

REOPENING PROTOCOL

(as of 10/1/2020)

Holy Communion Church

Purpose of this Document

In response to COVID-19, this document is intended to provide consistency and clarity in the structure for church reopening, as well as prove compliance with Oregon Health Authority Guidelines for Church Gatherings.

The document provides guidance for the following four areas:

1. Definitions
2. Biblical Response
3. Worship Services (Mass) & Other Ministry
4. Facility Sanitization

1. Definitions

Face Masks: The Oregon Health Authority requires face masks or face shields to be worn at all in-door gatherings. This document will refer to face masks and face shields as **face masks**.

Vulnerable members: People with weakened or compromised immune systems or those with comorbidity (two chronic diseases or medical conditions.)

Social Distancing / Physical Distancing / Close-Contact: The Surgeon General, CDC and the Governor of Oregon strongly recommend we keep social distancing (a 6' buffer between people) at all times. We have adopted a similar phrase that has the same meaning but allows us to continue to stay connected. At HCC we will use the phrase **physical distancing**, rather than social distancing. The return to Mass will likely result in members wishing to come in **close contact** with one another, which should be avoided except in family parties.

Illness/Sick: Those who are not feeling like their "normal" healthy self. Symptoms that warrant consideration of worshipping "at home" vs "in-person" include but are not limited to fever, cough, upset stomach, nausea, flu like aches, loss of sense of taste or smell, etc...)

2. Biblical Response

- We will comply with the Oregon Health Authority requirements regarding faith gatherings. We believe respecting the authority of our Government leaders' guidance pleases the Lord (Romans 13:1-5) and allows for us to be promoters of peace and unity rather than division in our community.
- We want those who are a part of our Church family (and their guests) to feel comfortable with their timing and their level of re-engagement without any pressure. As Christians, we are to consider others above ourselves. Romans 12:10 is instructive: "Be devoted to one another in love. Excel at showing respect for each other." (ISV)

3. Worship Services (Mass) & Other Ministries

- Prior to September 29, worship services have been conducted online only, livestreamed on Facebook and through the church's website.
- As of September 29, we will be offering in-person 12 noon Weekday Masses twice weekly. An in-person Weekend Mass is planned to begin soon after.
- The Sunday 9 am LIVESTREAM Mass will continue to be offered.
- Bible Studies and other opportunities will be offered via Zoom.
- Currently, because of the need for physical distancing, there will be no access to church fellowship and office areas.

Protection of Vulnerable Members

Those with weakened or compromised immune systems or those with comorbidity are strongly encouraged to stay home and participate in livestream Mass until Phase 3 (vaccine, etc.). Volunteers in the vulnerable category are asked not to serve until Phase 3 is achieved as well. Those who are ill are encouraged to do the same until they are well and healthy once again.

Worship Service (Mass) Elements at HCC

Worshippers are alerted of the following protocol both by signage on church windows and doors and by a handout every person receives as they enter the church for Mass.

FACE MASKS: The wearing of face masks is required in Oregon at all in-door gatherings. All who come to worship are required to wear a face mask while inside the church facility.

HAND SANITIZER: A hand sanitizer station is located at the entrance to the sanctuary. Worshippers must use the hand sanitizer as they enter and as they exit the sanctuary.

SEATING: Rows are set 6' apart. Family parties must be seated allowing 6' between each family party. Combining family parties is not permitted.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION: Worshippers are to remain in their seats for Communion distribution. Wearing a face mask, the priest will bring the host to the people as they remain in their seats. He will sanitize his hands before and not touch anyone while distributing. If an accidental touch happens, Fr. Jim will cleanse his hands with a disinfecting wipe which he will carry with him.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING: We ask all worshippers not to cluster with other worshippers in any area of the facility, both indoors OR in the parking lots. They are asked to keep 6' physical distance.

RESTROOM USE: Signage outside and inside the restrooms will ask each user to use the provided sanitizer spray and wipes to clean all surfaces which have been touched.

PROPER HYGIENE: According to the Oregon Health Authority, worshipers are to avoid touching their face. If they cough or sneeze, they are encouraged to cover their mouth with a tissue and to throw away the tissue and cleanse their hands immediately.

OFFERING: An offering box has been mounted on the wall at the front entrance. Worshipers are asked to place their offering in the box as they enter or exit the church.

OFFICE AND FELLOWSHIP AREAS: The fellowship and office areas of the facility will not be open to the public during or following Mass times.

Volunteer Ministry Teams

Ministry teams such as greeters and ushers are typically in close contact with church members. Until further notice these volunteers will not engage in any physical contact which can make church members feel uncomfortable or render them unsafe. A simple wave and a friendly greeting is sufficient to welcome people into the church. Even if our volunteers feel comfortable greeting with a handshake or hug, it may make others uncomfortable.

Facility Sanitization

The facility will be sanitized after every worship gathering. This will include the foyer, sanctuary and restrooms – all spaces where worshipers have been for the Mass.

The HCC Council is prayerfully trying with our congregation members, to navigate these uncertain times. We desire to create a safe and welcoming atmosphere of worship for our members and guests. As we engage with the re-opening our church, we will be entering a new world filled with challenges but also filled with opportunity to impact our community with the love of Jesus.

If you have any questions or concerns, we encourage you to reach out to us.

Approved unanimously September 26, 2020

HOLY COMMUNION CHURCH COUNCIL

Philip Young, President

Mike Marr, Vice President

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