

STAGE FOUR
The New Normal
As of October 18, 2022

Public Health Indicators:

- Vaccines are readily and widely available to the general public.
- Treatment of proven effectiveness is widely available.
- Home testing is easily available.

Prevention and Intervention:

- Decisions about appropriate measures to prevent and mitigate the community spread of COVID-19 have shifted to local churches. It is now more the responsibility of individuals to determine the risks and benefits of particular activities.
- The CDC remains a constant source of updated information for community spread and risk assessment

Diocesan New Normal:

- There is no limit to the number of worshipers who may attend worship and other activities, except for those who are known to be infectious, are actively sick or who display any of the symptoms of being ill. In the case of known exposures, follow [CDC guidelines](#).
- Although we can gather without limitations, worship and meetings continue both in person and virtually.
- Worshipers may wear masks throughout the service, but masks are not required.
- Pandemic restrictions on celebrating the Holy Eucharist are lifted.
 1. The offering of a chalice for direct consumption of wine is the traditional and standard practice.
 2. Where intinction is practiced, we recommend a separate chalice for intinction only. It is recommended that a eucharistic minister perform the actual intinction.
 3. Congregations may choose to continue with COVID-19 precautions depending upon the local context.
 4. Prepackaged wine and bread are prohibited.
 5. The use of small individual cups is discouraged but not prohibited.
- Widespread pastoral care for individuals and congregations is being offered for those still dealing with the cumulative impacts of the last 2.5 years of the pandemic.
- Emergency preparedness plans and strategies are in place.
- We move forward with new practices and ways of doing church that have proved helpful during the pandemic, including:

1. Increased online giving as well as in-person offerings;
2. Fruitful collaborative endeavors;
3. Right-sizing of building use and capacities to meet a growing mission field;
4. Streamlined, efficient use of financial and other resources; and
5. Strategic efforts toward the realization of key strategic missions, visions and goals.