Regathering Plan
Policies and Procedures to Facilitate Regathering for Worship on the Cathedral Grounds and Inside the Building During the Ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic.

Revised October 21 2020
A Message from the Dean

“The Episcopal Church Welcomes You,” is our denominational tagline, and I am so proud to be a part of an institution that has this as a core value. I am also proud of the fact that when the Pandemic hit in March we demonstrated our resilience by reinventing church across the whole country in a single day. Now I am proud to be a part of the careful and thoughtful process of returning us to in person worship.

It is our desire to return to in person worship as safely as County and Diocesan guidelines allow. It is our desire to return to in person worship incrementally, so that we can test our approach and adapt it as we go. It is our desire to listen to your feedback and incorporate it into our policies and practices. As such this is a living document, that will adapt as time moves on and we learn more. We are going to start with a set of safety assumptions based on County and Diocesan Guidelines. As these evolve so will our practices. We will also adapt our practices based on feedback.

We are living through unprecedented times and we want to be a part of rebuilding the fabric of our community. This work is going to be hard, and sometimes unsatisfying, but ultimately it is full of hope. Please be understanding as you read this document and engage in our re-gathering activities that this is being offered with good intentions only, and that restrictions you read about here are designed to create a safe space for us to be together. If you think anything is overly cautious, talk to me, the Dean, or any members of our re-gathering Team. You will find their names below in the introduction to this document. Please assume good will, it is the most effective tool we have for navigating this difficult moment.

Thank you for being a welcoming community. We want to welcome you back to in person worship, but we want to do so in the right way. This is our best assessment of how to do that.

Love,

The Very Rev. Matthew Woodward+
Dean of Trinity Cathedral, Sacramento

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Executive Summary

The following plan goes into great detail, but we wanted to make sure that the salient points could be appreciated in a single page of writing.

We have decided to open the Cathedral gradually and incrementally, taking into account County and Diocesan Guidelines and our capacity to implement new welcoming and cleaning arrangements.

We will decide what specific plans will be a month at a time. As we open the Cathedral to regathering there is always a chance that we will have to move backwards in our plan if COVID-19 infections rise significantly and the County requires us to return to greater restrictions.

Online worship will continue throughout this entire period, and beyond. We hope to integrate online worship and classes into the life of the Cathedral permanently.

Take home communion will be offered once a month for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The entrance for worship for the time being will be the courtyard door from the Alleyway behind the Cathedral. This will assist with a ‘one way’ system within the Cathedral space.

For the foreseeable future, everyone who wishes to worship or participate in activities on the Cathedral Site will be asked to either make a reservation in advance through Realm, or give their name at the door, including contact details. We will reserve a small number of seats for walk-in worshippers. Through Realm, or at the door worshippers will be asked to respond to a symptom list. If you are experiencing symptoms on the list we ask that you stay home.

Well trained ushers will guide you to your seats. Not all pews will be occupied, and tape will indicate which seats are available. The Cathedral will be limited to a maximum occupancy of 75 for now.

There will be no corporate singing, and responses to prayers are to be offered quietly, without full vocal projection.

Communion will be distributed in one kind: bread. It will be brought to you in your pew.

At the end of the service all are invited to leave by the front doors of the Cathedral to facilitate the one way system. Offering plates will be available at entry and exit. There will be no coffee hour until further notice.

Children are welcome, but must stay with families and we will not be offering children’s activities in the cathedral until further notice.

The Cathedral will be cleaned and disinfected between each service. Restrooms will be cleaned between each service.
Introduction

As our Dean outlined above, this is a living document that will evolve over time. Please make sure you are reading the most up to date version. A revision date will always be on the front page. If you are not sure if you are reading the most up to date version please check with Jo Michael, our Operations Manager.

This plan covers anything and everything related to regathering on our Cathedral site, including worshiping outside, and inside on a Sunday and mid-week. It also includes expectations for small group meetings that may begin to regather. Please read the whole document, and the appendices at the end for a full sense of our approach.

