

REOPENING PRIORITIES

Phase II is initially about worship and we will restart:

- **Sunday Worship** - we will continue to worship virtually once we restart in-person worship.
- **Wednesday Healing Service** – we will restart the mid-week service after we successfully resume in-person Sunday services. In the meantime, we will continue virtual our Wednesday service.

Formation (education) and ministries including Bargains Galore and the Bookstore will come later.

PHASE I – No In-Person Gatherings

Phase I - External Indicators

- Increasing rates of COVID-19
- Overburdened medical resources
- State and local “Stay at Home” orders

Phase I - Guidelines for Church Ministry

- Offices may be open with very few staff
- Essential ministries (food banks, direct service, blood drives, 12-step) may continue, with reduction of volunteers, all volunteers wearing masks, and thorough cleaning after activities.
- Christian Formation for all ages offered online

Phase I - Guidelines for Worship

- No in-person worship or meetings of more than 10.
- Online worship recommended.
- Funerals, weddings, and ordinations of less than 10 people permitted, with masks and social distancing between participants.
- Emergency baptisms only.

PUBLIC HEALTH INDICATORS FOR PHASE I

COVID-19 CASES, HOSPITALIZATIONS
AND DEATHS INCREASING

IN ANY PHASE

If a church member or staff person who has been in the church building or with church members tests positive, the infected individual should notify the priest. The priest, or staff, should notify everyone who was present in the worship service or event that someone at the gathering had COVID-19. They should be advised to contact their doctor. The priest and staff should not identify the person who tested positive.

The church will immediately go back to Phase I for at least 14 days and will need to do a substantive cleaning of any affected areas of the building at least 72 hours after the last contact.

Some or all churches may also need to return to Phase I due to increased infection rates.

Outdoor Worship – in any phase

Outdoor worship services can begin when:

1. A congregation has a diocesan-approved Phase II plan and agrees to follow all Phase II procedures (masks, distancing, etc.) for outdoor worship.
2. Hospital capacity - at least 30% of inpatient beds are available.

Masks and social distancing are required even outdoors. No limit on how many people may gather as long as space permits for social distancing.

PHASE II - Vestry have a plan approved by Bp. Reddall

Phase II - External Indicators

- A sustained reduction in cases for at least 14 days in Maricopa county.
- Local hospitals are able to treat all patients requiring hospitalization without overwhelming the system
- The ability to test everyone with COVID-19 symptoms
- Lifting of "Stay at Home" orders from officials
- Note: until a vaccine that is widely administered, there is no way to absolutely ensure safety of those who gather.
- Those over 60 and those with the following underlying conditions are particularly vulnerable and may be wise to continue to worship online.
 - Uncontrolled diabetes
 - Asthma
 - Hypertension
 - History of lung disease
 - Immune system compromised
 - Undergoing chemotherapy

Phase II General Guidelines for Churches

- Everyone must wear a mask over their noses and mouths whenever on church property.
- Offices can be open with staff appropriately distancing.
- Hand sanitizer at all entrances and in all restrooms.
- Tissues and covered trash baskets available and accessible.
- Masks for those who don't bring one.
- No shared food events (coffee hours, meals).
- No Sunday School, youth group, or children's ministry.
- Continue to offer Bible Study and Christian formation online; small groups of 10 or fewer may meet in-person maintaining 6' distance.

BENCHMARKS & LEARNING SCENARIOS

The Community Spread Benchmarks

ADHS defines community spread levels with the weekly thresholds outlined below:

Benchmarks	Minimal	Moderate	Substantial
Cases	< 10 cases/100k	10-100 cases/100k	> 100 cases/100k
Percent Positivity	< 5%	5-10% *	> 10%
COVID-like Illness	< 5%	5-10%	> 10%

Phase II General Guidelines for Churches

- Congregation must continue online worship
- Minimize touching of items.
 - Single use bulletins that include responses and set out on a table.
 - Encourage members to bring a BCP or give each member one to bring each time.
 - Use a downloadable bulletin.
 - Project prayers and responses on screens.
- Ensure masks are being worn and social distancing maintained.
- Avoid a line at the door when entering or exiting.
- Clergy should greet people where it won't block an entrance or exit.
- The role of ushers is critical. Ushers must be respected, able to be firm, and welcoming to people who are lonely and isolated. Consider who is called to this ministry at this time.
- Consider restroom access and cleaning plans.
- Consider closing off any areas not in use.
- No processions that would bring ministers within 6' of worshippers.
- Music: No choir or congregational singing. A single cantor is permitted if there is a 20' distance around them (including distance from an accompanist). Otherwise, only instrumental is permitted. We encourage creativity in finding ways for singers to continue to minister through music online, and for choirs to maintain their relationships and community.

