

Grace Episcopal Church and the Incarnation – Philadelphia  
&  
Holy Innocents St. Paul Episcopal Church – Philadelphia  
for  
The Parishes Plan for the  
Gradual Return to In-Church Corporate Worship

June 8, 2020

As of the date of this plan, the City of Philadelphia is currently in **Yellow**.

### Introduction

As followers of the Risen Lord Jesus, we are compelled to pattern our lives around ‘the Great Commandment.’ The Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, and Luke each recite the command from Deuteronomy and Leviticus to **love God**, to **love others**, and to **love ourselves**. The Johannine Gospel also affirm this notion by Jesus conveying ‘the New Commandment.’ Jesus said “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. **By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another** (John 15:34-35 NRSV, emphasis added).” Hence, the true essence of being a follower of Jesus is centered around the **love of God**, the **love of each other**, and the **love of ourselves**. The Parishes Plan for the Gradual Return to In-Church Corporate Worship is just that; a plan that will assist each of us to live into the core of what it means to be a Christian by living into a right relationship with each other.

Therefore, if we find that we are not able to live into this ‘highest of all laws,’ we will be required to suspend our in-church corporate worship. Consequently, if there is one person in the congregation that is not willing to comply, the service will be stopped, and the church will be vacated. The rector will reserve the right to not allow this person back into the church. The core and more important new norms that we will need to live by are as follows:

1. All persons present on the church property and in the building must wear masks covering their noses and mouths at all times. The rector is the only exceptions and only during the officiating of liturgy.
2. No in-person contact; in other words, no touching of any kind and no hugging. Also, a 6 feet social distancing must be strictly observed at all times; before, during and after the service.
3. Exact adherence to instructions from greeters and ushers.
4. No congregating before or after church services on the church properties or on the surrounding sidewalks.

### What **must** be done before the scheduling the first Sunday open

1. Mark the inside churches for 6 feet distancing with colored tape, ropes, etc. This includes restrooms, entrances, and seating in the churches. Making sure that other areas are not accessible (classrooms, pantry, upper hall, staircases, etc.) If webcasting equipment is installed before the opening, both the Parish Hall (Grace) and the Lower Hall (Holy), chairs will be arranged for the 6 feet distancing also. In all rooms for worship, only 25 persons or fewer will be marked for seating; this includes the officiant, a lector, usher, and greeter. The first row and the last row will not be used. All of this is to comply with the distancing rule.
2. Signage for 6 feet distancing, masks are required at all times, only 2 persons in the restrooms will be placed at the entrances and throughout the buildings where they are visible and needed.
3. Signage for the elevator that will allow only 1 person in the elevator at a time.
4. Hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes will be placed at the entrances of the building, the areas of worship, in the sacristy, and at up at the altar. Hand sanitizer will be placed in each pew where there are people sitting.
5. Two months supplies of mask (individually placed in Ziplock bags), Clorox Wipes, hand sanitizer, cleaning supplies, and gloves (for the altar guild) to be purchased for each church.
6. All books and other materials will be removed from all the worship spaces and the narthex.
7. A Pastoral Letter with instructions and expectation will be sent from the rector. This will be mailed, emailed and put out on Facebook. Additionally, a phone-tree with the vestry members to call the membership a week after the letter is mailed.
8. A phone call from the rector to each person that is known to be compromised will be made to affirm that returning to church is optional and to discuss any additional concerns or considerations this plan has not made.
9. All vestry members will be asked to be ushers or greeters.
10. Services will only take place on Sundays. Professional cleaning service will be scheduled to clean the buildings on Thursday or Friday. They will have a list of requirements from the diocese and CDC.
11. The vestry will approval and signoff on this plan, unanimously. This plan will need to be approved by this bishop before we move forward. Once we have obtained the bishop's approval, the final plan will be distributed via the website, social media, and US Mail where needed.

### What **might** be done before scheduling the first Sunday open

1. Obtaining webcasting equipment for one or both churches.
2. Start webcasting Morning Prayers for Sundays for each parish before the return of in-church corporate worship. At these particular services the persons in attendance will include the officiant, reader, and an altar guild member.
3. Updating websites to allowing persons to watch services when they are webcasted.
4. Post Bishop's letter and plan, Father Brian's pastoral letter, and the parishes plans on websites,

## Scheduling the first Sunday back in the churches

1. The churches will have a 'soft opening' will be tentatively on Sunday, June 28 with vestry members and families. This will be used as a trial run and we will talk about concerns and modifications after the service. Date is subject to change to a later date if it is deemed that the pandemic is becoming more threatening.
2. The first week back will be tentatively on Sunday, July 5. Date is subject to change to later date if it is deemed that the pandemic is becoming more threatening or if the bishop or rector along with the wardens feel that the parishes are unable to fulfill this plan.
3. All vestry members will be trained via Zoom on how to be ushers.
4. We will advertise all new norms in all forms, i.e. masks, 6 feet distancing, 25 person limits per worship space, communion in one-kind, only persons that are in good health, etc.
5. NO access to the building (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) during the week before the first service without the prier verbal permission from the rector. The parish administer will document who has come in the building for what reason. **If persons with keys are found to violate this particular procedure, a request to return the keys will be immediately requested.**