This document has been created by the regathering team, members include:
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Please reach out to the Dean or members of this team with comments or questions.
Developing a Plan in a Time of Dean Transition

In the middle of the COVID-19 crisis we were already involved in a search for a new Dean. Our Interim Dean, Jim Richardson started this process, and it is now being completed by our new Dean, Matthew Woodward. This transition has slowed some of our processes down, but it has also given us the opportunity to have a second set of eyes look over our plans as Matthew has built on the excellent work Jim began.

In the period of time that we have been in transition, the impact of COVID-19 has also changed in our country. Transmission rates climbed, then fell, then climbed and fell once more. At the time of writing infections are growing again nationwide, in Sacramento County we are experiencing substantial infections, but not widespread. This plan is written with that in mind. If, however, the categorization of our county returns to ‘widespread’ infections, we will have to adjust our expectations of in person worship. Worship planning, therefore, will be done on a monthly basis. We will provide regular updates and details in the newsletter and E-news.

We do want to move forward however, and try to return to in-person worship, even if we may have to pause it again temporarily. It will help us to learn, adapt and prepare for the future.

Below is a collection of actions already taken, and a list of those actions still to be undertaken for the purpose of this plan.
County and Diocesan Guidance

The California Department of Public Health cautions: “Even with adherence to physical distancing, convening in a congregational setting of multiple different households to practice a personal faith carries a relatively higher risk for widespread transmission of the COVID-19 virus, and may result in increased rates of infection, hospitalization, and death, especially among more vulnerable populations.”

The department also notes: “This guidance does not obligate places of worship to resume in-person activity. Further, it is strongly recommended that places of worship continue to facilitate remote services and other related activities for those who are vulnerable to COVID-19 including older adults and those with comorbidities.”

The California Department of Public Health guidelines limit our worship attendance to 25 percent of our seating capacity. That translates to 75 people maximum at the Cathedral, including those leading worship. We are working to develop a seating plan that allows this number of people to be present in the Cathedral with social distancing.

Our Bishop and Diocesan office are fully informed of our re-gathering plan and support our approach to regathering. We are in regular contact with the Office of the Bishop and her guidance is reflected in this document.
What will Worship be like?

Continuing and Improving Online Worship

We have discovered that many people enjoy our online worship offerings, and even though we are re-gathering, many will not wish to rejoin public worship until later in the COVID-19 response cycle. We are committed to providing online worship permanently from now on. We believe it will supplement our in person worship experience. We are installing a new camera system in early November to improve the experience of our online worship.

Availability of Home Communion

We will also continue to offer take home communion once a month for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The bread will be blessed during a Saturday morning Eucharist, which will be livestreamed online. The Eucharist will be packaged appropriately and handed out in the alley along with any other take home items we may provide from time to time to foster at home worship experiences. Wine will not be provided. The Congregation will be asked to consume the Eucharist during our Sunday service.

Reservations

Booking will be necessary for attendance at all worship activities, and we are going to use Realm as our online portal for managing reservations. There will be a cap set in Realm for each service based on our maximum capacity. Please be aware that if you are not able to book for a service you should look ahead to see if another is available. If you have attended recently please allow others to book before you for subsequent services. If there are still spaces available on Saturday afternoon please feel free to book to attend again. Members who have limited internet access will be assisted by Cathedral staff in making reservations.

Reservations help us to keep track of numbers attending the cathedral so that we do not exceed county guidelines. The list generated by the reservation system helps us to keep track of everyone who has been present in case contact tracing is required.

