



A Way Forward

A Pastoral Letter

We face a great challenge. Many lives have already been lost; many more are ill. And although the rate of infection seems to have plateaued in Kentucky, experts predict that the virus will continue to spread. This has produced anxiety and concern for the well-being of those we love: family, friends, and neighbors. The pandemic has also shone a light on many limitations in our economic, social, political, and ecclesial systems. And yet, I see hope. I see innovation. I see mutual care. I see spiritual renewal. I see God with us making the impossible possible.

In this time of Covidtide, we have had to re-imagine how to live out our vocation as God's Church. In part, our distinctive voice challenges those who seek to avoid the reality of suffering and death with the paradoxical message of lament and hope. The Easter proclamation of Christ's resurrection gives us both clarity and purpose. God calls us into a new and manifestly changed life. Now, we have a wonderful opportunity to re-member afresh. Bishop Sean Rowe said, "normal is our history, not our future." There is no going back to some ideal way of life as the gathered Church. Instead, we must take seriously Christ's call to become a community of people who help one another live out their whole life as followers of Jesus who are fully engaged in God's Mission to put the world right again.

The following guidelines are not exhaustive. Every day we are learning more about the biology of this virus and discovering new and innovative ways to respond. Nonetheless, I hope that these guidelines will assist you as you pray, examine, discuss, imagine, and plan together as a faith community. I invite you to consider all aspects of our life together as Church: Worship, Ministry, and Mission, as you make your plans and continue to live out your faith.

The guidelines will evolve as we learn more from science and our own experiments in working out how to Be the Church in a time of pandemic. Your plans will play an important part in this learning process. Once you have completed your plan, send it to Mission House, care of bkibler@diolex.org. Each plan will be collated and sent out for collegial review and mutual learning. After the plans are returned to Mission House, I will give my consent for you to move forward. The process is deliberate, dynamic, and collegial. Remember, we must anticipate that this challenge may last another 12, 18, or even 24 months.

We know that change can be very uncomfortable, and not all will agree with your decisions. Please be gentle with each other. All of us are grieving and feel out of balance. Take time to listen and respect all voices. Make room for those who are sometimes not heard and celebrate with joy the grace of God at work among you.

Many of you, may choose not to gather in-person at this time. Our Faith Communities have many parishioners who are in high-risk categories and would be left out of what should be a joyous return to in-person, public worship. Our actions will also directly impact the health and well-being of our friends, families, and neighbors. We have a responsibility to our wider community, as Covid-19 disproportionately affects those with disabilities, communities of color, the elderly and essential workers, and their families. It is hard to imagine placing our rich liturgical heritage into the limited confines of these guidelines. It is a difficult choice.

As St. Paul told the faith community at Thessalonica, who also faced great challenges:

“Therefore, encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing. Be at peace among yourselves... Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you... The one who calls you is faithful.”

1 Thes 5:11-24

+Mark

A Way Forward

These guidelines are based on the recommendations of the Government of Kentucky, the Center for Disease Control, the Kentucky Council of Churches, and several Episcopal Dioceses.

*They shall be used to guide planning **A Way Forward** in each Faith Community of our Diocese.*

