do not have any of the following symptoms:
    - Sore throat
    - Coughing or sneezing

- Body aches
  - Shortness of breath
  - Loss of taste or smell
- They have not been caring for, or in contact with, anyone who has been diagnosed with or showing symptoms of COVID-19.
- Their temperature does not exceed 100.4, determined via a contactless temperature check.
- Their name and contact number to be recorded by the volunteer.
- If an individual refuses any of these verification activities, they will be asked to leave the premises. Recommended language is:
  - *Diocesan and governmental guidelines mandate that we enforce social distancing policy, including being healthy and wearing a mask at all times. Jesus also calls us to love our neighbor as ourselves, making sure that we do nothing to endanger anyone in the community. If you cannot follow the guidelines, we regret that we cannot let you worship in person. Father Michael will be happy to talk with you about this at another time if you wish.*
- Attendees will then be directed to the Sanctuary doors, to use the provided hand sanitizer, and pick up their single-use bulletin.
- An usher will escort each party to seats. Seating will be from front to back of the church. Seating will be at alternate ends of each pew. Only a single party will be in any aisle at a time. Self-selection of seats by attendees cannot be accommodated.
- Per CDC recommendations, only family groupings will be seated together.
- If seating a large party encroaches on the space needed for distance in the next pew, that pew will be skipped when seating the following party.

### **Communion Protocol**

- Preparation for and clean-up after service will be performed by a single Altar Guild member. Hands will be washed prior to handling communion wafers or communion vessels.
- Only the Presider will go to the altar for preparation for communion and the Eucharistic Prayer.
- All communion elements will be on the credence table. They will not be processed from the back of the church.
- Prior to preparing for communion, the Presider will clean his/her hands with hand sanitizer.
- Following the Eucharistic Prayer and before distribution to communicants, the Presider will again clean his/her hands with hand sanitizer.
- Communion will be distributed from a single station at the foot of the steps to the chancel area. Only consecrated bread will be distributed.
- Ushers will “release” communicants by pew (from the front) to receive communion. This will be done from the center aisle.
- Communicants will maintain six feet distancing while queued to receive communion. Markings will be placed on the carpet to gauge distance.
- Communicants will fully stretch out arms/hands to receive the host. Tongs will be used to distribute the host to the communicant. The Presider will fully stretch his/her

arm/hand toward communicant and “drop” the host into the communicant’s hand, avoiding physical contact.

- Communicant will gently remove his/her mask, consume the host, put their mask back on, and return to his/her seat by the side aisle.
- Presider will take communion to anyone unable to come to the steps for communion.

#### **Exit Protocol**

- Ushers will dismiss worshipers by pew, from the rear of the church to the front.
- A recycle bin will be available in the narthex for disposal of bulletins if a worshiper does not wish to take the bulletin home with them.
- No coffee hour or other gathering space will be provided, and worshipers will be encouraged not to congregate.

#### **Other Protocols**

- After completion of the service, the offering will be collected from the offering baskets. One usher, gloved, will place the offering in the regular offering bag. A second usher will observe from a distance of six feet. The ushers will take the offering bag to Fr. Michael, who will let the ushers into the Finance Office so the bag can be placed in the safe.

#### **Sanctuary Cleaning**

- The sanctuary will be cleaned by janitorial each Saturday night. In addition, the Ladies’ and Men’s rooms will be deep-cleaned weekly.

#### **Restrooms/Drinking Fountain**

- Both the Ladies’ room accessible through the Bride’s Room and the Men’s rooms off the narthex will be available during services. Ushers will monitor restroom traffic to determine if further procedures are necessary to ensure social distancing.
- Hand sanitizer will be available outside the restrooms.
- The drinking fountains (in the courtyard areas) will be bagged to prevent usage.

#### **Sanctuary Preparation**

- All hymnals, prayer books, envelopes, pens, pew cushions, name tags/baskets, swag bags, printed materials and table décor have been removed from the Sanctuary and narthex and stored in Room 2. Worshipers are free to bring their own cushions for use during worship services.
- The Greeter’s station will not be used, and will continue to be locked in the Parish Hall.
- HVAC filters will be replaced in advance of the first in-person service.

#### **Notification Protocol**

- Anyone diagnosed with COVID-19 having attended an in-person Sunday service in the prior 14 days is asked to notify the church office.
- Upon such notification, the Reopening Task Force will notify each person in attendance at the identified Sunday service(s) to advise them of exposure to a COVID-19 diagnosed person. They will also be advised to stay home and self-monitor for symptoms, following CDC guidelines if symptoms develop.

- The Reopening Task Force will also advise the local health authority (Long Beach Dept. of Public Health)
- Anyone with symptoms or diagnosed with COVID-19 should not return to the campus until they have met the CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation.

**Communication**

- Guidelines will be posted on the parish Facebook page and website, published in the weekly email blasts, and mailed in hardcopy to each parishioner's address of record two weeks prior to reopening for in-person worship.
- People who are sick or who have been in contact with or care for those who are sick will be advised to not attend in-person worship.
- Protocols will be re-enforced at appropriate points during services.

Protocols for the Parish Office, Sunday School, Parish Groups, and Outside Groups are available in the complete Reopening Protocol document posted on the parish website at <http://stgregoryschurch.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/St-Gregorys-Reopening-Protocols-April-2021-Complete.pdf>