Physical Distancing, Speaking and Singing

- The presider will lead the worship observing physical distancing at all times.
• Worshippers will need to keep their masks on. We ask that if they want to respond in the prayers to do so quietly, in a low voice.
• There will not be congregational singing because it creates a vapor cloud that can spread infection.
• We will not have a choir; we will have one cantor in the choir room.
• We ask worshippers to remain in their seats throughout the service.
• Ushers will direct participants to their seats and request that the worshippers not circulate with other members or remain after the services for fellowship.
• During the Eucharist, the celebrant(s) will bring communion to each worshipper at their individual seat.
• During passing of the Peace, worshippers can stand as able and greet one another from their seating areas with hand signs, and waves.
• Clergy, vergers will have assigned seats.
• Lectors and intercessors will come forward one at a time and then return to their seats.
• If escorting is necessary, vergers will maintain adequate physical distancing at all times while escorting.
• No offering plates will be passed during the service, however there will be offering stations at the entrance and the exit.
• Worshippers will be asked to leave the campus at a socially safe distance, from the back of the nave. There will be no “coffee hour” or snacks after the worship.

A note on family participation

Children are an essential part of our community life at Trinity. They are welcome at all services, but in this time of COVID-19 restrictions we have to ask that families observe the following instructions for the safety of everyone at the Cathedral:
• Family units must stay together while on site.
• There will be no children’s activities onsite for the time being. Livestream chapel and zoom meetings will continue.
• Everyone is reminded that interacting with other parishioners is not possible at the moment.
• Please reach out to Canon Kathy Hopner for more discussion of this section.

Outdoor Eucharists

Outdoor Eucharists will be offered from time to time, mid week, for as long as weather allows. Please see announcements in the E-news for a schedule of outdoor Eucharists. All guidelines listed above will apply to outdoor eucharists.
Preparing and Cleaning the Space

- Our Custodians will be cleaning the Cathedral more frequently in future. Specifically before and after every service. Or whenever a different population occupies the Cathedral space.
- They will use a ‘fogger’ device to disinfect the entire space.
- Toilets will be cleaned before and after services.
  - Restrooms are available in the Great Hall, and will be thoroughly cleaned before and after all services.
  - Goal is to keep restroom use to a minimum.
  - Doors of restrooms should be propped open to minimize touch on the handles.
  - Hand sanitizer will be available in each restroom
- Separate microphones will be prepared for each clergy person.
Welcoming: Ushers, Guides, and Safety

Day-of Outline:

- Directional signage at garage, sidewalks on Capitol Avenue, and in the alley.
- Capitol Avenue entrances remain locked.
- Enter only through the alley.
- Members will check-in at the check-in table in the courtyard.
- Hand sanitizer will be available at the check-in station.
- If there is a wait, congregants will be directed to a socially distanced waiting area for usher escort.
- Seat will be assigned and a seating map will be available at the check-in table.
- Ushers will escort worshippers to assigned seats.
- Worshippers are encouraged to use their own electronic devices to view the bulletin; or bring a printed copy from home. Paper bulletins will not be available at the service.
- In the interest of safety, child care will not be provided until all issues in State guidelines are addressed.
- Restrooms will be available in Great Hall.

Additional Day-of Details:

- West transept and narthex doors open into the courtyard and solarium (please note: the street entrances will remain closed).
- There will be no late seating; outside doors will close when worship begins.
- Restrooms across from the office remain locked.
- Assembly Area/Office building remains locked.
Outside groups using our space

We are going to respond to outside groups who request to use the Cathedral space on a case by case basis. They will be informed of this re-gathering plan and invited to sign an agreement about their use of our space (please see Appendix 5).

We are open to allowing our space to be used by former ministry groups again under these circumstances, but will monitor their compliance with our re-gathering plan, and reserve the right to stop offering space to those who do not observe these guidelines.
Appendix 1: Health Screening Questionnaire

**DAY-OF HEALTH SURVEY (REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE)**

By clicking on the "YES" button below, I confirm that I have not had any of the following symptoms during the past *72 hours*: Fever of 100 degrees or greater, Cough (not due to a chronic or known condition), Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, New loss of taste or smell, Sore throat, Chills, Diarrhea. *

