



The Messenger

July 2020

Rector's Corner

Important News Regarding July 5th Reopening

The State of Illinois has recently moved into Phase 4 of its re-opening plan. In accordance with State, CDC, and Diocesan guidelines, we are now able to gather for in-person worship with a number of precautionary measures in place. We are by no means required to reopen, and we could just as easily revert to a previous phase in short notice. The Vestry met on Sunday, June 28th to discern Grace's plan for Phase 4 in-person worship. The following came out of said meeting.

First, after measuring the nave, it was determined that we can seat a maximum of 40 people at a service while still maintaining social distancing guidelines. This includes utilizing choir seating along with the baptistry and side-chapel if necessary. We have been averaging 60 people for our usual service. We have decided to split between an 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. service, with instrumental music at the 10:00 a.m. Both services will be a Rite II Eucharist. If you come July 5th, you will notice pews are marked off to reflect social distance seating and the ushers and I will do our best to guide you to a pew where you may sit with those in your household.

Second, masks will be required to be worn throughout the service, myself and readers included. Yes, they are hot, uncomfortable, and make it difficult to hear what is being said. Preaching with one on is no fun for me and I'm not too keen on being unable to see what faces you are making at me during the sermon. That said, for the sake of our sisters and brothers in Christ who will be sharing this worship space, we will be wearing them. It is the simplest gesture we can make in this time of pandemic to show our love for neighbor. There will be a limited supply of disposable masks on hand in the narthex should you arrive and realize you have forgotten yours. If wearing a mask is problematic for any reason, please stay home and catch the 10:00 service, which will still be streaming live on Facebook.

Third, Communion will be distributed in one kind, the bread. Our Eucharistic theology stipulates that this is still a legitimate reception of the sacrament. Rather than using the altar rail, I ask that you form a single-file line down the center aisle following the social distance markings on the carpet. Using tongs, I will drop the wafer into your hand. You may remove your mask long enough to consume it on your way back to your pew. Diocesan guidelines are very clear that the priest be the only one handling any of the vessels and refrain from directly touching the elements during consecration.

Chapter 4 – Miscellaneous: The Peace sadly must be non-contact, so practice your air-high fives or Queen Elizabeth waves. We will not be having coffee hour for the foreseeable future. My usual post-service greeting will be outside. Singing has been suspended, and Steve's article has more to say on that subject. There are hand sanitizer stations inside each door as you enter the narthex. If you are feeling ill, running a fever, or have been exposed to those who have tested positive for COVID-19, please stay home. Again, we will still be live streaming the services. If you are not comfortable returning yet, please let me know how I can be of service, be it a *Book of Common Prayer* for your home, delivery of

paper copies of the readings and sermon transcripts, etc. Please reach out to me. I know this must be a bittersweet pill to swallow; finally allowed to gather again in this holy space, but under less than ideal conditions. It is also little comfort to know that there is no phase to graduate to after this one except Phase 5 that has a vaccine in place. But the people of God have endured far greater challenges than this, and what we are doing in response to COVID-19 we do out of love for our parishioners and community, and respect for their safety. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me either via email or by calling the church where we are back in the office.

Peace,
Fr. Brian

The Core of our Faith

When a person becomes a Christian, he takes out a life insurance policy. But it is not a policy designed to insure one's own safety and blessings in heaven, but one to help those we love here on Earth. The basic motive of Christian living is not to insure ourselves against the fires of hell or to secure for ourselves the blessings of heaven. The primary motive is love — love for God and love for neighbor.

Grace Church Information

Holiday - July 3rd Office Closed

Building and Grounds Meeting Wednesday, July 8th at 1:00pm

Prall Family Vacation

The Pralls will be on vacation from July 20th to August 4th. We will be making our annual road trip out to the family cabin in the Adirondacks. I will not be securing a supply priest, as this region of the diocese is already severely limited, and I do not want them to have to learn our COVID-19 protocols on the fly. If there is anyone who would be interested in leading Morning Prayer for either the 8:00 a.m. or 10:00 a.m. services on July 26th and August 2nd, please let me know a.s.a.p. so I know whether or not we need to cancel.

Thanks,
Fr. Brian





July

4th Ann Elmer
6th Owen Helm
19th Martha Furst

5th Brian & Ellen Prall
11th Skip & Mary Lehnhard
Tony & Nicole Bolotnik
19th John & Elizabeth Woodward

Deadline for the August "Messenger" will be July 24th.

Music Notes from Steve

As we approach our first in-person worship services since March 8, I want the Grace family to know of the guidelines we must follow pertaining to music. These come not only from the healthcare community, but also via the framework set forth by the Diocese of Chicago, whose dedication to our safety and benefit has been constant all during the current crisis.

One of the more grievous prohibitions in our corporate life together will be a ban on singing, likely all the way until there is a reliable vaccine. Sounds unbelievable at first, but it's true. Evidence began to show early on that speaking and singing are highly efficient means for spreading the coronavirus on what medical professionals call "aerosols" – the unseen warm mist of breath. A now-infamous community choir rehearsal in Washington State became the first focal point for study. Meeting in the days of emerging caution around March 15, the singers refrained from hugging or touching and even suspended their usual post-rehearsal coffee social. Even amid those attempts at protection, 32 confirmed and 20 probable secondary cases were traced to the gathering, and the case against singing in the company of others has only grown.

For this reason, no one is to sing in corporate worship, not even a soloist, even in the presence of masks and social distancing. The congregation is not to sing along in any way (not even hum, at least that is the verdict for now.) Wind instruments blown with human breath also are prohibited. A sliver of good news: since the pipe organ draws its air in a space separate from the congregation, it poses no danger of recirculating germs and is therefore approved for use. Hallelujah! Other types of instruments also are fine, and the playing of previously recorded vocal and instrumental music offers expanded possibilities.

Among many expressions of our faith at Grace, worship is our foundation and music is an enduring signature of our joy. For me personally, the suspension of singing is a cause for deep grief. Some of my highest inspiration and satisfaction over 40-plus years as an organist has come through leading congregational singing, and innumerable moments of light have shone while teaching and leading choirs. Our Grace choir sorely misses time spent together, not only as a musical group, but also as a community of caring.

To paraphrase Queen Elizabeth's touching word that "We will meet again," I say with hope and belief that we will also sing again, all of us, together. For the time being, though, our communication with one another through music will rely on different means. Laura and I both look forward to greeting you in our beautiful church building as we all echo the sentiment of a great Charles Wesley hymn: "And are we yet alive, and see each other's face? Glory and thanks to Jesus give for his almighty grace."

Steve McMillen

Refresh my soul

It's so easy to get caught up in
this fast-paced, rapid-fire world and to forget
the peace that passes all understanding,
the love that casts out all fear.

So slow me down, Lord.

Steady me.

Infuse my life with harmony and calm
and refresh my soul in you.

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