Phase II - Specific Guidelines for Eucharist

- Communion will be offered in one kind (bread) to the congregation.
- No passing the Peace with physical touching.
- No passing of offering plates; put an offering plate in a central location; continue to encourage online giving.
- The Celebrant and any ministers who are distributing communion will wash their hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer immediately prior to the prayer of consecration. The Celebrant must wear a mask during the prayer of consecration.
- If the Celebrant or any minister touches the hand of anyone that they are distributing communion to, they must stop, and wash or sanitize their hands.
- Use only communion wafers and not bread that will be torn or divided.
- Communion must be distributed while congregants are standing and at a station where a 6' distance is kept between those waiting.
- Those distributing communion must wear masks.
- Remind congregants to not touch the minister's hands.
- Worship capacity will be limited to 50 people.
- Not everyone will be able to attend at the same time as we move forward and more people are comfortable to resume in-person worship. We will consider:
 - More services spread out over the weekend with cleaning after each
 - Establish a process to create worship smaller groups: reservations, a lottery, alphabetical assignments, etc.
 - Try to leave spaces for visitors
 - If you can worship outside, contact the Task Force for possibilities.
- Try to wait 72 hours before cleaning to protect the cleaning crew.
- Maintain 6' distance between family groups at all times.
- Baptismal fonts and holy water stoops must be drained.
- Remove items from pews: BCPs, Hymnals, pencils, etc.
- Shared robes should be washed after each use; individual robes should not be stored with robes of others.
- Baptisms, weddings, and funerals: in accordance with guidelines and limited by size of gathering.
- Highly vulnerable congregations should consider offering spoken Morning or Evening Prayer instead of Holy Eucharist.

Phase II - Guidelines for emergency in-home pastoral visits during Phase II:

Clergy may visit shut-ins who desire a pastoral visit under the following conditions:

- Both the visitor and the visited do not have any symptoms
- Visits outside on a patio are ideal.
- Clergy must wear an N95 mask, face shield, and gloves.
- Maintain 6' distance between people.
- Eucharist may only be shared with the person being visited partaking of the wine.

PHASE II.5

The Diocese of Arizona would rather add ministries and practices as we move forward rather than having to stop ministries and practices once regathered. Ministries in "Phase II.5" may be permitted once we are well into Phase II and understand more about transmission patterns of COVID-19, have reliable antibody testing, and/or have successfully lowered local infection rates.

The Task Force will be evaluating these options once we have experience with Phase II. Some of these ministries may be authorized; others may not. They include:

Moderately Limited Gatherings (More Businesses and Institutions Reopened / Fewer Restrictions)

- Gatherings of up to 100 people or 25% of capacity
- Congregational singing and choral singing
- In-person Sunday School and Youth Ministry
- Non-emergency Pastoral Visits by Lay Eucharistic Visitors and Clergy
- Some Coffee Hour and social gatherings
- Additional in-person Christian Formation

PHASE III

We will enter Phase III when there is either a vaccine for COVID-19 or effective methods of treating the virus. Phase III is likely 18-24 months away from us now but could come sooner if a vaccine or treatment becomes available.

Unlimited Gatherings

Phase III Guidelines for Church Community

- Offices are open.
- Ministry around food (coffee hour, socials, potlucks) can resume.
- Outside groups may resume meeting in church buildings.
- Unrestricted pastoral visiting.
- Full children, youth, and family ministry.

Phase III Guidelines for Worship

- No size restrictions on worship services.
- Maintain handwashing or sanitizing practices.
- Communion in both kinds for the congregation.
- Reception at altar rail permitted.
- Congregational singing and choirs resume.
- Mask wearing still encouraged, but not required.

St. Christopher's Regathering Plan was adopted by vestry resolution on Sept 15, 2020 and was **approved by Bishop Reddall on Sept 25, 2020**.

These guidelines are adapted from those presented by the diocesan task force for the purposes of St. Christopher's Episcopal Church in Sun City only and are not intended to be appropriate for any other church.

Diocesan Task Force Committee:

The Right Rev. Jennifer A. Reddall, *Bishop*
The Rev. Gerardo Brambila, *St. Mark's, Mesa*
The Rev. Taylor Devine, *St. Philips in the Hills, Tucson*

The Rev. Bruce Jackson, *St. John the Baptist, Glendale*

Dr. Gerry Kato, *Trinity Cathedral, Phoenix*

Kym Kennedy, *St. John's, Bisbee*

Canon Clyde Kunz, *Church of St. Matthew, Tucson*

Dr. Richard Neff, *Church of the Epiphany, Flagstaff*

The Rev. Erika von Haaren, *St. Barnabas on the Desert, Scottsdale*

Staff Members:

Canon Cathy Black

The Rev. Canon Anita Braden Canon

St. Christopher's Task Force:

Fr. Peter Fabre, *Priest-in-Charge*

Beth Mayhew, *Senior Warden*

Bill Lynn, *Junior Warden*

Diane Plein, *Clerk of the Vestry*

Mona Guarino, *Finance Chair / Vestry*

Ana Martinez, *Vestry*

Doreen Rorher, *Parish Administrator*

Plan Passed Unanimously by Vestry 08/14/20

Plan Approved by Bp Reddall 09/??/20

Contact any vestry member with questions or concerns.