○ Yes  ○ No

By clicking on the "YES" button below, I confirm that I have not had close contact with someone who has confirmed COVID-19 infection in the last *14 days.* *

○ Yes  ○ No

By clicking on the "YES" button below, I agree to abide by safety protocols and comply with directions from church staff and volunteer leaders during church events. *

○ Yes  ○ No

By clicking on the "YES" button below, I confirm that I am willing to take personal responsibility for my health and do what I can to protect the health of others. I understand that while Trinity seeks to reduce the possibility of virus transmission as much as possible, it cannot guarantee complete safety. *

○ Yes  ○ No
Appendix 2: Usher Guidelines for Regathering

Arrival & Seating

- Upon arrival wearing your mask/PPE, ensure the correct doors are unlocked and COVID and directional signage are in place.
  - Signage will instruct congregants that a mask is required over nose & mouth & to maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet
- Make sure the check-in table is placed. Hand sanitizer and face masks should be placed on the table.
- Check-in Table:
  - The check-in table should be staffed with two people.
    - Check-in Coordinator
      - Ask each congregant to confirm their identity and check them off the reservation list.
      - Ask each congregant the screening questions.
      - Ask each congregant to use hand sanitizer.
      - If they answer no to any of the screening questions, they should be referred to the Safety Coordinator
      - Ask the congregant to wait for an usher to greet them in the socially distanced waiting area.
    - Safety Coordinator
      - If a person has not made a reservation, the Safety Coordinator will welcome them and make arrangements for them to attend a service in the future (see appendix 8)
      - If a congregant answers no to any of the screening questions, explain State Health Regulations prohibit admission. Assure them they can make a reservation when they are well.
        - Refer this name to the cathedral staff for a wellness check.
      - Help waiting congregants find the bulletin on their own device.
      - Ask protocol violators to leave the premises (See script below)
- Seating of congregants:
  - After the congregant is checked in, an usher will greet the congregant and take them to their assigned seat through the west door of the Cathedral.
  - The seating chart will indicate where congregants should be seated.
  - If a congregant needs assistance at the Cathedral Alley doors following the service, the Safety Coordinator will ask them to stay seated until the cathedral is empty.
  - Usher will instruct the congregant to:
Place any non-electronic offerings in the offering plate placed centrally and on the way to their seat or at the exit following the service (electronic offerings can be made on the website (QR Code for offering?)

■ Wear their mask at all times over their mouth and their nose.
■ Maintain a social distance of 6 ft. from other parties.
■ Stay in their assigned seat and not mingle with other congregants.
■ Join in recitation, but refrain from singing. Encourage humming.
■ Find the bulletin on their own electronic device, or, use the bulletin the congregant has brought from home. (QR Code on the Check in table and in the pew?)

During the service

■ Ushers should remain available to help folks find the restrooms
■ Users will monitor congregants for mask wearing, social distance and staying in their area. Below are scripted lines for ushers to use when asking for each protocol to be followed. We want to have everyone say the same things so as not to confuse the congregants.
  ○ If someone removes their mask, warn them with these words, “To insure the safety of your fellow worshippers, we are observing strict mask protocols as advised by the CDC. Please put your mask back on over your mouth and nose.”
  ○ If someone is not social distancing, warn them with the words, “To insure the safety of your fellow worshippers, we are observing strict social distancing as recommended by the CDC. Please maintain 6 feet of distance between your party and other parties.”
  ○ If someone wanders from their assigned seat, warn them with the words, “To insure the safety of your fellow worshippers, we are asking that you remain in your assigned seat to protect you and everyone else in attendance. Please return to your assigned seat.”
    ■ If this person is a child, seek the help of the parent.
  ○ If someone is not compliant with the protocols and refuses to heed the warning, make the Safety Coordinator aware of the situation
    ■ Safety Coordinator should ask the congregant to leave using the following words, “I understand that you’re not comfortable with the State mandated safety protocols, however we are required to ask you to leave so we are not in violation of state law and do not jeopardize the safety of your fellow worshippers. I’m going to ask you to accompany me to the door.”
Offertory & Communion

- Electronic offerings can be made on the website, or a plate will be available for cash and checks upon entry and exit.
- Communion will be distributed by the Celebrant to each congregant in their seat.
- Wine will not be served but instead will be consecrated and remain on the altar.

