



The Anglican Diocese of the Great Lakes
3810 Ridgewood Road, Copley, OH 44321

Updated Guidelines for COVID-19 Response
In ADGL Churches

May 27, 2021

Dear Clergy and Wardens,

Greetings in the strong name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

I write today to give updated COVID-19 response guidelines for the churches of our diocese. Throughout the pandemic, our bishops and Standing Committee have endeavored to serve our clergy and parishioners with compassionate, pastoral care and best practices that were in keeping with CDC guidelines and state health directives. In the same spirit, I am issuing the following guidelines per updated CDC guidelines ***as informed by your state/local health care directives***. Applicable local government mandates should be followed if they still require masks in public settings.

Masks and Social Distancing

Masks and social distancing are optional in our services and events for those who are fully vaccinated.¹ Masks and social distancing are recommended and may be requested (but not required) for those who have not been vaccinated, for their own health, and for the health of others, including our children. We ask that all in attendance honor these guidelines, but we will not ask anyone about their vaccination status.

Regular seating may be resumed for those who are fully vaccinated. Those who are not fully vaccinated may opt to sit there at their own risk. A suitable area of socially distanced seating should also be provided for those who are not fully vaccinated or others who choose to sit there.

I request that each church post the provided sign (or one like it) near the entrances of your building(s).

Hygiene and Cleaning Practices

We recommend that churches continue to implement strong hygiene practices (handwashing, use of hand sanitizer, etc.) and reasonable cleaning practices for the general health of our congregants.

Distribution of Holy Communion

You may choose to continue to distribute in one kind (bread only). Communion may be distributed in both kinds by observing the following directives. Observing careful, sanitary preparation procedures, the wine

- may be distributed in individual cups (purchased pre-sealed or hygienically prepared).
- may be distributed by clergy who intinct the wafer and drop it into the communicant's hand(s).

¹ Masks and social distancing can also be optional for those who have recovered from COVID-19 for up to three months. After that, please consult your physician. See www.cdc.gov for more information.

- may be distributed by previously placing a drop on the wafer prior to the eucharist.

I strongly recommend that the wine should not be distributed to communicants by having them drink or intinct from a common cup(s). Should you choose to use a common cup(s), you must also provide one of the three methods mentioned above.

Fully vaccinated clergy may lead worship without wearing masks. Unvaccinated clergy shall continue to wear masks when in close proximity to others or when celebrating the Eucharist unless they have permission from the bishop (based on a physician's recommendation due to a medical condition) not to do so.

These measures will be regularly reviewed and updated as deemed appropriate.

Pastoral Concerns

The parish clergy and vestry (mission council) know the local context of the congregation best. You should thoughtfully and prayerfully consider the state of those present as pertains to the known numbers of vaccinated/recovered congregants, presence of the elderly, children, and/or immunocompromised, and other pertinent factors when implementing these guidelines. ***Whatever guidelines you decide to implement should be agreed to by your rector and vestry/mission council.***

Should you have any questions about the compliance of the guidelines you implement with state/local health directives, be sure to consult with the appropriate agencies and your insurance provider.

All guidelines should be practiced in an attitude of Christian love and with mutual respect for one another's choices regarding their own health.

Thank you for all your efforts to lead your congregations well through the challenging months of this pandemic. The diocesan leadership continues to pray for you as you implement new COVID guidelines for your congregations. Let us all pray for God's continual healing grace and wisdom to be released until this pandemic is fully behind us and other nations that are still in serious crisis.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding these guidelines or directives, please feel free to contact me directly.

Your fellow servant,



The Rt. Rev. Mark Engel, Bishop, Anglican Diocese of the Great Lakes