A Summary of Diocesan Guidelines

1. "Love the Lord your God... Love your neighbor as yourself." There is no commandment greater than these." Mark 12:30-31 This is our starting place. It is vital that our decisions demonstrate our love of God and family, friend, and neighbor in Christ Jesus. Do not be afraid, God is with us.
2. In this chaotic and volatile time, the key question is not when but how we continue to be the Church. Our new understanding that the 'church has left the building' frees us to respond to the Holy Spirit in new and creative ways as we join in with God's Mission to put the world right again.
3. The dispensation from the obligation to attend Holy Eucharist on Sundays and Holy Days continues until further notice. Anyone who is sick or living with someone who is sick should stay home, as should anyone who feels vulnerable for other reasons. Faith Communities offering live streamed and recorded worship should continue to do so and should communicate those options for those who cannot be physically present. For Faith Communities unable to offer services online, please direct parishioners to the listing of services at <http://diolink.org/diolex/index.php/church-at-home/>
4. After submitting a plan to Mission House that has been collegially reviewed by peers and consented to by our Bishop, Faith Communities may once again have public gatherings for weekday services, pastoral services, and Sunday services – so long as health and diocesan guidelines presented in this document are followed. Please remember that if infection rates increase, you will need to return to the previous season.
5. Permission is granted to hold outdoor services or drive-in parking lot services on your property. Faith Communities able to do so are strongly encouraged to consider this option, weather permitting. Physical distancing also applies to these events. Do not provide drive-through services only to receive Holy Communion, nor send the sacrament through the mail.
6. Further guidance will be provided about the process for receptions and confirmations.
7. Use discretion in resuming visits to the sick and homebound and in the distribution of Holy Communion to these individuals. Policies in place at hospitals and other facilities are to be followed at all times.
8. Continue to utilize virtual meeting technology. If in-person meetings are deemed essential, follow the health guidelines provided.

General Health Guidelines¹

1. Promote healthy hygiene practices

- a. All parishioners must wear a cloth face covering or mask at all gatherings in the building, except children aged less than 2 years old or some individuals who have trouble breathing or need assistance to remove their mask.
- b. Provide adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer), tissues, and no-touch trash cans.
- c. Post signs on how to stop the spread of COVID-19 and promote everyday protective measures, such as washing hands and covering coughs and sneezes and properly wearing a face covering.
- d. Encourage at-risk populations to continue to worship at home (people over 65 or with compromised immune systems).

2. Intensify cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation

- a. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at least daily and shared objects between use.
- b. Avoid use of items that are not easily cleaned, sanitized, or disinfected.
- c. Ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants and keep them away from children.
- d. Ensure that ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows and doors, using fans, etc. Do not open windows and doors if they pose a safety risk to children using the facility.
- e. Take steps to ensure that all water systems and features (for example, drinking fountains and decorative fountains) are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown to minimize the risk of Legionnaires' disease and other diseases associated with water.

3. Require physical distancing

- a. Limit the size of gatherings
- b. Keep physical distance guidelines and do not exceed current Diocesan Guidelines.
- c. Consider holding gatherings in a large, well-ventilated area or outdoors, as circumstances allow.
- d. Space out seating for all who do not live in the same household to at least six feet apart (radius); consider limiting seating to alternate rows.

4. Train all staff and volunteers

- a. Train all clergy and staff in the above safety actions. Consider conducting the training virtually, or, if in person, ensure that physical distancing is maintained.

5. Monitoring and Mitigation

- a. Check for signs and symptoms of illness of all who gather.
- b. Any clergy, staff, or parishioner who is sick should stay at home.
- c. Identify an area to separate anyone who exhibits COVID-like symptoms during a gathering and ensure that children are not left without adult supervision.

¹ Adopted from the CDC Interim Guidelines for Communities of Faith, May 8, 2020.

- d. Establish procedures for safely transporting anyone who becomes sick at the facility to their home or to a healthcare facility.
- e. Notify local health officials if a person diagnosed with COVID-19 has been in the facility, and communicate with staff and parishioners about potential exposure while maintaining confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or other applicable laws in accordance with religious practices.
- f. Inform those with exposure to a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to stay home, self-monitor for symptoms, and follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop.
- g. Close off areas used by the sick person and do not use the area until after cleaning and disinfection; wait 24 hours to clean and disinfect to reduce risk to individuals who are cleaning. If it is not possible to wait 24 hours, wait as long as possible before cleaning and disinfecting. Ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants and keep disinfectant products away from children.
- h. Advise sick staff and parishioners not to return to the facility until they have met the CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation.

