

July 8, 2020

Dear friends,

After much discussion and in conversation with other churches and clergy around us, your senior warden Danielle Troncelliti and your Vestry have created this plan for re-opening.

You will see that in-person worship St. Gabriel's will resume on **Saturday, July 18**, provided it is still safe to do so.

I'm excited to begin worship together again in person, but it's important to know that our worship services will look very different than they did when we last gathered in March, as you'll see in the plan below. These adjustments, while inconvenient, are essential for keeping everyone as safe as possible.

If you are not feeling well on a particular Sunday (have fever, cough, shortness of breath, muscle aches) or if you are in a high-risk population, please do **not** attend in-person services at St. Gabriel's. You can make use of our services online (which will still be broadcast on the St. Gabriel's [Facebook page](#)), or you can always reach out to me if you have pastoral concerns.

Thank you to our Senior Warden, Danielle Troncelliti, for her leadership and work in helping to craft this reopening plan. Thanks also to all those who have helped lead virtual worship by offering readings, prayers, and songs. Finally, thanks to everyone in the St. Gabriel's community for your patience, support, and prayers during this time.

If you have questions as you look through this plan, feel free to reach out to me by phone (610-385-3144) or email (andrew@stgabriels.us).

With love,
Andrew

St. Gabriel's, Douglassville Plan for Re-Opening

Summary

We will begin holding in-person services, starting **Saturday, July 18**, at our regular summer worship times. Based on attendance and ongoing developments with COVID-19 cases, we will reassess in mid-August, and we may add or remove services.

We had originally planned on worship outdoors for a time, but the oppressive heat makes that option difficult, so we will gather for worship indoors.

Plan Details

1. Where will we worship?

We will gather for worship at our usual locations and times.

- 5:00 pm on Saturday - 1801 Chapel (Rite II - contemporary language)
- 8:00 am on Sunday - Main sanctuary (Rite I - traditional language)
- 10:00 am on Sunday - Main sanctuary (Rite II - contemporary language)

Note that the later Sunday service begins at 10:00, not 10:30, for the summer. We are asking for volunteers each week to *sanitize* the sanctuary between the 8:00 and 10:00 services. If you are able to do this, please stay around after the 8:00 service or arrive at 9:15 if you are planning to attend the 10:00 service.

For the time being, we will *not* hold Sunday School for children, youth, or adults on Sunday morning.

2. How will worship look different?

There are several ways worship will look different for the foreseeable future.

- Everyone is *required* to wear a *mask* on the St. Gabriel's property, indoors and outdoors. Please bring masks if you have them, and we'll hand out masks if you don't. If you are medically unable to wear a mask, we ask that you please stay home and worship with us virtually
- Everyone will be *required* to *sign in* with an usher when you arrive. This is a requirement not only by our diocese but by our state government, so that we can conduct contact tracing if someone contracts the virus

- We will not offer Eucharist/Communion for at least several weeks. Our service will be the Liturgy of the Word, which ends after the Peace
- No *handshakes* or hugs during the Peace (except between family members)
- No *singing*. Research tells us that singing is one of the most effective ways to spread the virus. We will have music at all services (except the 8:00 am service), provided by Phoebe, Jake, and/or one or two vocalists. During these musical pieces, we encourage parishioners to hum along to the music and vocalists
- No *prayer books or hymnals*. The whole service will be printed on one-time-use recyclable bulletins
- No passing of the *offertory plate*. There will be a plate set on a table in which you can drop offerings. Alternatively, you can...
 - Mail in your offering
 - Set up a bill pay system through your bank to mail in checks regularly
 - [Give online through the St. Gabriel's website](#)

3. What precautions will you take to make sure everyone is safe?

In addition to the above measures, everyone will stay *six feet apart* from non-family members. Some pews and chairs in the sanctuary will be taped off to facilitate this distancing. Our ushers and vestry members will enforce these guidelines, so please cooperate with requests that are made of you.

We also ask that you only enter St. Gabriel's by the *side door* (leading to offices and classrooms, under the red awning that reads "St. Gabriel's Parish Life Center"). This will help us keep track of how many people are in the building, provide opportunities for everyone to use hand sanitizer, and ensure proper distancing. Please do not arrive more than 20 minutes before the start of the service, so that ushers can make sure they are ready to receive you.

To help keep our space clean, our cleaning service will continue to come in and sanitize during the week.

If you do contract COVID-19 and you have attended a worship service, please call Sally at the church office immediately (610-385-3144) to help us contain the spread.

4. I'm not ready to return to church. Can I continue worshiping from home?

You sure can. We'll continue streaming worship services on the St. Gabriel's Facebook page as a permanent measure.

5. What about outside groups that meet at St. Gabriel's?

For now, outside groups are not permitted to meet inside the building. A couple of Twelve-Step programs have begun meeting in the parking lot, which they are welcome to do, in conversation with St. Gabe's.

This policy for outside groups will continue until at least August 1, when we will hopefully have a better sense of how worship is working. We will require all groups to clean and sanitize their meeting space after use.