

Holy Trinity Anglican Church

COVID-19 Guidelines

The Bishop, Fr. Michael and our Parish Council have established guidelines to assure, as much as it is possible, the safety of all. It is also our desire for people to feel comfortable when attending Mass on the Lord's Day. We know and understand that some people will not be comfortable attending Mass in person at this time. We also know that some people may be uncomfortable with our establishing so many guidelines. However, it is always easier to loosen guidelines over time, than it is to add them. Fr. Michael is asking all of us to submit to what is outlined below. "*Take care that your rights...do not become a stumbling block to your brother...Rather, love your brother for whom Christ died*" (1 Corinthians 8:9-11/*Paraphrase*). Thus, please submit to these guidelines for the sake of your church family members and visitors who may be less comfortable than you are presently. Let us do our very best to love one another and to help everyone feel comfortable when attending Mass on the Lord's Day. These guidelines will be relaxed in time. Lastly, please note that our guidelines take into account Federal, State and Diocesan guidelines and recommendations.

- **Live Streaming:** For anyone unable, for whatever reason (e.g., illness, age, distance, etc), to attend Mass on Sunday - The Lord's Day, please know we will continue to live stream the 10:00 a.m. Mass. Our thanks to Fr. Praveen for all of his hard work in making this possible.
- **Prayer, Prayer and More Prayer (1):** Fr. Michael is asking the members of our HTAC Prayer Chain (lead: Emily Morse), our Healing Prayer Ministry (lead: Dcn. Rhonda Cotton) and our Intercessory Prayer Ministry (Lead: Martha Ayisi) to pray before, during and after every Sunday Mass. Please pray for God's protection to surround us as a church family and for the protection of all who attend the Mass on the Lord's Day from contracting COVID 19.
- **Prayer, Prayer and More Prayer (2):** Fr. Michael hopes to identify at least two people in our church family who are willing to fast and pray every Saturday (until this virus has passed us by) for God's protection to surround our church family and our Sunday morning Mass.
- **Health Officer & Health Team:** Fr. Michael will be appointing two Health Officers to advise him on any present health issues or situations which may arise.

- **Masks (1):** People must wear a mask in order to attend Mass on Sunday mornings. A cloth mask is strongly recommended. If you forget your mask at home, one will be provided for you.
 - **Masks (2):** The Cantor and Choir, for purposes of singing, will wear a surgical mask rather than a cloth mask. More on the Cantor and Choir below.
 - **Masks (3):** HTAC will be ordering triple-ply cloth masks (with our logo) to be distributed to our members. The cost to HTAC is \$7.00 per mask. If you wish to make a donation to help offset the cost of these cloth masks, please make your check out to "HTAC" and write "Mask" in the memo. Thank you. All of our regular attendees will receive a cloth mask.
 - **Masks (4):** If, due to health issues, you are unable to wear a mask, we ask that you please stay at home and watch the Mass via live stream. Please let Fr. Michael know if this is the case (508-330-2179) and he or another member of our clergy team will bring you the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion on a regular basis.
 - **Masks (5):** Children ages 2 to 5 are not required to wear a mask. This decision is up to their parents/guardians. Children 2 and younger are not to wear a mask.
 - **Masks (6):** Masks must be worn over the nose and mouth. Please, no exceptions.
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- **Hand Sanitizer (1):** People will be required to wash their hands thoroughly with hand sanitizer upon entering and leaving the church on Sunday mornings.
 - **Hand Sanitizer (2):** People will be required to wash their hands with hand sanitizer before receiving the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion.
 - **Hand Sanitizer (3):** We have installed several hand sanitizer stations throughout the church, including on the two front pews of the inner aisle for people to use just prior to receiving the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion.
 - **Hand Sanitizer (4):** People may bring their own hand sanitizer as long as they wash their hands with it at the times appointed above. Hand sanitizer must contain at least 60% alcohol.
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- **Seating (1):** Family members living in the same household may be seated together.
 - **Seating (2):** All people, unless from the same household, must be seated at least six feet apart from the closest person.
 - **Seating (3):** Every second pew will be open for seating.
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- **Social Distancing (1):** Social distancing must be maintained at all times. People must stay at least six feet from one another, unless from the same household.