Dismissal & Closing

- Congregants will be dismissed from the back of the nave forward.
- Congregants will leave the church through the Capitol Avenue doors.
- Congregants who need assistance should stay in their seats until the cathedral is empty. Ushers will then assist them.
Appendix 3: Current Protocols for Members or Visitors Without Reservations

There will be cases of folks who arrive without a reservation. Some will see the church doors open and assume they can attend the service, and some will have read or heard about the service but were not aware of the reservation requirement.

We want to be welcoming to all who come to the Cathedral AND we need to follow good protocols for health and safety. Therefore, we propose the following protocols for those who show up for a service without reservations.

- The Safety Coordinator will be stationed at the check-in/health screening table that is trained in these protocols
  - Before the service starts during check-in
  - Throughout the service to intercept late-comers
- When a non-reserved guest comes to the table:
  - They should be greeted and welcomed (Welcome bag?)
  - They should be asked how they heard about the service and informed of the reservations requirement for safety reasons (number of people and contact-tracing)
  - They should be offered the chance to put their name on a numbered list of folks who are waiting for a seat, should a reserved guest not show up
    - Try to assess how far they've come
    - Try to assess their connectivity to online resources.
    - If they have not received an email about the services, please get their email on the list so they can be included in updates
  - If they are not seated, they should be offered a reserved seat at the next possible service
    - We could call the list the next day and facilitate that reservation
    - We could have a sign up laptop there at the table and assist them to choose a date
  - If a guest is persistent about getting in and will not receive the solutions offered above, they should be gently reminded that we are at capacity, our numbers are governed by County guidelines currently, and then they should be asked if they would like a member of the Cathedral clergy to reach out to them to talk about this during the week. Their name and contact details taken and passed to the Dean.
Appendix 4: Questionnaire to Cathedral Members

As official restrictions ease, what best describes your attitude toward returning to some form of in-person services?

1. I will return at the first opportunity and have very few concerns.
2. I’m eager to return soon, but with some concerns.
3. I would wait for a while, then try attending.
4. It will probably be quite a while before I return.

What circumstances would you look for before being comfortable returning to an in-person service?

1. As long as the church has a good protocol for social distancing, cleaning, etc., I’d be ready right away.
2. I’d be ready if the church has a good protocol and the local infection rate is low and stable.
3. I’d be ready if the church has a good protocol, the local infection rate is low and stable, and testing and contact tracing are being widely used in our county.
4. I won’t be ready until an effective vaccine is widely available.
5. Other (please explain):________________________________________________

Any in-person services we might have over the next several months will be different than what we are used to. We will be observing the following precautions in the months to come:

1. Registering in advance to attend
2. Holding services outdoors
3. Social distancing and masks for all participants
4. No singing, or vocal participation in responses
5. No physical contact during the peace
6. Communion with bread alone
7. No coffee hour
8. No Children’s activities
9. Limiting numbers in the Cathedral to less than 75 people.

How would these circumstances affect your willingness to participate?
1. I'd be happy to be back at church no matter what.
2. The restrictions might feel strange, but it would be worth it to me.
3. I'd give it a try, but might not keep coming if the restrictions feel too strange.
4. I'd rather not attend in person until church services are less restricted.

Since March, we’ve been holding services and meetings online via Zoom and Facebook. To what extent have you been participating?

1. I participate in online services every week or almost every week.
2. I've participated in online services sometimes.
3. I haven't participated in online services because I haven't been able to.
4. I've chosen not to participate in online services.

Given that congregational singing is high-risk and won’t be happening at first, what in-person music alternatives are most appealing to you?

