



CHAPEL of the CROSS

an historic Episcopal Church

Reopening Policies v3

After considering guidance from the Bishop, Governor, CDC, MSDH, and Church Mutual, as well as consulting LouAnn Woodward, MD (member, Vice Chancellor & Dean of the University of Mississippi Medical Center), Stephen Stray, PhD (Assistant Professor at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, Virologist), and Stephania Jackson, RN (member, Director of Children's Ministries), the Vestry has adopted the following Reopening Policy.

- As part of this reopening policy, we first acknowledge the grace of God, and we pray for God's guidance for our physical, mental, and spiritual health. In that regard, we consider an essay written by the Rt. Rev. N. T. Wright, "Should Churches Reopen? The Answer Lies in Thinking of This as a Time of Exile." Bishop Wright is the Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity at the University of St. Andrews, a Senior Research Fellow at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford University, the former bishop of Durham, and a favorite author of our Wednesday Morning Bible Study.
 - time.com/5837693/should-churches-reopen-thinking-about-exile
- We also acknowledge that good and faithful folks disagree on these issues. Here is a good article reminding us how we can healthily and positively interact in these awkward times:
 - www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/wellness/family-friends-disagree-social-distancing-coronavirus/2020/06/06/ec4b034a-a769-11ea-b473-04905b1af82b_story.html
- Bishop Brian Seage has provided us with specific reopening guidelines (including new guidelines published 22 January 2021) which are incorporated into this policy. The guidelines issued by Bishop Seage apply to both indoor and outdoor services.
- Individuals may be at high risk for complications related to the Coronavirus. For more information visit this webpage:
 - governorreeves.ms.gov/wp-content/uploads/Executive-Order-1492-Safer-Return.pdf
- Individuals who have traveled in the past 14 days by commercial transportation (i.e. air, train, cruise ship, etc.) are encouraged to participate in online worship offerings for the safety and well-being of fellow parishioners.
- Individuals who feel ill or live in a household where someone feels ill are specifically asked not to attend in-person worship.
- Individuals who have tested positive for the virus within the last 10 days or have had an unprotected exposure to COVID-19 within the last 14 days are specifically asked not to attend in-person worship. If one has tested positive for the virus, one can attend in-person worship if 10 days have passed since their positive test, s/he has been fever free for at least 3 days, and is experiencing improved respiratory symptoms.
- In case of pastoral need or emergency, at the clergy's discretion, certain sacramental rites (burial, matrimony, baptism, etc.) are permitted so long as they follow the same guidelines as Sunday worship set forth herein.

- Sanitizing protocols will be developed with the sexton and cleaning crew.
- Improved air filters have been installed in high-traffic indoor facilities at the Chapel.
- In order to try to assess risk, all individuals who attend a worship service are asked to inform the parish office as soon as possible if s/he, tests positive for the virus, or if s/he becomes ill with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 infection within 14 days of attending a worship service. Because an asymptomatic attendee can transfer the virus, attendees are also asked to report if a non-attendee in close personal contact with attendee tests positive or develops COVID-19 symptoms within this 14 day period.
- Parishioners are required to make a reservation for every in-person worship service they plan to attend. This enables the Chapel to maintain required attendance thresholds as well as enable contact tracing in the event an attendee tests positive for the virus or exhibits symptoms consistent with COVID-19. To make a reservation, please contact the Associate Rector via e-mail, wcompton@chapelofthecrossms.org, or look for a link to SignUp Genius in the Chapel's weekly email messages to the parish.
- During any gathering, all participants over two years of age are required to wear a mask or cloth face covering at all times. Ushers will provide disposable masks for any congregant who does not have a mask. Those who receive a face covering are responsible for disposing of it or (preferably) taking it with them.
- At in-person worship services, congregants may have their temperature taken prior to entering the Chapel.
- Hand sanitizer will be readily available at all services, including in the pews. The restrooms will be stocked with soap and paper towels.
- Social distancing will be observed at all times, meaning all individuals, unless they live in the same household or are a part of the same extended family, should remain six feet away from one another.
- Childcare cannot be offered at this time.
- At this time, because of the current guidance from the Bishop, seating at in-person worship services in the Chapel will be limited to 20 individuals, and parishioners should maintain a safe, social distance from individuals outside of their household.
- Clergy, ushers, altar guild members, and anyone who may touch items of worship should wash or sanitize their hands before, during, and after serving.
- All Books of Common Prayer, Hymnals, and other printed materials will be removed from the worship services. A bulletin will be produced for each service containing all worship materials. A digital version of this bulletin will be posted and distributed, so congregants may participate in the service via a personal electronic device. Bringing personal Books of Common Prayer are also welcome.
- Alms Basins will not be circulated during in-person worship service. However, one or more stationary receptacles will be available for an offering.
- Each service will include one officiant or priest, one usher, one lector, and (if available) one organist and/or one instrumentalist. No vergers or acolytes will be used.

- Traffic areas in and out of the Chapel, to and from the altar, and to and from the restrooms will be guided as one way. Ushers, clergy, and other participants will direct traffic in a manner to promote social distancing.
- While instrumental music may be offered during a service, congregational singing may not occur at this time.
- Outdoor services, such as worship services on the lawn in front of the Chapel or in the Music Tent area across the parking lot from the Chapel, may be offered. While an outdoor service may accommodate more participants, all of the guidelines set forth in this policy will be followed.
- Eucharist, if celebrated, will be offered in “one kind,” i.e. bread only. Communion will be distributed at a standing station rather than at the altar rail. The priest will sanitize their hands before the Eucharistic prayer and before the distribution of communion. The wafers will be covered during the offering of the Eucharistic prayer.
- Bulletins, disposable masks, and any other single use items will not be re-used.
- Congregants are encouraged to maintain social distance after the conclusion of an in-person worship service. A social hour, coffee, water, and other hospitality cannot be offered at this time.
- When Sunday in-person services are offered, at least one (most likely the 11a) will be broadcast via Facebook Live and/or another platform to permit virtual participation for those who cannot attend.