## What In-Church Corporate Worship will look like

1. In-house corporate worship will be open to parish members and visitors until the space is at full capacity. It will be at a "first come, first served" bases. A line will gather outside the gates of the parishes. If the parish(es) have obtain webcasting equipment, the services will start/continue to webcast the services.
2. Service bulletins will already be placed at each available seat on the Friday before the service. Updated and additional rubrics will be added to the service bulletins and will be colored in red to add extra emphasis.
3. No one will be allowed in the churches on a particular Sunday until 15 minutes before the service except the officiant, organist, one altar guild person, greeter and three ushers.
4. Cones and rope will be places outside of the churches fence (down the sidewalk) to allow a line to form that marks 6 feet social distancing.
5. When entering the building, the greeter will mark down the persons' name on who attended the service. All guests for visitors will ask to have their name and phone number taken so we can notify them of possible knowledge of contamination or exposure to the Coronavirus. This information will be transferred into Churchtrac (electronic membership database) on the following Monday by the parish administrators.
6. Ushers will take each person or household to available seating. They will make accommodation or adjustments for family with children and youth. Ushers will assure that no worship space is over the limit of 25 persons. Church (19 + officiant, organist, reader, greeter, usher, technical support) Parish hall/Lower hall (20 + officiant during communion, 2 ushers).
7. Once the church is at capacity, the ushers will lock the door so that more people cannot enter the building. A sign will be placed on the door explaining that church is at capacity (and if we are living streaming, the sign will give them instruction on how to join the service at livestream). The ushers will state attentive during the service to guide persons to the

correct restrooms and informing people if they leave, they are not able to return to the service.

8. Organ music will be played at the following times. Prelude, times then the minister(s) of worship move in or out of the church, during communion, and postlude music. The score and lyrics of the music play will not be printed in the service bulletin. By this point, all hymn books have been removed.
9. There will be assigned one lector for all the readings of Holy Scriptures, the praying of the Psalms and the prayers; as required by the rubrics according to Morning Prayer or the Holy Eucharist.
10. If or when the liturgy has moved from Morning Prayer to the Holy Eucharist, the Liturgy of the Table will progress as follows. Verbal announcements along with a reemphasis of the written rubrics that are in the service bulletin will be made before the Offertory Sentences. Collection plates will be placed in a convenient place where people can make their offerings either before or after the service. Ushers will supervise the offering plates at all times.
11. No one will assist the celebrant with setting the Table. The credence table will have been set as follows. There will be two patens; one with a small celebrant host, the other with enough hosts to communicate the persons present at all worship spaces. The chalice will be covered as is normative with a freshly laundered purificator, then a pall, and finally a freshly laundered corporal. None of the vessels will be veiled; but rather, each paten will be covered with a pall like the chalice. In two different cruets, one will have enough wine and water for the celebrant only. At this time, we will forgo the use of the lavabo bowl of washing the priest hands. The celebrant will be the only person at or around the altar during the entire service.
12. At the beginning of the Eucharist Prayer, the patens and chalices be covered with palls. The celebrant will start as far back from the Altar as possible. A new service bulletin will be used and not the Altar Book. Before the Words of Institution, the celebration will remove the palls from the bread. After touching the bread, the celebrant will elevate the paten above her/his mouth during 'the Words.' The celebration will return the patens to the Altar, replace the palls before reverencing. In a like manner, the celebrant removes the pall, elevate the chalice in a similar height during 'the Words.' Celebrant will return the chalice to the Altar, replace the pall, and then reverence the Sacrament. At the point of the Epiclesis, the palls will be removed as the celebration extends her/his hands over the gifts and leaves them uncovered until the Great Amen. At that point, the palls are returned to cover the Blessed Sacrament before the final reverence and before the Lord's Prayer. At the Fraction, the celebration will remove the pall from the small celebrant host, elevate, and then fract. (This will be the host that the celebrant will communicate herself/himself.
13. For Holy Eucharist, the distribution of communion will go as follows. After the Fraction, the celebrant will remove the chasuble, replace the face mask, re-sanitize their hands and go out into the congregation to distribute the consecrated bread by going to each person as they remain in their assigned pew. The celebration will respectfully drop the host in each hand; not touching anyone else. At any time that there might have been cross contamination, the celebrant will re-sanitize their hands. After everyone has been communicated, the celebrant will return to the Altar, communicate themselves in both kinds. The Altar will be cleared.
14. The celebrant will then lead the Post-communion Prayer without a mask from behind the Altar. Give the Blessings from in front of the Altar. And finally give the Dismissal. At that point, the celebrant puts back on their mask and processes out of the church while music is

playing and goes to their office to devest. There is no line or greeting of worshipers. At this point the ushers will kindly usher each row of person out to the door; assuring that social distancing is kept, and the persons are not only leaving the building but also the church property.

