

## Summary of “Re-Entry” Planning Task Force

In this time of pandemic we are especially compelled to observe our baptismal covenant – those promises made for us at baptism, and the promises we take on for ourselves when we are confirmed. In these promises we say that we will spend our whole lives learning to love ourselves and our neighbors, and to respect the dignity of every human being. In these uncertain and volatile days of COVID, our faith in Jesus, our love for one another, and our baptismal promises require us to do everything possible to ensure the well-being, physical safety, and health of ourselves, our church, and our surrounding community.

Trinity Vestry members Julie Campanelli and Margaret DiMarco, along with Laura Capaldini, Treasurer, and Devon Anderson, Rector, have met throughout the summer to develop guidance for Trinity on when and how we might resume meeting together in person for worship and for other communal activities. The group is guided by our desire to safely include all of our fellow parishioners and staff during a time of COVID19. We are committed to making decisions based on our spiritual values, scientific information and facts, and recommendations from our bishop, the Rt. Rev. Craig Loya, our county and state governments, and the national Center for Disease Control. Final decisions will be made collaboratively by the Vestry and Rector, with the Rector having final authority over worship and building use.

At the July 2020 meeting, the Vestry approved a **Trinity Phased Re-Entry Plan**, which follows phases laid out by the Diocese. Moving from phase to phase is determined primarily by:

1. Increases or decreases in the rate of COVID 19 cases both statewide and locally
2. The positivity rate of COVID 19 testing both statewide and locally (newly added metric introduced by the Diocese)
3. Availability of effective treatments and/or vaccines
4. Mandates for masks and physical (social) distancing

The plan includes many details for safe re-entry to our facilities. We carefully considered whether re-opening facilities would allow us to include ALL parishioners and staff in our collective spiritual life. The plan will be reviewed and revised over time to reflect changing circumstances.

A brief summary of the phases, based off the Diocesan Phases, are:

### **Phase 1.5: Current Reality – FALL 2020**

COVID 19 cases still expanding locally and nationally; local and state testing “positivity rate” above 5%; no vaccine or highly effective treatments; masks and physical distancing are the norms.

- The building remains closed except for occasional use by staff
- Staff mostly working from home
- Masks are required for building entry and any gatherings

- Small gatherings for high-need sacraments (funerals) available following state and Diocesan guidance
- All services, group meetings, youth gatherings, adult formation, etc. online only (currently in Zoom Format)
- Any outside gatherings follow strict masking and physical distancing guidelines

### **Phase 2.0: Regathering in Person (Limited) – 2021?**

Reduction in COVID cases in numbers for 45 days on a seven day average; local and state testing positivity rate of 5% or less; greatly increased testing and contact tracing; continued adequate hospital capacity

- Clergy and staff may return to the building but may work from home
- Small group worship is permitted in person if strict distancing is followed and at reduced capacity from normal
- Those 65 or older and those with chronic health conditions should not re-gather
- Continued availability of on-line delivery of most services, religious education, and meetings
- Strict protocols in place for distancing, hand-washing, masking, and safe preparation of limited areas of the church when in use
- No communion or any sharing of meals or food

### **Phase 3.0: Increasing Participation - Future**

At this time, negative COVID 19 spread, mass vaccination available, mass testing for virus and immunity, and lifting of state-mandated physical distancing

- Clergy and staff return to work at church
- Worship Services resume with some restrictions
- Formation/education programs resume in person or remain online based on the needs of the target population
- Possible continuing restrictions on music, communion, and physical contact when in person

### **NEXT STEPS**

Groups are forming to work on the following tasks:

- Communications: Sharing our plans with the congregation, updating the website, signage outside the church (“We are open – online!”), Fall activities brochure, keeping in touch with all parishioners
- Evangelism: Spreading the word of Trinity’s activities to others in the community, developing new members
- Engagement: How to keep parishioners involved – such as Connect Team, Adult Formation, Music Team, Outreach and Social Justice, Youth Groups, etc.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** contact any member of the Task Force or Devon Anderson, Rector. Full copies of the Task Force Report are available upon request.