

FOR YOUR INFORMATION: This friendly amendment was approved and passed by Session at their stated meeting June 17, 2021. As the Stewardship Committee Chair / Corporation President Dennis explained below, his proposed amendment was designed/crafted to clarify some wording, eliminate some unnecessary redundancy to Worship Committee's original proposal (which I have included on page two), all while maintaining the overall intention(s) of the original motion ... and the one point of difference was to postpone the resumption of "full service" communion until at least September, which would be consistent with the reasoning behind our postponing resumption of passing items such as Greenwood Greeters and offering plates. As pastor, I thought it might help aid our mutual understanding on these sensitive issues to include page two, the original motion, as well as some documents used by the Worship Committee which helped craft the precise wording of their original proposal.

Stephen L. Clark, Pastor/Moderator

I offer this friendly amendment to the Worship proposal. Some wording has been clarified and redundancy eliminated. Also, the practice of passing the communion elements and offering plates is the same process and should not be reinstated until September...if the way be clear.

With respect to the Worship Committee and the session's thanks for the excellent research.

Dennis Charpentier, President of the Corporation

THE WORSHIP COMMITTEE MOVES THE FOLLOWING TO COMMENCE SUNDAY, JULY 4, 2021

- Reservations for worship will no longer be required. The blue tape will be removed from the pews as building capacity limits have been lifted. Maintaining three feet of social distancing between unrelated individuals is recommended. Mutually consenting adults may agree to sit together as has been approved for the choir.
- Anyone is welcome to continue wearing a mask, but masks will no longer be required for vaccinated individuals as stated by Rhode Island Department of Health. The RIDOH guidelines request the unvaccinated people wear masks indoors. As Christian citizens, we know the Bible exhorts us to obey our government (Romans 13:1) and so we leave the issue of masks to each person's individual conscience. We are seeking to simultaneously respect civil authority and the conscientious convictions and concerns of all out of love and mutual respect in order to safeguard/promote the health and harmony of our worshipping community.
- Hand sanitizer stations will continue to be maintained throughout the building, and boxes of facemasks will be made available in the narthex for any to use.
- Live streaming of services will continue. We will continue to print all worship materials for the foreseeable future. Use of the Bibles and hymnals in the pews will be permitted. We will maintain the current protocol of not passing the offering plates and Greenwood Greeters, and using the sanitized individual packets for the Lord's Supper through July and August.
- Children's Church and nursery care will resume under the direction of the Director of Family Ministries.
- Coffee hour will continue to be served outside or inside as weather permits and using our current protocols for serving.

THE WORSHIP COMMITTEE MOVES THE FOLLOWING TO COMMENCE SUNDAY, JULY 4TH –

- Reservations will be discontinued. Tape will be removed from the pews as building capacity limits have been lifted; 100% building capacity was permitted as of May 17. Guidance of maintaining three feet of social distancing between unrelated individuals will be recommended, but not enforced; as has been approved for the choir, mutually consenting adults may agree to sit together.
- Anyone is welcome to continue wearing a mask, but masks will no longer be required. Rhode Island Health Department guidelines stipulate masks are not requested indoors if the individual has been vaccinated. While the guidance still requests the unvaccinated to wear masks indoors, we will not be checking anyone's vaccination status. As Christian citizens, we know the Bible exhorts us to obey our government (Romans 13:1) and so we leave the issue of masks to each person's individual conscience. Some vaccinated people may still choose to wear a mask, as also suggested by CDC guidelines. We are not making any political or scientific statements regarding mask usage. We are seeking to simultaneously respect civil authority and the conscientious convictions and concerns of all, whether we agree or not, out of love and mutual respect in order to safeguard/promote the health and harmony of our worshipping community.
- Hand sanitizer stations will continue to be maintained throughout the building, and boxes of facemasks will be made available in the narthex for any to use.
- We will continue to offer live streamed services each Sunday. While we will continue to print all worship materials for the foreseeable future (as these need to be prepared for the online community anyway), using the Bibles and hymnals in the pews will be permitted. We will maintain the current protocol of not passing the offering plates and Greenwood Greeters through the summer months.
- Children's Church and nursery care will resume under the direction of the Director of Family Ministries.
- We will reinstitute our usual protocol of observing the Lord's Supper served by elders and deacons. *(We are currently out of the individual sanitized communion packets and will need to order more if this is particular bullet point is not approved.)*
- Coffee hour will continue to be served outside or inside as weather permits and using our current protocols for serving.

To THE SESSION: Attached are two references reviewed/resourced by the Worship Committee to supplement sources previously used by Session to prepare the policies currently in place.

One is a June 1 posted update from the 1,000+ member congregation I served in New Jersey, the Presbyterian Church of New Providence. I visited Sunday June 6 for worship; both services were very well attended. To put this in a bit of perspective, they worshipped indoors for the FIRST TIME that Sunday; they had been meeting in a huge tent next to the backyard cemetery. That they had come that far so quickly is impressive. They still do not have coffee hour and/or serve food, which was a HUGE weekly operation in that church; I understand they plan to recommence food/coffee service in July.