6. Maintain healthy operations

- a. Implement flexible sick leave and related flexible policies and practices for staff (e.g., allow work from home, if feasible).
- b. Monitor absenteeism and create a roster of trained back-up staff. Designate a staff person to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. Employees should know who this person is and how to contact them.
- c. Communicate clearly with staff and parishioners about actions being taken to protect their health.
- d. Check state and local health department notices daily about transmission in the community and adjust operations accordingly.
- e. In the event a person diagnosed with COVID-19 is determined to have been in the building and poses a risk to the community, it is strongly suggested to close, then properly clean and disinfect the area and the building where the individual was present.

Detailed Considerations

Season One: Healthy at Home

Worship

- All worship should take place online or by alternative means (email, physical mailings, etc) in communities where access is an issue.
- Funerals and weddings must be limited to 5 participants.

Ministry

Pastoral Care and Christian Education:

- Buildings are to remain closed to the public.
- Connect with every member and pay special attention to those who are elderly, ill, unable to get out easily, or have limited resources.
- Inform your members how to communicate with clergy and the church office.
- Encourage online fellowship groups and formation.
- Stop in-person visits to hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and prisons.
- No in-person pastoral visits to member's homes should be conducted.

Mission

Social Outreach:

- Limit the number of volunteers, as possible.
- Ensure youth volunteers have written permission from parents or guardians that specifies the type of work being done and the groups encountered.
- Ask guests being served not to enter the building.
- Provide resources and referrals for addiction/mental illness/domestic abuse.
- No group should physically meet in our buildings.
- Inform groups of meeting alternatives and provide local/national referral numbers.

Peace and Justice:

- Inform members of our faith communities of avenues for the promotion of peace and justice issues in the absence of in-person meetings:
 - Episcopal Public Policy Network
 - Episcopal Relief and Development
 - Episcopal Migration Ministries
 - Local peace and justice advocates

Evangelism/Communications:

- Respond to new contacts through social media.
- Make your social media public and unrestricted (with rare exceptions).
- Publicize times of online events.

- Share Zoom links privately and/or use Zoom's privacy features to prevent "Zoom bombing" and other security breaches.
- Keep all websites and social media up to date.
- Post links to important outside information, such as Bishop's messages, diocesan announcements, and information from the Presiding Bishop/Episcopal Church.
- Consider creative ways of engaging with your online audience, such as posting short videos of your ministries or member testimonials telling how their faith supports them in a time like this.
- Invest when possible in technology such as video equipment, conferencing and communications software, and online giving platforms.

Summer Camp at The Cathedral Domain:

- All in-person programs are canceled in accordance with diocesan and governmental guidelines.

Season Two: A Time to Prepare

Worship

- Continue with online-only worship (or your alternative, as in Season One).
- Consider recording worship and prayer services in the church with appropriate distancing and safety guidelines.
- Pastoral offices may continue with 10 or fewer in attendance (weddings, funerals).

Ministry

Offices, Buildings, and Grounds:

- In preparation for the return to using our buildings, organize cleaning teams and volunteers in addition to cleanings by the custodian.
- Post signs indicating COVID-19 symptoms and urging people to stay home/seek medical attention if they have symptoms.
- Clean the building regularly and between uses, paying extra attention to high-touch surfaces.
- If you become aware that someone in the church or a building user has been infected with COVID-19, put your Communication Plan into action, and cooperate fully with contact tracers.
- Church buildings will remain locked to non-staff.
- Continue to make plans for a gradual return.

Pastoral Care and Christian Education:

- Small groups should continue to meet online.
- Keep office functions as limited as possible to ensure essential operations; use safety guidelines.
- High-risk individuals should continue to shelter in place.
- Continue online formation.

- Continue member contact plans (phone trees, newsletters, etc).
- Hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and prisons will continue restricting visitation.
- If you become aware that someone in the church or a building user has been infected with COVID-19, put your Communication Plan into action, and cooperate fully with contact tracers.
- Promote online donations to food banks and other relief efforts.

