



Greetings everyone,

We are very excited to share with you some updates to our COVID procedures at St. James' Episcopal Church, Clinton, NY.

As some of you may be aware, the Right Rev. DeDe Duncan-Probe, Episcopal Bishop of the Diocese of Central New York, has given permission for each parish to adopt COVID safety procedures that they feel are appropriate as long as they comply with the CDC guidelines and NY State mandates.

We at St. James' are deliberately moving slowly and carefully into the new period of rising vaccinations and falling COVID cases. The Mohawk Valley currently has one of the lowest vaccination rates in the state and it is our goal to be as hospitable and safe as possible, to carry out the Episcopal Church's motto of welcoming all while also caring for all. We will continue to make our worship services accessible through Zoom for those who are unable to attend in person. We encourage everyone inside the church building to wear their mask, in order to protect the vulnerable, including children and anyone who cannot be vaccinated.

Our goal is to offer hybrid services (in person along with live streaming) for both the Saturday 4pm and Sunday 9:30am services as soon as possible (we currently alternate hybrid services). In order to make that happen, we need volunteers to help set and clean up the altar, hospitality ushers at the church, as well as digital ushers and Zoom hosts. Training is available for all of these positions and the more folks we have willing to help, the sooner we can provide two hybrid services each week.

As of June 19, 2021 here are the steps the Vestry approved and adopted:

- * You will not need to pre-register to attend any service.
- * For Sunday services during the summer, Minister of Music Richard Lloyd and the choir will continue to provide recorded music for hymns and other music.

+Communion procedures:

+ + John and the Lay Eucharist Minister assisting him will wear masks during distribution of communion.

+ + When partaking of the Eucharistic, each attendant has the option of

A. receiving the host only for communion,

B. receiving the host which Fr. John has dipped in the wine (intinction); please take the host from Fr. John with your fingers (not in your palm).

(According to Episcopal theology, receiving the host alone, or both the host and wine, equally conveys the full Eucharistic presence of Christ.)

For OUTDOOR services:

- * People attending an outdoor service have the option of wearing masks, regardless of vaccination status.
- * As much as possible, we will maintain 6 feet physical distancing between households.
- * Outdoor snacks and drinks will be permitted.

For INDOOR services:

- * People attending an indoor service who have been fully vaccinated (2 full weeks after the final injection) have the option of wearing masks.
- * People attending an indoor service who have not been fully vaccinated are required to wear masks.
- * As much as possible, we will maintain 6 feet physical distancing between households.
- * During communion, we will continue to proceed to the chancel area from the center aisle, returning to the pew via the outside aisles, keeping 6 feet from other households.
- * People wearing masks may now sing in the church building.

We welcome your questions and concerns as we continue to provide worship that is sacred and safe for all. As conditions warrant, we will monitor and update our procedures.

We would like to continue to thank the Regathering Committee (Patricia Jue, David Hermann, Ted Johnson, Mark Linderman, and Kate Marquardt) for their prayerful and research based recommendations.

God bless each of you.

Father John Crosswaite

Wardens Karen Anderson and Kathy Collett