- **Social Distancing (2):** The only exception to the six feet rule is when Fr. Michael is administering the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion to a person. More on that below.
- **Social Distancing (3):** Please refrain from touching other people in the church or anywhere on church property. No exceptions, please. This includes handshaking, hugging, kissing, fist-bumping, elbow-bumping, etc. Please also do your best not to touch your face.
- **Social Distancing (4):** Greeters will do their best to assist with social distancing guidelines. However, people are asked to comply.
- **Bathroom Use Limited:** Bathroom use is limited and strongly discouraged at this time. If you must use the bathroom, please use the lysol provided before and after use and PLEASE wash your hands thoroughly (for at least 20 seconds). You may use the side door on the "*Epistle-side*" (i.e., the right side of the church as you are facing the altar) to access the bathroom.
- **Coughing and Sneezing:** Please cover unexpected coughs and sneezes with a tissue or use the inside of your elbow. Used tissues should be thrown in the bathroom trash and you should immediately wash your hands with hot water and soap or hand sanitizer (washing for at least 20 seconds). If you feel a sneeze or cough coming on, or if you begin to feel light-headed, please step outside into the fresh air, exiting through the front doors.
- **Maximum Attendance:** The maximum number of people attending Mass on a Sunday at HTAC is 55 at this time. Once this number is reached, others will be sadly turned away. :-)
- **Entering/Exiting the Church for Mass (1):** All people are to enter and leave the church through the front doors. Please DO NOT use any of the side entrances. Clergy and Choir members must also enter and exit through the front doors of the church. No exceptions, please!
- **Entering/Exiting the Church for Mass (2):** At the end of Mass, people are asked to exit the church one pew at a time, beginning at the back of the church. Our HTAC Greeters will assist with this.
- **Entering/Exiting the Church for Mass (3):** The only exception to the above is the use of the elevator when necessary.

- **Entering/Exiting the Church for Mass (4):** Please remember to keep six feet away from other people when entering and exiting the church building, unless people are from the same household.
- **Entering/Exiting the Church for Mass (5):** Fr. Michael will not be greeting people at the door prior to or following Mass. However, he loves you and is so blessed that you joined in the Mass on the Lord's Day.

- **Planning to Attend Mass (1):** The Bishop is requiring that all people attending Mass on the Lord's Day have their attendance recorded (i.e., date and name). In the, hopefully unlikely, event that someone attending Mass on a Sunday contracts COVID 19, the people who attended Mass with them will be notified. This record will be destroyed after four weeks.
- **Planning to Attend Mass (2):** If you plan to attend Mass on a Sunday morning (beginning Sunday, June 14), PLEASE send an e-mail to our Parish Council Clerk, Richard Bostock, ahead of time to "sign up." This will give us an idea of how many people plan to attend. Please e-mail Richard at: richard.bostock.htac@gmail.com - or - richard.bostock@umassmemorial.org.
- **Planning to Attend Mass (3):** If you do not have access to a computer, please call Fr. Michael at 508-330-2179 to register your upcoming attendance at the Sunday Mass. If he does not answer, please leave a voice message. He will pass your information onto Richard Bostock, Clerk. If, for any reason, you do not e-mail Richard or call Fr. Michael, but are able to attend Mass, please do come anyway.
- **Cleaning/Sanitizing the Church:** We will be cleaning the church between Sundays.

- **Number of Masses on the Lord's Day:** There will be only one Mass on a Sunday for the time being. This is a temporary measure.
- **Morning Prayer on the Lord's Day:** Our 9:00 a.m. Morning Prayer on Sundays will not be offered at this time. This too is a temporary measure.

- **Clergy Serving in the Sanctuary (1):** Fr. Michael will be the only clergy person serving in the Sanctuary for the time being. This is a temporary measure.
- **Clergy Serving in the Sanctuary (2):** The only exception to the above is when clergy are ministering as Altar Servers (e.g., thurifer).
- **Clergy Serving in the Sanctuary (3):** Should Fr. Michael take ill, another priest will be appointed by him to preside and preach at the Eucharist on Sunday. The Mass will be offered. May our doors never be closed again!

- **Servers in the Sanctuary:** On most Sundays, we will only have one thurifer and one cross-bearer in the Sanctuary. Fr. Michael will appoint the Servers.
- **Gospel Procession & Sermon:** The Gospel will be proclaimed from the altar by Fr. Michael. Thus, for the time being, the Gospel procession (from the altar to the nave among God's people) will not take place. Fr. Michael will preach from the lectern which will be inside the sanctuary gate. These are temporary measures.