Mission

Social Outreach:

- Make plans to expand your outreach work.
- Continue to ensure you have adequate supplies (PPE, cleaning and sanitizing, etc).
- Volunteers will need to be trained on all safety protocols.
- Keep all groups who use your facility informed of changing protocols and procedures.

Peace and Justice:

- Inform your faith community and wider community of peace and justice activities.
- Seek support for your work from your faith community.

Evangelism/Communications:

- Communicate why you are not yet open by stressing love of neighbor.
- Consider additional ways you can connect to visitors.
- Promote evangelism opportunities in your community.
- Consider how you will continue online worship as we begin to offer in-person gatherings. Here are some questions to consider:
 - Is your current setup for recording online worship suitable for when people return to the worship space? Can you maintain adequate physical distancing during recording? If you are pre-recording on a different day, is continuing that sustainable/desirable/necessary, or do you need to switch to recording your Sunday in-person service?
 - Does it make sense to shift to a rota system for online Sunday morning worship? (i.e. churches would rotate the responsibility of Sunday morning broadcast to reduce the burden once we begin to reintroduce other responsibilities for clergy and staff)
 - To what degree has digital ministry become an important part of a new reality for churches? Do you value the continuation of digital communications past the lockdown period? Is this realistic for your faith community in terms of staffing and other resources? What would enable you to sustain this ministry if it is of value to you?
- Communicate new guidelines and procedures for in-person gatherings.
- Plan how to receive first time visitors when our churches resume in-person worship.
- Review your emergency plan.

Summer Camp (The Cathedral Domain):

- No summer camps will operate this summer in the traditional manner.
- Instead, we will offer a "Domain at Home" program (primarily for younger campers); campers will receive a package from the Domain containing items for crafts, projects, and activities.

- The Domain will use social media in a creative way to offer virtual hikes, teachings from clergy, and journal prompts.
- The Domain will hold periodic Zoom meetings with campers according to age group.
- We will consider offering abbreviated camps for juniors and seniors in late July-early August (if safe).
- We will consider offering physically distanced hiking for families.
- We will consider offering to rent tents and cabins for family retreats.

Season Three: A Way Forward

Worship

Note: Infections could increase again, requiring us to revert to the guidelines of a prior season.

1. For all in-person worship²:

- Continue to live stream worship services when possible.
- If appropriate and possible, add additional services to weekly schedules to maintain physical distancing at each service.
- Limit the sharing of frequently touched objects, such as worship aids, prayer books, hymnals, religious texts and other bulletins, books or other items passed or shared among parishioners (encourage parishioners to bring their own, if possible); consider photocopying or projecting prayers, songs, and texts using electronic means.
- Encourage people to enter via one door and exit via another door.
- No congregating should be permitted in any locations.
- Households or individuals should sit at least 6 feet apart in all directions. Assist this effort by roping off 2 pews between each available pew. Long pews at least 10 feet in length? One person may be able to sit at either end make it obvious where people are being asked to sit, and where they should not sit. Blue painters' tape may assist in this effort and not damage the pews.
- Consider if the nave is the best place to have in-person worship. Might the parish hall, or the yard outside, weather permitting, be more feasible to follow guidelines?
- Consider which method of sharing the text of the liturgy is best for your faith community. Some possibilities are sharing the entire liturgy on a screen, having single use bulletins that are already placed in pews that will be recycled after one use (not handed to them, or placed in a pile at the entrance to avoid physical contact), invite people to bring their own BCP with them to worship, and take it back home with them.
- Congregational singing and choirs are not permitted at this time. See section below for considerations regarding speaking, singing, and playing instruments.
- Do not have physical passing of the peace; rather, bow, wave, make the peace sign and/or acknowledge those around you without moving from your space.
- The offering plate should be placed on a table, not passed in the service; encourage continued/additional online giving. Some faith communities are using dipjar.com with a kiosk in a safe and large open area.

