

September 22, 2020

Dear Atonement Friends,

I trust that this letter finds you and those you love safe and well, and despite all that has happened, confident of God's grace and love for you. There has been much uncertainty and loss during this pandemic. Yet, we have also been inspired by the courage of many first responders and essential workers -- treating, caring, and serving.

It's been a long time since we've been able to worship God together in person. I've missed that. I have enjoyed seeing and praying with many of you on Zoom and Facebook Live, in Private Communion, and through worship videos. I know that some of us don't feel ready yet to venture out to church. And there are some who are more than ready. Thanks to many of you who have taken our member survey.

So, we believe that it's right for us to return to worshipping together at Atonement, knowing that not everyone will choose to do so at this time. As we gather again, we will be following the Bishop's directives and state and local guidelines concerning safety protocols. In order that you will know what steps you will need to take to participate, and what to expect at services, please read this entire email. We also want you to know that we are working on new technology that will allow us to stream and record our services -- so that anyone who doesn't yet feel comfortable returning to church in person will be able to participate. A big "thank you" to our new Worship Team and our Technology Team, for their ministry.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact one of the wardens or me.

Faithfully,

Lynne

Prior to the service:

- To ensure social distancing at the service, we must limit the number of people who can attend to 25% capacity. Consequently, you must contact the office no later than Friday at 3:00pm to register for a Sunday service. You must provide your name and contact information and the name and contact information of all family members attending with you.
- If we reach capacity for the service before you can register, we will advise you and ask if you would like to be informed about a possible second service in the evening.
- If you fail to register in advance, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to admit you to the service because we may be at capacity. If we are not at capacity, we will gladly welcome you. You will need to give the usher your name and contact information.

- Prior to the service you will receive a bulletin by email. If you are able, follow the bulletin/order of service on your own electronic device. Or print out and bring it with you to the service. A few printed copies will be available for any visitors. Please take any paper bulletins home with you after the service.
- If you are going to need handicap access, please advise us when you register.
- Please do not attend the service if you have any of these COVID-19 symptoms: chills, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.

At the service:

- An usher will be at the door of the church to ensure that everyone can maintain social distancing entering the service.
- An usher will take everyone's temperature using a contactless thermometer. No one will be admitted to the service with a fever (temperature above 100.4 F).
- An usher will be in the church and will show people to their seat. The pews will be marked for 6-foot distances and there will be two empty pews between occupied pews. People who live together may sit together.
- The service of Holy Eucharist will be abbreviated to approximately 45 minutes in length.
- When Holy Communion is distributed an usher will release people by pews so physical distancing can be maintained. Communion will be received only in the form of the wafer and at the rail standing, not kneeling. As always, you may choose not to receive Communion.
- When the service is completed the usher will guide everyone to exit the church one row at a time starting with the back row.

- If you need to leave your seat during the service for any reason, please make sure you go directly out the rear exit of the church and re-enter using the same doors. An usher will ensure that you can safely return to your seat.
- You must wear a mask throughout the service. If you do not have one, one will be provided to you. Remove your mask briefly at the altar rail to receive Communion. Those leading worship will also be wearing masks.
- At this time, neither the congregation nor the choir may sing. There will be music, however, i.e. a prelude (beginning before 10 a.m.) and postlude, a chanted psalm and/or a solo.
- There will be no hymnals or prayer books in the pews. Please feel free to bring your own copy of *The Book of Common Prayer* but do not share it in worship with anyone outside of those in the same household.
- Social distancing will be maintained at the Peace.
- The restrooms will be available for use, one person at a time except for members of the same family. In addition to washing hands, please wipe every surface touched with an alcohol wipe, which will be provided, including the doorknob.
- The water cooler will not be available. Feel free to bring your own water in a reusable container.
- There will be no coffee hour, but you may bring your own beverage to enjoy outside with others, while maintaining a six-foot distance from non-family members. However, please do not gather with others unless you can maintain social distancing.

Please remember:

- Follow the guidance of the ushers.
- When you're in church, and if you receive Communion, it's likely that you will be visible briefly while the service is being live-streamed, and in the recorded service.

- Pay attention to all signs.
- **While every effort will be made to keep people safe, there is no way to eliminate the risk of infection.**
- If you are tested positive for COVID-19 within 14 days after attending a service, please contact the parish office immediately.