



Simple COVID Protocols through January 31, 2021

Approved by the CCA Vestry November 19, 2020

Preamble By Fr. Marc -

The number of COVID infections in Chatham County has now passed the 10,000 mark, with the most recent death to COVID being a 20-year old male with no underlying conditions.

For me and many of the staff, the virus has hit close to home: a friend and collaborator of Mark Williams who was integral in assisting him with the building of our digital organ died from COVID on November 16. Many of us continue to pray for our friend and colleague, Ron Parrish, assistant pastor at IPC, who struggles for his life in ICU at St. Joseph's.

After a difficult but important conversation at Parish Council re: how to respond to the current COVID dynamic and having had an equally heart-felt and helpful exchange with the staff today (November 17), I am proposing the following be approved by the Vestry as a simple summary of COVID Protocols through January 31.

Markings & Signage – We will clearly mark spaces for families and/or other “units” with paint on the Whitefield lawn for our 4 p.m. services. We will also use tape and/or other delineators to encourage 6 feet of spacing when individuals get in line to receive Communion. The State directed COVID disclaimer will be in place at the entrance to the building (for 8 and 10:30 a.m.) and the sidewalk entrance to the Whitefield Center (for 4 p.m.), according to the guidelines issued by the State.

Entrance/Exit Guidance – The Rector will stand at the front of the nave (at 8 and 10:30 a.m.) to assist ushers in reminding entering worshippers to exercise social distancing, not only as a courtesy to fellow worshippers, but also in obedience to our Lord's command to “love your neighbor.” Prior to the closing blessing, the Celebrant will remind worshippers to exit the building immediately after worship, practicing social distancing in the process. Fellowship and conversation may take place outside on the church lawn and sidewalk.

Aerosol Dispersants – Singing, a significant contributor to aerosol dispersants, will be allowed outdoors only. There will be no singing at any indoor service or gathering. This includes soloists. The first two pews in front of the pulpit will be marked as closed, as projected voices put forth significant aerosol dispersants as well.

Masks – The latest studies show masks help protect not only those around the individual wearing the mask, but the individual him/herself. Masks will be required at all indoor worship, and strongly recommended at outdoor worship. Outdoor worshippers who interact with others closer than 6 feet for more than 10 minutes are expected to wear masks. There are different understandings re: the effectiveness of wearing masks. We ask that you abide by this protocol out of compassion for others, even if it does not agree with your convictions.

Every non-worship event sponsored by CCA will take into account these Protocols and provide clear guidance (either written or verbal) that is in accordance with these Protocols as adapted for the specific event. If there is any question re: the application of COVID Protocols for a non-worship event, they are to be directed to the Rector who will make the final determination, in consultation with the Wardens, where necessary.

Under no circumstances whatsoever will anyone displaying COVID-like symptoms be allowed to engage in worship or any other church activity in person. Such individuals will be invited to worship online or with our recorded worship offerings.

These Protocols will be in effect starting November 22 and will remain in effect until January 31, unless otherwise amended by the Vestry.