² Thankfully borrowed from the Episcopal Dioceses of Texas and the 4 Dioceses in Michigan, as well as St. Paul's, Clarence, NY

- Develop a plan for dismissing congregants in an orderly way to ensure physical distancing as people exit.
- Empower your ushers to remind participants about these guidelines and requirements.
- At the conclusion of any service of worship, clergy should not stand in the doorway to greet departing people.

2. Singing, speaking, and playing instruments in worship³:

- Singing together, even from a distance, is one of the riskiest behaviors due to the spread of aerosol and droplets that can carry the virus a significant distance and remain suspended in the air. A cloth mask is unlikely to protect you or your neighbor. More information can be found at the National Association of Teachers of Singing website (https://www.nats.org/cgi/page.cgi/article.html/What_s_New/NATS_co-presents_important_webinar_with_significant_reach_and_impact).
- Similar caution applies to unison speaking, such as reciting the Lord's Prayer and other communal speech.
- Playing a wind instrument initiates a spread of aerosol and droplets and poses a strong risk of infection.
- Consider how church musicians can best be supported financially and otherwise during this difficult time.
- Feature instrumental music and find other ways for worshipers to participate; for instance, clapping, moving in rhythm, or using small percussion instruments.
- When and where it is safe to do so, feature music from soloists or small ensembles, with the congregation praying through attentive listening.
- Use online worship opportunities and soloists or small ensembles to teach and learn new songs from the hymnal or other sources; have a song of the week or month and invite worshipers to sing it at home.
- Encourage members to order hymnals to keep and use at home, especially if they must continue to worship at home for some time.

3. Additional guidelines for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist⁴:

- Our Anglican understanding of the Eucharist is that it is a sacrament of thanksgiving and praise undertaken by the whole people of God, not an act performed by ordained people for the benefit of the laity.
- Limit the number of people gathered at the table during the celebration of Eucharist; do not use acolytes at this time and Deacons should stand 6' from the altar.
- Celebrants should use hand sanitizer or wash with soap and water immediately before the Eucharistic prayer.
- Only share communion in one kind – wafers.
- Wafers should be used instead of bread and distributed in such a fashion that requires the least amount of physical contact.
- Sanitize or wash hands before the distribution of communion.

³ Thankfully borrowed from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/returning-to%20In-person-worship.pdf?_ga=2.7716658.1630327717.1589378048-1302143999.1589378048&fbclid=IwAR1spjGHMYAwKIHPUD9UE1g4idYmkBSS6SJo2PvYrb8onV5K-GDm3BEukpA

⁴ Thankfully borrowed from the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe

- It is recommended that the bread be placed in a ciborium that is covered with a purificator during the Eucharistic prayer.
- The celebrant, after breaking the host, should consume it entirely; it should not be part of the distribution.
- Clergy should wear masks and gloves when distributing communion.
- Ensure that those receiving communion maintain appropriate physical distancing. Consider forming a single line down the center of the nave, with people standing at least 6 feet apart rather than kneeling at the altar rail.

Holy Baptism:

- Baptisms may be conducted in ways that observe guidelines on gatherings. Infants should be presented by members of their household living together. The parents, and not the priest, should hold an infant being baptized. A shell, cup, or other instrument should be used for the sprinkling of water.

Funerals:

- We encourage our clergy and lay leaders to continue to pastorally support a family in mourning while maintaining, as much as possible, recommended physical distancing and handwashing measures. Pastoral support via phone or video are very appropriate. If the deceased is cremated, the family may wish to wait to have the funeral until public gatherings are advisable. If waiting is not appropriate, we recommend holding the office of the Burial of the Dead (without Eucharist).
- The number of people should be limited by current guidelines.
- When it becomes advisable to hold public gatherings, a Memorial Eucharist can be held for the deceased.

Weddings:

- If you have a wedding scheduled, please give the couple the options of postponing the ceremony or bringing their witnesses for a private ceremony.
- The number of people should be limited by current guidelines.
- If the couple chooses to have a small ceremony, a larger celebration of their marriage can be scheduled for a date when public gatherings are advisable.
- Encourage your congregation to look out for their neighbors.

