

# Customary in the time of Pandemic

Updated 5 February 2021

*"This is how everyone will know that you are my disciples, when you love each other."* John 13:35 CEB.

These are extraordinary times. We are attempting to hold together our worshipping communities in ways which would be nearly inconceivable during the compilation of even our most recent *Book of Common Prayer*. What we do, we do for the love of God and the love for each other. Whatever caution we show is borne from a desire to live out that love by keeping our beloved neighbors safe. The Bible consistently advises us to *favor the vulnerable* and do right by them. In the context of our worshipping community, this will include certain sacrifices, including keeping our distance, wearing protective gear, and loving the most vulnerable in our midst in ways other than inviting them to public worship until it is safe to do so. We don't know how long that might be. It will be different - in some ways even painfully so. But (to paraphrase Thomas Merton) we believe that our desire to please God does in fact please God. As we take this next step in the way we worship as a community, we do so not on a journey back to the old way of "doing Church," but on our journey toward full communion with the one who made us, the one who bids us to love one another; the one seated on the throne who said *"Look! I'm making all things new."* Rev 21:25 CEB

Practically, we know that the COVID-19 virus spreads quickly and easily, particularly in droplets smaller than the eye can see. We know that it has disproportionately traumatic effects on the most vulnerable in our midst. Given these realities, everything we do is aimed at mitigating this spread. We don't look for ways around the rules, or ways to bend them, or special permissions from Church or governmental authorities, because we don't believe that these guidelines are arbitrary or unfair. Together, we must have in mind not the "letter of the law," but rather the "spirit of the law." We must keep our gatherings as safe as possible - not because the Church or the State or the County told us to, but because we are deeply motivated by our love for our neighbor.

*"This is beyond doubt a critical period in the history of our country, but I see no reason to despair... Let us be one and we shall not fall!"* from Kamehameha IV's speech on the day of his ascension, 13 January 1855

UPDATED 2/5/2021	<b>Phase 0 - no in person worship.</b>	<b>Phase 1 - In person with highest caution</b>
<b>Worship Space Preparations</b>	Zoom/ Facebook Live/ YouTube (live or recorded), etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Worship outside, space permitting!</b> (think through Audio/Visual needs).</li> <li>• Go in <b>ahead of time</b> and measure off your worship space (6 ft spacing, side to side, front and back), skipping rows as needed. This will provide the number of worshippers you can safely accommodate.</li> <li>• Mark 6-foot spacing lines with tape on the floor where lines for communion would form.</li> <li>• <b>Sanitize high-touch areas</b> and <b>disinfect</b> worship space before <b>and between</b> liturgies/uses.</li> <li>• <b>Sanitize</b> and <b>disinfect</b> vessels (chalice, paten, etc.) before <b>and between</b> liturgies/uses.</li> <li>• Wash vestments frequently.</li> <li>• Have extra masks available at entrance.</li> <li>• <b>Communicate</b> any new procedures with your congregation ahead of time.</li> <li>• <b>Post signage</b> about your procedures and expectations (especially the requirement of masks and social distancing) around your campus.</li> <li>• If possible, continue to share liturgy virtually for the more vulnerable of your community.</li> <li>• Clergy to possibly take on Altar guild duties, especially if the guild is composed of kupuna or those more vulnerable.</li> </ul>
<b>Liturgical Participants: Expectations</b>	<p>Best to use technology so participants do not occupy the same room.</p> <p>If in the same room, the <b>very few</b> participants should be very distant from one another and not share books, stands, microphones, seats.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limiting the size of the altar party is best. Invite kupuna to stay home and have younger acolytes (etc.) take part for now.</li> <li>• Masks <b>and</b> spacing (6-foot minimum). To be clear: we expect all people (clergy and lay) to <b>wear a CDC-approved mask over their mouth and nose for the entirety of their time in the building</b> (or at worship for outdoor liturgies).</li> <li>• Face shields are not an acceptable substitute for cloth face masks. The "CDC does not recommend use of face shields for normal everyday activities or as a substitute for cloth face coverings." <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html</a></li> <li>• No sharing of bulletins, hymnals, notebooks, etc.</li> <li>• Worship leading and readings from multiple locations with separate microphones best (microphones are important, especially considering masks are to be worn by all participants).</li> <li>• If greeting people as they exit, do with social distancing and without contact (ideally out-of-doors).</li> </ul>

