

St. Peters AME Church Reentry FAQs July 2021

Is it safe for houses of worship to resume some form of in-person gatherings?

Yes. The CDC and the State of Minnesota have lifted many restrictions relative to Covid-19, including in-person church services. Many churches in the Twin Cities have resumed in-person services for several months. If health conditions change, in-person services may again be interrupted.

Are there limits on how many people can be gathered in the building at one time for churches?

The State of Minnesota has lifted restriction limits regarding the number of worshippers for services. Proper social distancing is still required. Individuals and family units will be required to maintain a minimum 6-foot distance from others. The Trustee Board will lead the effort to map out spaces for individuals and families in the sanctuary.

In addition, a plan has been established to route foot traffic and designate separate doorways for entering and exiting the building. All instructions for movement and physical distancing will be communicated in advance and instructional signage will be posted throughout the facility.

What steps will be taken to monitor and screen members and visitors for COVID-19?

Congregants' temperatures will be taken before they enter the St. Peters sanctuary with a noncontact thermometer or thermal imager. They will also be asked to enter their contact information in a church ledger. **This information will be used for contact tracing purposes only.** Any individual with a temperature of 100.5 degrees Fahrenheit or higher or who exhibits signs of illness will be denied entry. If an individual is diagnosed with COVID-19 after attending a St. Peter's worship service, she/he should immediately notify the church and local health officials. If/when this occurs, the church will perform contact tracing and may result in the suspension of in-person services for a period of time.

Will the building and bathrooms be disinfected?

Currently, the church sanctuary is the only part of the facility that will be open to members and visitors. The sanctuary and designated bathrooms have been cleaned in accordance with CDC guidelines. These areas will be cleaned before and after every usage.

Should masks be required with limited in-person indoor worship services?

Yes, masks or other face coverings will be required for all people to ensure the greatest amount of safety for all people. Children younger than 2 years old or anyone who has trouble breathing and cannot wear a mask should not attend in-person services until all restrictions can be safely lifted.

What precautions regarding shared objects and surfaces are being taken during in-person indoors worship services?

Houses of worship have been advised to avoid any shared objects or surfaces. Worship aids, prayer rugs, prayer books, hymnals, religious texts, bulletins, books, or any other item that multiple people could touch will be removed from spaces where members visit. Any regularly touched objects or surfaces will be disinfected after each use.

How will communion be served to keep everyone safe?

St. Peters will provide disposable single-use elements kits. Hand-sanitizing materials will be placed throughout the sanctuary. Congregants will be asked to dispose of the containers in a marked receptacle on their way out after the worship service.

What are the guidelines for receptions (graduations, weddings, funerals, etc.) held at the church?

Receptions and other gatherings in the church building are not available at this time.

What are the protocols for bulletins during St. Peters' services?

To help ensure maximum safety, no paper bulletins will be handed out during the service at this time. Paper bulletins are mailed to members. The service program can be viewed online at the church's website(<https://www.thestpeters.org>).

How can we safely maintain tithing during the COVID-19 pandemic?

You can utilize the virtual tithing platforms on the church website at <https://www.thestpeters.org>.

For those unable to use online giving, you may send tithes and offerings to:

St. Peters African Methodist Episcopal Church 401 E. 41st Street, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55409