15. After the church is empty, the ushers will secure the money in a Ziplock bag and locked up. It will be counted on Wednesday morning under dual-control with gloves and masks.

### Ongoing Worship and Other Online Ministries

1. We will continue with Zoom Bible Studies both at 2 pm and 7 pm on Wednesdays.
2. We will continue with Zoom Family Fun Friday's (Children's worship) at 5 pm on Fridays.
3. We will continue with Eucharist Eats and Entertainment
4. Contact the office for meeting information and details.

### Use of the Property

1. The renting of church space (at Holy or Grace) will be prohibited until further notice. That includes parishioners and outside parties.
2. Any vestry meetings that require in-person attendance will continue to adhere to all social distancing rules, according to CDC guidelines as well as those instituted by the rector.
3. All use of or visits to the property needs to be preapproved by the rector in writing and appropriately scheduled by the parish administrator.

### Pastoral Care

1. The rector will continue to give pastoral care as needed while still following proper CDC guidelines on all occasions.
2. In-person visits will be on an as needed basis, i.e. sick and dying visits. Face masks will be mandatory at all times and worn throughout entire visit. The 6 feet social distancing rule will continue to be enforced.
3. Baptisms will not be performed unless it is deemed an emergency situation.
4. The rector will be able to perform ministration at the time of death as long as the following protocols are adhered to and the safety of all parties are considered:
  - a. Anyone other than recipient of ministration at the time of death that has been exposed to COVID-19 is not permitted to be present in the room.
  - b. The rector and all others present, except for the recipient, must have their faces covered for the duration of the visit.
  - c. The process of anointing may or may not take place, pending the level of comfort and safety of the rector. If the anointing does take place, gloves will be worn by the rector.

## Cleaning supplies/Sanitary products

1. There will be 2 months' worth of cleaning supplies kept at each church property at all times and all sanitizing products will contain at least 60% alcohol content.
2. The following cleaning supplies will be held at each location. Inventory will be maintained:
  - a. Paper towels and/or cleaning rags
  - b. Clorox – multi-purpose cleaner
  - c. Clorox wipes or similar products that meet CDC standards
  - d. Lysol disinfectant spray
3. The following products will be made available to the congregations:
  - a. Facial tissues (stationed only in accessible areas)
  - b. Purell sanitize dispensers (motion sensor)
  - c. Disposable facemasks (bagged separately)
  - d. Single use, latex free, gloves (for usher use only)

## Outreach Ministries (Jesus Justice Ministries)

1. All Jesus Justice Ministries will resume according to the reopening schedule set by the rector and ratified by the vestry, provided that each group follows all cleaning requirements and safety procedures stated below.  
Ministries: Food Pantries, 12 step programs, Girls Friendly Society, Boy Scouts, yoga, and so forth.
2. All participants will be required to wear a facemask, covering their nose and mouth, from the moment of entry until the moment of departure. There will be no exception to this rule at any time. If this rule is not adhered to the group will immediately be suspended from use of the building.
3. Cleaning requirements are as follows:
  - a. The space utilized will need to be sanitized before and after the meeting takes place. This includes tables, chairs, door handles, and any tools/items used during meeting.
  - b. Any cleaning products used during sanitation are to be properly disposed of.
  - c. The use of the kitchen at both churches will not be permitted at this time.

*This plan is an ongoing document that will be adjusted and modified as needed.*

The vestry members of Grace Episcopal Church and the Incarnation

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Art Anderson

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Colleen Anderson

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Marianne Anthony, *Vestry Secretary*

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Jim Earl

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Mike Kelly, *Rector Warden*

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Robert (Bob) Saxton

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Anne Paul

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William (Bill) Marquett

The vestry members of Holy Innocents St. Paul's Episcopal Church

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Crucita Bermudez

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Isabel Burgos

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kathy Costello

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tim Forbes

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John Heller

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Evelyn Huber

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Leslie Marchuk, *Vestry Secretary*

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Katrina Nedby, *Senior Warden*

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Luis Rivera, *Junior Warden*

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Richard Thompson, *Treasurer*

The rector of  
Grace Episcopal Church and the Incarnation  
&  
Holy Innocents St. Paul's Episcopal Church

\_\_\_\_\_  
The Reverend Brian G. Rallison

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Date