1. Live music on the organ and piano with some recorded elements
2. Music provided by a Cantor from a separate room but playing over the sound system
3. Fully spoken service (no music at all)
4. Other:
   _______________________________________________________________________

How connected do you feel to your congregation these days?

1. 1 – Very disconnected
2. 2 – Mostly disconnected
3. 3 – Mostly connected
4. 4 – Very connected

What do you miss most about in-person worship?

Is there anything else you would like the Regathering Team to know?

Name (optional):

Age (optional):

Gender (optional):

Number of people in your family:
Appendix 5: Agreement for on campus activities for outside groups

For any on-campus activities at Trinity Cathedral while state and/or county health orders are in effect:

By my presence on campus, I am confirming that

I will not come onto the campus if I am experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, or have been in recent contact with anyone confirmed to have COVID-19. If I begin to experience symptoms while on campus, I will leave immediately and seek medical attention. I agree to abide by safety protocols, including those regarding face coverings and social distancing, and by instructions from staff and volunteer leaders.

I am willing to take personal responsibility for my health and do what I can to protect the health of others. I understand that while the Church seeks to reduce the possibility of viral transmission as much as possible, it cannot guarantee complete safety.

Signed:

Printed Name:

Date:
Appendix 6: Specific actions to prepare for re-gathering

Already Completed

Service Preparation:

- Remove pews in the choir area and side aisles.
- Remove prayer books and hymnals from pews.
- Remove seat cushions from the Nave pews.
- Plan service around not using the center aisle, which is too narrow for adequate physical distancing.
- Move East Transept seats to six-foot distances for individual worshippers.
- Put hand sanitizer bottles in the entrances.
- Increase air circulation with an added fan.
- Develop a reservation system through Realm.
- Develop a system for contact tracing.
  - Realm captures participants' contact information and health screening responses when they register.
  - In addition to the online records saved in Realm, a paper version with names and health screening confirmations is recorded as participants enter and saved on file in the Cathedral office.
- Remove pamphlets and other papers from narthex.

In progress

Service Preparation:

- Develop a plan for social distancing in pews, highlighting areas where we can sit with painters tape.
- In the fullness of time mark the sections in each pew available for seating in an attractive and welcoming manner.
- Create directional signage for sandwich boards.
- A check-in station and a designated monitor will collect the information separate from the ushers.
- Send a survey to the congregation describing generally what regathering may look like and ask whether people are comfortable coming back?
- Develop clear instructions about bulletins, that we will not print these for participants, but ask them to bring electronic devices with bulletins pre-loaded or a print out from home.
- Create directional signs at garage, alley, front sidewalk?
- Set up courtyard check-in stations (see below)?
• Reserve seats for lectors and intercessors in the East Transept.
• Set up two plates as people enter and exit for offering, clearly signposted.
• Develop rest room use protocols.
• Removing the Altar Rail cushion.
Appendix 7: Creation of Teams to implement this plan

We are creating the following teams to aid us in re-gathering, these are sub groups to the re-gathering team, and although initial names are provided below to show who is taking the initial lead, these teams will develop over time. If you wish to volunteer please contact the named people.

- **Communications Team** – Creating necessary newsletter items and congregational survey - Jay Elmquist and Kevin Donohue
- **Reservation Team** – Send out and track reservations; assign seats; create seating map for the ushers - Jo Michael and Randie Strike
- **Usher Team** – Trained and rehearsed; set up check-in stations; put programs on seats - Kevin Donohue and John Kraynak
  - Ushers for checking in
  - Ushers to assist with seating
- **Signage Team** – create and place directional signs - Jo Michael
- **Sacristan Team** – set up for worship, coordinating with vergers, lectors/intercessors Altar Guild and flower teams - Chris Sanft and Elizabeth Kenealey
- **Compliance Team** – Review and evaluate our plan and execution to ensure it is complying with federal, state and diocesan guidelines - Stephen Henry and David Ford