Plan for Re-opening St. Vladimir UOC South Side Pittsburgh

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!

We ask for your prayers and patience as we put this plan into place. Please know that we are acting out of an abundance of caution, but each individual and family needs to decide when it is safe for them to attend services. **PLEASE REVIEW ALL OF THE INFORMATION IN THE PLAN. It is very important that we all do our best to follow the plan so that we can safely return and remain together in church.** Of course please contact Fr. John or any parish council member if you have any questions or concerns about anything in this document or anything that you feel is missing.

The parish will “reopen” to in-person services in two phases:

**Phase One:** Divine Liturgy on Sundays June 28th and July 5th will be held outdoors at the parish Cemetery. All participants will wear masks and maintain a minimum of 6 feet of distance. Communion will be distributed so the driveway will be marked for distance in the Communion Line, an altar server wearing a mask will hold the cloth. Although there should be no surfaces to touch, we ask that everyone sanitize their hands prior to arriving. Please note that there are no bathrooms at the Cemetery. There are a number of convenience stores with restroom facilities nearby in the event of an emergency, directions will be provided on a sign.

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**Phase Two:** Assuming there are no significant negative developments in the number of cases of COVID-19 in our area, Divine Liturgy and Vespers will be held in St. Vladimir’s Church beginning on July 12th. Although we cannot guarantee that you will not come in contact with Coronavirus, the following procedures and policies will be in place to minimize the risk until further notice:

**Prior to Divine Liturgy:**

* All pews and “high touch” surfaces, such as door handles and light switches will be sanitized prior to the beginning of each service.
* Send an email to stvladimiruocpgh@gmail.com or call the parish phone number (412) 431-9758 and leave a voicemail indicating that you plan to attend Saturday evening Vespers and/or Sunday morning Divine Liturgy by Friday evening. We are hoping to be able to fit everyone in for all services, but space will be limited by social distancing guidelines.
* We can hold approximately 25-30 people inside the church building during services. In the event that more people plan to attend than we can safely fit inside the church, we will contact everyone who has responded with options to stand outside in the yard, or to give anyone who has been unable to attend the opportunity to have a spot inside.
* Our Hierarchs have stressed the importance of receiving the Mystery of Holy Confession prior to receiving Holy Communion for the first time after returning to church. Please contact Fr. John directly to schedule a time to receive Holy Confession. As a reminder, the following information regarding Confession has been communicated to the parish:
	+ Fr. John will be available by appointment at the parish every Saturday prior to Vespers (which begin at 6:00 PM). There will also be an opportunity for you to receive Holy Confession by appointment either at your home or Fr. John’s.
	+ Confessions will be scheduled no more than one individual or family per hour. Individuals should wear masks that cover their mouth and nose. Cleaning wipes will be available to wipe down any surfaces after each session.
	+ A document to be used as a guide for preparing for Confession is available on our parish website, to make it as spiritually nourishing for you as possible. Remember that all the sins we can’t remember during Holy Confession are still absolved when we properly prepare prior to coming to our Father who is in Heaven for forgiveness, while being witnessed by the priest.

**Entering the Church:**

* Sanitize hands prior to entering the church. Hand sanitizer will be available for additional use during the service as needed.
* Wear a mask that covers the nose and mouth as you enter the church and throughout the service. A limited number of masks will be available for anyone who does not have their own to bring.
* Someone will be at the door to take everyone’s temperature with a touchless thermometer before entering. Your temperature must be below 100.4 degrees to be admitted.
* Your name, address, and phone number will be recorded.
* Seating will be mapped out based on the people who have let us know that they will be attending, to maintain a minimum of 6 feet of distance between individuals and families. When you arrive you will be shown where to stand.
* These procedures will take time- please plan to arrive before 9:15am to minimize distractions throughout the service.

**During Services:**

* Physical Distancing- Continue to wear masks and maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from others. Venerate the Cross and icons by making the sign of the Cross and a respectful bow; please do not kiss or touch them. No physical greeting during the “Kiss of Peace.”
* Choir- One or two choir members will sing from the choir loft or at the front of the church, maintaining social distance and wearing masks. No one else will be permitted in the choir loft if the singers are there.
* Altar Servers- Fr. John will identify one or two adult altar servers prior to the service. Altar servers must sanitize their hands prior to entering the vestry and wear a mask throughout the service.
* Communion- Fr. John will wear a face covering while distributing Holy Communion.The center aisle will be taped to reflect 6 feet distance for waiting in line. Remove your mask as you approach the chalice and put it back once your lips are free from the Eucharist. Do not kiss the chalice and avoid any movements that could cause the Holy Eucharist to be spilled. Communion will be distributed using the Common Spoon as directed by our Hierarchs. If you have concerns about your health and safety regarding receiving Holy Communion, please feel free to discuss with Fr. John.
* Pews- all items will be removed from the pews and shelves in the backs of each pew. Items that do not belong to the church (cushions, personal prayer books, etc.) will be available on the table in the back so that you can take them home.
* Bathrooms- Bathrooms will be cleaned and sanitized prior to each service. Individuals must use the cleaning products provided to wipe down all surfaces that were touched when using the bathroom, including the toilet seat and handle. This is for the safety of parishioners, but also for the safety of the day care center staff and children.
* Collections- We strongly encourage parishioners and guests to use the MyEOffering online donation platform available on the parish website [www.stvladimirpgh.org](http://www.stvladimirpgh.org) to minimize contact for everyone. However, a basket for donations will be available near the church doors. Donations should be in an envelope with name and phone number (preferably in your church envelopes). The same procedure will be followed at the Cemetery.
* Outside Option while the Divine Liturgy is celebrated in the Church building- The service will be streamed to the parish yard and/or the windows will be opened so that those with personal health concerns and small children who may not be able to maintain social distancing/mask wearing inside the church may be part of the Divine Liturgy. It is still strongly recommended that individuals participating outside wear a mask and they must maintain social distancing. Individuals may come inside for Communion.

**After Services:**

* Fr. John will dismiss each row using gloves while distributing antidoron.
* Exit directly through the back doors after your row is dismissed- no congregating, Coffee hour, etc. at this time.
* If you or someone in your home tests positive for Coronavirus/Covid-19 within two weeks of attending a service, contact Fr. John directly and self-quarantine based on your doctor’s instructions. In the event that a person who has attended our parish tests positive, we will notify everyone who was present when the individual attended. The church will be closed for two weeks as a precaution.

**Additional Guidance and Reminders:**

* If you or anyone you are in contact with at home or work have tested positive for Coronavirus, or if you are otherwise feeling sick, please stay home.
* The Hierarchs continue to strongly recommend that parishioners over the age of 65 remain at home. Those with chronic health conditions that could affect the impacts of the virus are also encouraged to remain home. However, we will not deny anyone entrance unless there is not enough room to maintain physical distancing.
* We will continue to stream services through our [Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/pg/StVladimirUOCPghPa/videos/?ref=page_internal).
* If you or anyone you know is unable to safely attend services in person and would like to receive Confession and Communion, or would simply like to receive a visit please contact Fr. John to make arrangements.