- **Choir (1):** Choir rehearsal before Mass on Sunday mornings and during the week is cancelled for now. This is a temporary measure. Familiar hymns and Service Music will be chosen each week.
- **Choir (2):** The Choir will be ministering from the Choir Loft, maintaining social distancing measures. They will also be required to wear a mask (although, they may wear a surgical, rather than a cloth mask) and will remain six feet back from the rail.
- **Choir (3):** We will, for a time, only have three Choir members serving on any given Sunday; i.e., the Cantor and two others. The Cantor and others (if possible) will be "miked" so that they do not have to project their voices.
- **Choir (4):** The Choir will not be joining in the processions at this time. This is a temporary measure.

- **Congregational Singing (1):** The Cantor and Choir (limited to three people) will sing the hymn, service music, etc. People may follow along, but are asked to refrain from participating by voice (although not in heart). *LIFT UP YOUR HEARTS!!!*
- **Congregational Singing (2):** We will only have one hymn per Sunday. The words will be printed in the bulletin. The hymn will be sung by the Choir, and only by the Choir, at the time of the Offertory. This is a temporary measure.

- **Feeling Ill (1):** If you are feeling ill, please stay at home.
- **Feeling Ill (2):** Please stay at home if you are ill and especially if you have a fever, dry cough, flu-like symptoms or have lost your sense of taste and/or smell. If you have any of these symptoms, please call your Doctor.
- **Feeling Ill (3):** Anyone with preexisting health conditions which may compromise them should they contract COVID 19 are encouraged to prayerfully consider remaining at home. Should you decide to stay at home, please view the Mass via live stream. Also, please let Fr. Michael know and he or one of our other clergy will bring you the Blessed Sacrament on a scheduled basis.

- **Feeling Ill (4):** Anyone diagnosed by a Doctor with COVID 19, or who is undergoing testing for COVID 19, is to let Fr. Michael know asap. Confidentiality will be kept unless an individual consents to release their name for purposes of prayer. Should a person be diagnosed with the virus, people who attended Mass the previous Sunday (or two) will be notified.
- **Feeling Ill (5):** Persons diagnosed with COVID 19 and persons living in the same house with someone diagnosed with COVID 19 must not attend Mass until cleared by a doctor.
- **COVID 19 Free:** People who had (past tense) COVID 19 and have tested negative for the virus at least twice and are cleared by their doctor, are welcome to attend Mass.

- **Tithes/Pledges/Free-will Offerings:** The offering basket/plate will not be passed. Please place your offering in the plate as you enter the church for Mass on Sunday or send your offering to, "HTAC Office, 60 Gibbon Street, Marlborough, MA, 01752." The plate will be under the care of one of our Greeters at all times. The gifts will not be brought forward during the offertory at this time.
- **Coffee Hour/Fellowship:** Coffee Hour/Fellowship on Sunday mornings will not be held at this time. This is a temporary measure.
- **Sunday Adult and Children's Christian Education (1):** Sunday Adult and Children's Education will not be held at this time. This is a temporary measure.
- **Childcare:** Childcare will not be offered at this time.
- **Sunday Adult Christian Education (2):** Please note, Fr. Michael is contemplating offering Adult Christian Education on Sunday afternoons, via Zoom. TBD.

- **Weekday Mass on Wednesdays:** Wednesday morning Mass at 11:30 a.m. will not be held for the time being. This is a temporary measure.
- **Weekday Bible Study on Wednesdays:** Wednesday morning Bible Study at 10:00 a.m. will continue via Zoom. All are welcome to join us. This is a temporary measure.
- **Noonday Prayer on Fridays (1):** Noonday Prayer on Fridays will continue via teleconference (although, we will soon be changing over to Zoom). All are welcome to join us. Following Noonday Prayer (which includes a hymn and a homily), we offer a time of free prayer for all who are able to join in.
- **Noonday Prayer on Fridays (2):** Please note, Fr. Michael may move this prayer time to another day or ask another member of our clergy to officiate. You will be informed of any changes ahead of time.