Ministry

Formation Guidelines:

In-person formation might begin with small groups, but online formation should continue. Encourage staff and community members to protect their personal health.

- Follow all the health guidelines posted above.
- Consider where is the best place to have in-person formation classes. Might the parish hall, or the yard outside, weather permitting, make it more feasible to follow guidelines?
- Remove items that would be easy to touch and necessary to clean between groups.
- Consider the method of sharing the text in the small group. Some possibilities are:
 - sharing the entire formation offering on a screen

- having single use sheets that are already placed in chairs that will be recycled after one use (not handed to them, or placed in a pile at the entrance to avoid physical contact)
- invite people to bring their own Bible with them for Bible study, and take it back home with them

Pastoral Care:

Follow the above Formation guidelines as appropriate for these rites.

- Hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities and prisons continue to limit visitors.
- Prepare to pastorally deal with people acting out or ignoring protocol.
- It may be that we experience a second wave and need to temporarily return to more assertive forms of distancing.
- Remind people who are ill to stay at home in order to recover.
- Remain in contact with those who may be vulnerable or quarantined to ensure that they have their spiritual, social, and physical needs attended to.

Offices, Buildings, and Grounds:

- Office functions could resume while maintaining physical distancing and wearing masks.
- Clean and sanitize the office, paying particular attention to high-touch surfaces.
- High risk individuals should continue with telework.
- Consider onsite temperature/health checks and employee testing.
- Consider alternating days for employees to work in the office to allow for physical distancing when space is limited.
- Close common areas (no break rooms or cafeterias).
- If you become aware that someone in the church office or a building user has been infected with COVID-19, put your Communication Plan into action, and cooperate fully with contact tracers.
- Going forward, it is possible that a person may expose the office staff and members to the COVID-19 virus. If that happens, those gathered will be asked to return a 14-day quarantine.
- Groups must be limited by appropriate physical distancing. Obtain names for possible contact tracing.
- Avoid gathering in common areas.

Mission

Social Outreach:

- If the number of people entering the facility will be limited, decide how and by whom those limits will be imposed/enforced, and post signs at entrances stating those limits.
- All participants are required to wear masks and continue to wash hands upon entering the building.
- Temperatures will be taken of everyone entering the building.
- Ensure that furniture and seating has been positioned to allow the required minimum of 6' between each person.
- Sanitize all surfaces after each use.
- If bathrooms are available, decide who will ensure that they are sanitized after each use.

AA/NA, 12 Step Programs, Group Counseling, etc:

- Make sure those who are overseeing these gatherings are aware of state and local limits on the number of people permitted to gather, and post those limits at the entrances.
- Decide who will enforce these limits.
- Decide who will provide supplies such as masks, sanitizing supplies, paper towels, tissue, wipes, trash bags, etc.
- Ensure you have a plan for professionally sanitizing your building in the event there is an active case of COVID-19 in your facility.
- In the event someone contracts COVID-19 or encounters someone who has tested positive, ensure you have a plan for communicating with your community and anyone who may have come into contact with that individual, while remembering privacy and pastoral care.

Peace & Justice:

- Small gatherings exercising appropriate physical distancing are now permitted.
- Invite those from outside our faith communities who have shown interest in our activities to any small group meetings.
- Invite those outside our faith communities who have shown interest to a small bible study related to concerns of faith and justice.

Evangelism/Communications:

- Ensure all information is shared digitally (website, social media, e-news, etc.).
- Consider an 'inquirers'' class for those who have shown interest in our communities.
- Consider making visits to or otherwise contacting those who have shown interest, while observing proper physical distancing.
- Post all needed signage and procedures in buildings as people begin to re-enter our spaces.
- Use newsletters/e-news, indoor/outdoor signage, and websites/social media to communicate regularly to both internal and external audiences about plans and procedures for resuming in-person worship, as those are likely to be dynamic in response to local and regional trends in infections.
- Do your in-house plans need to change for producing bulletins, in format and/or quantity, to reflect safe guidelines around handling worship materials?

