



March

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

775-358-4474

www.StPaulsSparks.org

The Rev. Kirk A. Woodliff, Rector

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Sunday Worship Information

10:00 a.m. Sundays on ZOOM

8:00 p.m. Wednesdays on Facebook

Details can be found under the online worship tab at www.StPaulsSparks.org.

If you would like Holy Communion during worship, please call the church 775-358-4474.

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
(1135 12th Street)
P. O. Box 737
Sparks NV 89432

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

Place Label Here

Monthly Update: When Will We Open?

It is with great hope that I write this update on our status for reopening. What I ask of you first, is to read the following letter *and* requirements issued to us from the Diocese.



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF NEVADA

Together we can change the world.

February 25, 2021

Dear Friends in Christ,

Thank you so much for your patience as we worked out these new guidelines regarding reopening. As you know, Governor Sisolak put out new statewide guidelines that significantly reduced the COVID related restrictions in Nevada. We, like you, are very anxious to get back to gathering as a worshipping community. We are also still acutely aware of the dangers of this virus AND the deadly variants that are ravaging the country and the world. This is not over. Nevada still ranks low regarding to vaccine availability and distribution. Nevada still ranks high in regards to infection rates. We are not at the end of the road and there are miles yet to go.

Additionally, many Nevada Episcopalians have already been infected by this virus. Unfortunately, that does not mean that they are immune. Antibodies only stay in the blood of an infected person for a short time. The length of time is unknown, but one study found that they were completely gone after 73 days (or two and a half months). After that, the patients were back to being just as vulnerable as someone who had never had the virus. Previous infection is not the same as a vaccination and it does not mean that person is immune. Of course, you have the choice to get vaccinated or not, but we, as leadership, urge you to consider it when you are eligible. It can protect you and your community. Every person vaccinated brings us closer to some semblance of normalcy.

Which brings us to the conversation about reopening. We agree that it is time for clergy to consider if their parish can reopen. Below you will find the new requirements and a list of suggestions. It is the responsibility of the cleric in charge at your parish to decide what is appropriate going forward, within reason. There are some ongoing mandates from the Chancellor and myself that we expect you to abide by. These are minimums. Please consider more conservative capacities and spacing. Please hold services outside if possible. Please consider doing Eucharist less frequently or not at all. Please consider holding off on meeting in person at all.

Once you have decided what your congregation will do for safety and what limits you will set for yourself (i.e. positivity rates, number of active cases, number of available hospital beds, etc.), please notify the Diocese (office@episcopalnevada.org) that you are planning to reopen and how you plan to do so. Please also let us know what these limits are for you. If you are already holding services, please let us know what your limits are as well. This information will help us stand in solidarity with you and hold you accountable if hard decisions need to be made.

If you have any further questions or if you would like assistance putting together a plan that works for your community and parish, we are here to help. Stay healthy. Stay safe. You are precious and loved.

Stay Awesome,

Maggie Davidson

President, Standing Committee

Kathleen Bliss

Chancellor, Diocese of Nevada

Diocesan Requirements for Reopening

10% positivity rate or less in your community

Reservations for attendance at every service

1 hour service limit

No more than 35% of fire marshal's capacity (only with ample ventilation)

10 feet spacing indoors and 6 feet spacing outdoors

Ongoing regular cleaning and disinfecting

Masks worn AT ALL TIMES (from the parking lot to church and back)

Ample availability of PPE and hand sanitizer

You shall not exceed State/County guidelines

Stop services if someone who has attended service contracts COVID-19. Notify the Diocese immediately. Resume in-person meetings no sooner than 14 days later.

Suggested by the Diocese

Outdoor services instead of inside

25% capacity or less

Double masking

No Eucharist

Reduced number of people serving (i.e., using only one lector)

From the Pile on Fr. Kirk's Desk...



So, what does this mean for us concerning in person worship?

Currently the numbers in Washoe County allow us to gather for in person worship. This could change however, since as I type, the numbers in the county are on the rise.

Here is how we are going to proceed.

We will continue to offer worship that is accessible online. The format may or may not stay the same, time will tell, but rest assured that you will continue to be able to worship with us online.