- **Mondays:** Please note that Fr. Michael is visiting all three Fire Stations in Marlborough on Mondays in order to support our first responders.
- **June's Table:** Fr. Michael, Fr. Isaac and Joanne Gauvin, our June's Table Sexton, will be in the Outreach Center every Saturday at 3:30 p.m. to accept donations for June's Table. Please see the E-NEWS for details.
- **Other Ministries:** Other ministries of HTAC will not typically be meeting at this time. If you are a Ministry Leader and wish to offer your ministry via social media (for example) or through some other means, please speak with Fr. Michael before establishing anything.
- **Fr. Michael's Days Off:** Temporarily, Fr. Michael will be taking Thursdays and Fridays as his two days off. This is a temporary measure.

Receiving the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion (when we re-open):

- **Spiritual Communion (1):** Some people attending Mass at HTAC may still be uncomfortable receiving the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion at this time. Thus, we will print the prayer for receiving, "Spiritual Communion," in the Bulletin/Order of Service each week. We will also be posting it with the Readings on-line.
- **Spiritual Communion (2):** People not receiving the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion at this time are encouraged to recite this prayer while the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion is being administered.
- **Spiritual Communion (3):** In time, Fr. Michael will strongly discourage the practice of spiritual communion for those attending Mass in person and encourage people to receive the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion (assuming they are baptized, have confessed their sins to Almighty God, believe God's Word in 1 Corinthians 10:16-17, etc.). Baptized Christians, meeting the above criteria, should not normally abstain from receiving the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion. The Eucharist is, "*The Medicine of Immortality*;" thus, to abstain from the Sacrament is to cut oneself off from life. Jesus says: "*I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh*" (John 6:51). Sin is a spiritual disease. Holy Communion is the cure. Abstention from the Blessed Sacrament has been one of the great spiritual sorrows emerging from the virus.
- **Receiving the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion (1):** People desiring to receive the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion are required to wear a mask, lowering their mask only briefly to receive the Blessed Sacrament.

- **Receiving the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion (2):** People must wash their hands with sanitizer just prior to receiving the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion. Please, no exceptions.
- **Receiving the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion (3):** People are to receive Holy Communion in the hand only. This is a temporary measure.
- **Administering the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion (1):** The Priest administering the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion will: 1) wear a mask; 2) wash his hands with hot-water and soap before administering the Blessed Sacrament and 3) will only place the Sacrament in the person's hand.
- **Administering the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion (2):** People may not receive the Sacrament on the tongue. This is a temporary measure.
- **Administering the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion (3):** Should the priest accidentally touch a person's hand when administering the Blessed Sacrament (or vice versa), the priest will wash his hands again with sanitizer before administering the Blessed Sacrament to the next person. Thus, please do your very best not to touch the priest's hand when receiving Holy Communion.
- **Administering the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion (4):** People will only be allowed to receive the Consecrated Bread (i.e., the Body of Christ) at this time. They may not receive from the Sacred Chalice ☺. In time, receiving in both kinds will once again be allowed and strongly encouraged according to Anglican practice (save those who for health reasons cannot receive the Consecrated Wine).
- **Administering the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion (5):** Only the Presider will receive the Consecrated Wine (i.e., the Blood of Christ) from the Chalice. Again, this is only for a time.
- **Administering the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion (6 - SPECIAL NOTE):** Fr. Michael is hoping, most weeks, to be able to place a drop of the Consecrated Wine (i.e., the Blood of Christ) onto the Sacred Host in order for people to receive both the Body and Blood of Christ. This may not always be possible.
- **Administering the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion (7):** Intinction of the Consecrated Bread (i.e., the Body of Christ) into the Sacred Chalice by the person receiving the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion will no longer be allowed at HTAC. Studies have shown that this practice is the least sanitary way of partaking of Holy Communion.
- **Administering the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion (8):** In the future, the priest, deacon or licensed lay Chalice-bearer may intinct the Consecrated Bread into the

Consecrated Wine and place it on the tongue of the person receiving. However, this is not allowed at this time.

- **Administering the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion (9):** People will be invited to come forward toward the Sanctuary Gate to receive the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion one at a time, keeping six feet apart. Please remain standing to receive the Blessed Sacrament/Holy Communion at the Gate of the Sanctuary (i.e., in the center). The Greeters will assist people.