Season Four: Most Restrictions Lifted

Worship

With vaccines and herd immunity in place, worship and formation may begin to look something more like it did in a time before COVID-19. As time passes in Season Three, we will have more emerging information for worship in Season Four.

Ministry

Pastoral Care:

- There will be some availability to visit health institutions and prisons.
- Larger groups are allowed.
- Continue to address the needs of the high-risk individuals, the sick, the quarantined, and the vulnerable.
- Continue to address the needs of those who rely on community meals by offering alternate forms of support when outreach programs are cancelled.

Mission

Social Outreach:

- Be vigilant about following health and governmental regulations.
- Continue with hand washing, sanitizing, use of masks, gloves, hair nets, etc.
- Clean all surfaces and equipment after each use.
- Keep to non-physical greetings (no hugs, shaking hands, etc.).
- Maintain proper distancing, especially for vulnerable individuals.
- Be mindful of notifications of return of COVID-19 or other health issues, taking proper action as recommended by health officials.
- Continue to make outside groups aware of faith community policies.
- Ensure that posters and notices regarding health issues and policies are visible.

Peace and Justice:

- Larger gatherings are now permitted, but safety practices should always be a consideration.

Evangelism/Communications:

- Normal work should return with an emphasis on healthy practices.
- Continue to use newsletters/e-news, indoor/outdoor signage, and websites/social media, to communicate regularly to both internal and external audiences about policies and procedures.
- If your church is thinking more expansively about worship, ministry, and mission, how can you support those initiatives with communication, both internal and external? How can the diocesan Communications Office support you in that communication?

Finance and Stewardship: Guidance for All Seasons

Stewardship:

- Establish and publicize online giving. If you do not have online technology, contact Melanie at Mission House to have your community added to the “Donate” page on the diocesan website.
- Ask your membership to keep their pledge up to date or to make a gift to the church.
- Encourage members to tithe their stimulus check.
- Continue to support outreach. Direct action may be limited at this time, so one way forward may be to collect and donate funds to agencies equipped to meet critical needs with the lowest risk to the greater community.

Finances:

- Keep accounting and financial records up to date.
- Practice accountability when spending church funds.
- If you don't have a designated church administrator, keep a log and receipts; find someone who likes to keep track of the details and use a tracking system such as Quicken or Microsoft Money.
- Begin to think prospectively; most financial reports are historical, that is they give information about what has happened in the past month or quarter.
- Identify the financial needs for the next 60 to 90 days and draft a cash flow report that outlines expected revenues and expenses; this will help the vestry make decisions about spending and borrowing should that become necessary.
- If your faith community needs or wants assistance from the diocesan Financial Swat Team, don't wait; contact Mission House before you run out of funds.
- Review your current budget; some planned expenditures may not be needed during Covidtide, which will make funds available for additional expenditures for cleaning services and supplies, hand sanitizer, paper towels, etc.
- Set and rank spending priorities; that is, decide what expenses get paid first when cash levels are low.
- Invest when possible in technology that supports the mission and ministry of your faith community such as video equipment, conferencing and communications software, and online giving platforms.
- Save expenses where you can; to reduce the cost of utilities, analyze building usage and close off areas that will not be used (now that the weather has moderated, turn heating units off and set AC thermostats at 80 degrees, turn off the lights when a room is not in use).

Additional Resources

CDC Guidance for Community and Faith-Based Organizations:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html>

KY COVID-19 Resources:

<http://kycovid19.ky.gov>

KY Dept. for Public Health Phase 1 Guidelines for Houses of Worship:

<https://lexingtonhealthdepartment.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Healthy-at-Work-Reqs-phase-1-Places-of-Worship.pdf>