I encourage you to pray about the timing of your return to in person worship. If you have any hesitation, I suggest you continue to gather with us online for now.

If you feel that you will have a hard time following the guidelines set for us by the Diocese, then I suggest you pray a little harder about whether it is time for you to return to in person worship. **If you can't follow the guidelines**, i.e., wear a mask over your nose and mouth from the time you leave your car until the time you return to it, then please join us online. If you can't remain 6 feet away from others, then please join us online. It will be stressful on our volunteers who will ask you to follow the guidelines, followed by me asking you to leave and to tune in online.

Our first outside in person worship service is scheduled for Easter morning, April 4th.

The time of this service has yet to be set.

Also know that due to Washoe County infection rates, the weather, or some other unforeseen circumstance, this in person service could be canceled and moved solely to Zoom.

What do we need from you?

1. **Pray:** Please pray about if coming to an outside in person service is the right thing for you to do.
2. **Make a reservation:** You **MUST** make a reservation and receive a confirmation from the church office. To make a reservation, email Robin@StPaulsSparks.org or call 775-358-4474. Your reservation is for the people in your "bubble", that is, for the people who live under your roof, or who is in your bubble by other means, i.e., you currently hang out in doors with this person in such a way that you are already sharing each other's air, germs, cooties, etc.
3. **Bring your own chair:** If possible, arrive to worship with your own "lawn chair". If you don't have your own, you will be provided with a metal folding chair. These chairs will have to be cleaned following each use.
4. **Follow the guidelines:** If you make a reservation, you are agreeing to following the guidelines, which include wearing your mask over your mouth and nose the whole time you are on the property, including walking in the parking lot, and you agree to maintain a distance of 6 feet between others that are not in your bubble. That means no hugging, no handshakes, no fist bumps, etc.
5. **Building access:** The only access of the church building will be for use of the restrooms. (You might want to park closer to the garden gates.)
6. **Kindness first:** You agree to be kind, without complaint, knowing that everyone is doing the best they can to provide a meaningful worship experience in the safest possible manner.
7. **Worship times:** There may be multiple worship times on this day, but maybe not.

We can't at this time reserve a specific time. If you don't get the time slot you prefer, please remember that you have already agreed to be kind.

8. **Illness or known Covid exposure:** If you feel ill or if you have contact with someone who is, please stay home and join us on Zoom. We WILL take your temperature before you are escorted to your seat. If you don't like your seat, remember that you have already agreed to be kind.
9. **Childcare:** There will not be childcare offered at this time.
10. **Cancelation:** If the in-person service gets canceled, it will have been done so out of love. And please remember, you have already agreed to be kind.

Worship Ministries

As you know, Fr. Kirk wiped the slate clean last year, leaving us without any worship leaders which also wiped away any stress or concern we might have been having about meeting our worship ministry responsibilities.

This also gives everyone a chance to step away from previous ministries and possibly try some new ones. Currently, we are NOT recruiting for all previous ministries. We are however recruiting volunteers for the following ministries that are needed for outside in person worship. Each of these ministries are open to all members, no matter of age, gender, etc.

Greeter: Those in this ministry will welcome people when they arrive, remind them of social distancing guidelines, confirm reservations, direct people to the hand sanitizer, supply a mask to those who left theirs at home, take everyone's temperature with a touchless thermometer, and direct the usher where to seat everyone.

Usher: Will show people to their seating area to ensure distancing guidelines are met, distribute bulletins, supply metal chairs if needed, disinfect used metal chairs, collect the offering during the service and secure it afterward, direct people to an exit in an orderly fashion at the end of the service. This ministry requires at times the wearing of protective gloves.

Lector: Those in this ministry will read the scriptures and prayers of the people during worship.

Altar Guild: Those in this ministry will set up the mobile altar outside as well as other things needed for worship.

Livestream and Audio Team: Those in this ministry will set up and monitor the computers, cameras, and sound equipment needed to livestream the worship service on Zoom or another online platform. They will also set up and take down the outdoor sound system. Training will be given, though members of this ministry should be comfortable with computers.



Sr. Warden Report

Senior Warden's March 2021 Epistle Article

I wanted to let you all know how excited I am to be part of the Vestry again. I am honored to serve as Senior Warden.