<p><b>Gathering of the People: Expectations</b></p> <p>UPDATED 2/5/2021</p>	<p>Consider guidelines and resources on Diocesan Covid-19 page.</p> <p>Beware of “Zoom Bombing” Reach out to those who can’t join virtually.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage at-risk populations to stay home</li> <li>• While masked and practicing social distancing, vocal congregational responses may be made in a quiet voice.</li> <li>• <b>Masks</b> worn by all throughout the liturgy, including entering and exiting the worship space, which can be more crowded as people are funneled together.</li> <li>• <b>Limit worshiper numbers</b> to match lessened capacity with proper spacing (at least 6 feet). Don’t forget to leave some room for visitors. How much that effects your Church depends upon its context, given the congregational and worship space sizes. Some of our congregations have large worship spaces and small congregations and may easily fit everyone even with the new spacing. Some may need to allow for half the normal gathering, some perhaps will have to adjust even more. Ideas to mitigate the size of the worshipping body: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increase number of liturgies to spread out congregation (perhaps new times altogether so people don’t gravitate to “their” service)</li> <li>○ Ask regulars to attend every other week (A-M names on the first Sunday, etc.) for the benefit of the whole and to keep everyone safe.</li> <li>○ Some larger mainland Churches are giving out (free) “tickets” to minimize unsafe overcrowding.</li> <li>○ Asking for thoughtful cooperation ahead of time is better than needing some sort of “bouncer” or putting people at risk!</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Liturgical Notes</b></p>	<p>Morning Prayer (or Liturgy of the Word for Morning Prayer, as allowed by BCP) is preferred by our Bishop.</p> <p>If Eucharist is celebrated, avoid prayers that refer to “spiritual communion”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Music: choral (excepting very small, distanced groups, details in next point below) <b>and congregational</b> singing is suspended. Airborne particles can travel over considerable distance when singing, and masks minimize rather than eliminate the release of these particles. For more information, please see <a href="https://www.drheathernelson.com/singingandcovid19">https://www.drheathernelson.com/singingandcovid19</a> .</li> <li>• Musicians are permitted to perform, provided a minimum of a twelve-to-fifteen-foot distance between each of them and between them and the congregation is maintained. Combining these distances with physical barriers (such as a large plexiglass sheet or singing from the next room) is even better. <b>If County and State laws permit</b>, musicians may remove their masks while performing if these minimums (distance and barrier) are kept. These minimums also apply to any and all recording sessions. Vocalists in several of our congregations have already reported that singing while masked works well and is “no big deal” after a time of adjustment. Several businesses are starting to create masks specially intended for singers.</li> </ul>

UPDATED 2/5/2021

- While the Holy Eucharist is “the principal act of worship on the Lord’s Day and other major Feasts” (BCP 13), Morning Prayer or the Liturgy of the Word without Communion (as explicated in the BCP 406-7) may be used for public worship on Sundays at this time. Where Eucharist is shared, not all liturgies even in the same day need to be Eucharistic.
- Studies have shown that longer gatherings increase the danger of community spread. Consider ways to avoid longer liturgies (fewer readings, etc.).
- Processions are allowed; either in silence or to music played or sung by individuals not themselves in the procession.
- Kneeling is allowed, provided appropriate social distancing is maintained.
- Gospel book not to be passed from person to person.
- If allowed by County and State laws, a preacher separated by a barrier such as a plexiglass partition and a minimum of twenty-feet from the nearest person may remove their mask to preach in consideration of the hard of hearing – **not** in order to flout the rules. This should only be done if absolutely necessary as an act of hospitality – otherwise, solidarity with the congregation as a whole as well as their overall protection call us to preach while using a mask.
- **No physical contact sharing peace.** It would be a beautiful thing for people to bow reverently to each other, or in a playful atmosphere, one might shaka to their hearts’ content! If these changes are too difficult in your context, you may skip the Peace (as per BCP 360).
- Do not “pass the plate” for a collection. Encourage online giving and provide a place for people to leave their offering (calabash, etc.).
- All elements (both wine **and bread**) covered as much as possible throughout the Eucharistic Prayer.
- The words normally spoken during reception of the Bread and Wine (e.g. “The Body of Christ, the Bread of Heaven”) to be said to the assembly as a whole before distributing communion, and not spoken as people are receiving face-to-face to minimize risk (airborne particles are lessened, not eliminated, by mask use).
- Multiple communion stations can cut down on crowding, depending upon context.
- Avoid seating people on pew/row ends where communion lines will form.
- Distribute communion at floor level.
- Communion remains valid in one kind. Congregants have the option of receiving only the Bread (wafers) or only the Wine, and the offering of Bread (wafers) alone is authorized when preferred in your context at this time.
- Avoid contact when distributing communion – wafers “dropped” slightly into hands, not pressed into hands.

UPDATED 2/5/2021		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of home-baked bread is suspended. The use of wafers lessens personal contact.</li> <li>• Intinction ("dipping" the Bread into the Wine) is suspended.</li> <li>• Purificators must be changed out frequently so that same cloth is not wiping and re-wiping the chalice throughout.</li> <li>• If wine is offered (which is not preferred) communicants must not touch the bottom of the chalice as one might to help guide it normally.</li> </ul>
Other gatherings		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aloha/Coffee hour is temporarily suspended. Consider other means of (virtual) fellowship.</li> <li>• Other groups may meet in numbers approved by the State/County. Pay special attention to disinfecting/sanitizing before and after such gatherings.</li> <li>• Formation/Education opportunities must match the same criteria as worship in terms of mask wearing and social distancing. Length of engagements should be shortened. Virtual formation gatherings are encouraged.</li> </ul>
Baptism		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sponsors to maintain social distancing.</li> <li>• Only one baptismal group (one to be baptized and sponsors/family) to the general font area at a time.</li> <li>• Due to close contact for an extended period, the Celebrant is to add a face shield to the cloth mask they would already be wearing.</li> <li>• The Celebrant to sanitize their hands between multiple baptisms.</li> </ul>