The other (more succinct) document is from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Providence.

If I may add an additional item, Moderator's prerogative: Just this one link ... I realize not all are aware of the serious concerns and/or conscientious objections some have regarding the Covid vaccines; the substance of these issues and concerns are not readily broadcast on/in the usual media and are often removed from social networking sites. This particular linked article was first written April 12, and reprinted in this journal a week or so ago. It was forwarded by a physician friend and is a bit long, but I think it provides a good summary of many of the concerns some have and provides several links and footnotes to supporting resources (I regret this author gets bit "snarky" in spots, but I do think he summarizes/collates well the concerns I've also read in other sources --slc).

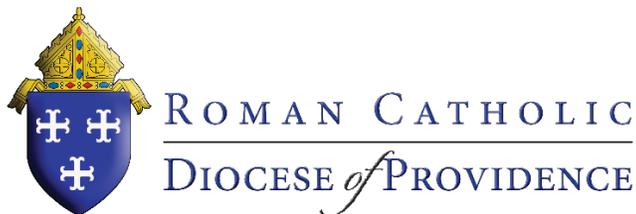
<https://www.citizensjournal.us/18-reasons-i-wont-be-getting-a-covid-vaccine/>

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AT NEW PROVIDENCE

With the new guidelines from Governor Murphy on COVID protocols the Elders are excited to announce that beginning Sunday, June 6th –

- ❖ The 11 a.m. worship service will be held in the sanctuary and will no longer be held in the tent. The tent will continue to be used for church events such as VBS and other gatherings.
- ❖ Social distancing and room capacity limits have been lifted, which means we can fully use the Ministry Center and the Sanctuary, including the balcony.
- ❖ We will no longer require reservations for either the 9:30 a.m. or the 11:00 a.m. worship service. Just come! Contact tracing is no longer required.
- ❖ We will not be taking anyone's temperature as they enter the building.
- ❖ According to the Governor's guidelines masks are not required indoors if you have been vaccinated. The Governor still asks unvaccinated people to wear masks indoors. However, we will not be checking anyone's vaccination status. As Christian citizens the Bible tells us to obey our government (Romans 13:1) and so we leave the issue of masks to each person's own individual conscience and comfort level. Many vaccinated people may still choose to wear a mask, and that is perfectly OK as well. We are not making any scientific or political statements regarding the use of masks. We are only trying to follow the guidelines given to us by the Governor, whether we agree with them or not, and keep our community healthy.
- ❖ The church will be fully open for use during the week and on Sundays for small groups and other gatherings. Room reservations should go through Office Manager Dawn Goldbach.
- ❖ Food and coffee service is still off the table. Hopefully, that will return in the weeks ahead. Check with Property Manager Mike Ohlson if you have questions about anything related to food and beverage in the church.
- ❖ The Pre-School and Kindergarten will continue to follow the State guidelines for its operation, which are different than those for the church. Contact Maury Fryer for details.
- ❖ We will continue to offer two online services each Sunday at 9:30 AM and 11:00 AM.
- ❖ For Communion we will continue to use the individual wafer and juice cups for the foreseeable future.
- ❖ There will be no bulletins or passing of the offering plates. You are encouraged to give online or to use the offering boxes placed at the entrances to each worship venue.
- ❖ Bible and hymnals can be used in the sanctuary.
- ❖ Singing is permitted.

So, your church is fully open for business starting June 6th – which is also Caring Ministries Sunday. Please plan to join your church family for in-person worship as people share their stories of how our Caring Ministries have impacted their lives this past year.



Update on COVID19 Directives for Parishes and Diocesan Agencies

In light of the updated health guidelines by the CDC, the Governor, and the Rhode Island Department of Health, the following changes in procedure should be considered in our parishes.

Indoor seating capacity is increased from 80% to 100% beginning Friday May, 21, 2021.

Fully vaccinated parishioners are no longer required to wear a facemask indoors and outdoors.

Those who are not fully vaccinated should be asked to continue to wear a facemask indoors. However, any form of discrimination should be avoided against those who are not fully vaccinated and those who do not use a facemask.

Parish social gatherings may resume beginning Friday May, 21, 2021 with 100% seating capacity. Parishes and agencies should follow the recommended protocols set forth by the Rhode Island Department of Health for "catered events."

Pastors should continue to observe the following within their parish at this time.

- Sufficient hand sanitizing dispensers should be made available at the vestibule of the church which can be used by parishioners upon entering. Parishioners should continually be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene.
- The distribution of the Precious Blood at Holy Communion to the lay faithful should remain suspended.
- Allow for proper ventilation for increased airflow and HVAC filtration when possible.