This will be a very busy time for us. As you know, we received directions for reopening the church a few weeks ago. The Vestry is prayerfully considering what needs to be done to make this happen. We very much want the experience to renew and refresh parishioners. Please bear with us as we work through all the guidelines to safely meet.

I want to thank each of you for remaining constant and faithful during this unprecedented time. I know it has been difficult.

Margaret Bouzek
Senior Warden

Holy Week Worship

Please confirm the following details online at StPaulsSparks.org.

Palm Sunday, March 28

10:00 a.m. Holy Communion on *Zoom*

Wednesday, March 31, Tenebrae

Any time after 6:00 p.m.

Facebook and YouTube

Maundy Thursday, April 1

6:00 p.m. Holy Communion on *Zoom*

Good Friday, April 2,

Stations of the Cross,

Any time after 12:00 p.m.

Facebook and YouTube

Good Friday Liturgy, 6:00 p.m.

6:00 p.m. on *Zoom*

Easter Worship

Easter Vigil, Saturday, April 3

8:00 p.m. Holy Communion on *Zoom*

Easter Sunday, April 4

Outside in person and *Zoom*: Holy Communion

Time(s) and location to be announced

In person worship requires a reservation.

Please read this newsletter for details.

What is Holy Week?

From early times Christians have observed the week before Easter as a time of special devotion. Jerusalem contained many sacred places that were sites for devotion and liturgy. Pilgrims to the holy city worshipped as they followed the path of Jesus in his last days. From this beginning evolved the rites we observe today. These services provide a liturgical experience of the last days of Jesus' earthly life, as well as the time and events leading up to his resurrection. Holy Week ends at sundown on the Saturday before Easter with the celebration of the Easter Vigil.

Palm Sunday

The Sunday before Easter at which Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem is recalled. The observance of Palm Sunday in Jerusalem was witnessed by the pilgrim Egeria in about 381-384. During this observance there was a procession of people down the Mount of Olives into Jerusalem. The people waved branches of palms or olive trees as they walked. The liturgy of the palms is the entrance rite for the service. The congregation may gather at a place apart from the church and

process to the church after the blessing of the branches of palm.

Tenebrae (Wednesday evening)

This form of the monastic office (matins and lauds) moves from light and darkness and is structured around psalms, readings, and responsories. The distinctive ceremonial of Tenebrae includes use of fifteen lighted candles. One candle is extinguished as each of the fourteen appointed psalms is completed. The fifteenth candle, symbolic of Christ, is left lighted at the end of the final psalm but it is carried away to be hidden, which signifies the apparent victory of the forces of evil. A sudden loud noise is made at the end of the service, symbolizing the earthquake at Christ's death. The lighted candle is then restored to its place, suggesting Christ's eventual triumph.

Maundy Thursday

The Thursday in Holy Week. It comes from the Latin *mandatum novum*, "new commandment," from John 13:34. The ceremony of washing feet was also referred to as "the Maundy." The liturgy for Maundy Thursday provides for celebration of the eucharist and a ceremony of the washing of feet. Following this, the altar is stripped, and all decorative furnishings are removed from the church.

Good Friday

The Friday before Easter Day, on which the church commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus. The liturgy includes the reading of the Passion gospel, a solemn form of intercession known as the solemn collects (dating from ancient Rome), and devotions before the cross (commonly known as the veneration of the cross).

Easter Vigil or Great Vigil

The liturgy intended as the first (and arguably, the primary) celebration of Easter. The service begins in darkness, sometime between sunset on Holy Saturday and sunrise on Easter and consists of four parts: The Service of Light; The Service of Lessons; Christian Initiation (Holy Baptism) or the Renewal of Baptismal Vows; and the Eucharist.

Easter Day

The feast of Christ's resurrection. According to Bede, the word derives from the Anglo-Saxon spring goddess Eostre. Christians in England applied the word to the principal festival of the church year, both day and season. 1) Easter Day is the annual feast of the resurrection, the pascha or Christian Passover. Faith in Jesus' resurrection on the Sunday or third day following his crucifixion is at the heart of Christian belief.