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**Subject:** Good News and Updated Guidelines for St. John's - Please read

**Date:** Wed, May 19, 2021 3:20 pm

**Attachments:** 2021-05-14 Good news from His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH.pdf (164K)

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Dear Faithful of Saint John's,

**In case you missed them, here they are again:  
Last week's *trifecta* of important announcements about the coronavirus  
pandemic**

- 1.** The CDC advised that fully vaccinated people can now feel safe gathering in public places without wearing a mask and without concern about social distancing, because the vaccine has proven to be remarkably effective in protecting people from serious infection.
- 2.** The Municipality of Anchorage lifted the mandate requiring masks in public places, and positive case rates for Covid in Anchorage are no longer at the "high alert" level. Furthermore, all those who want to receive the Covid vaccine have had an opportunity.
- 3.** Metropolitan Joseph wrote that that he feels confident in these new CDC guidelines and that our Churches can begin to fully re-open, while at the same time taking into consideration the valid needs and concerns some of our faithful people might have. Please, I ask you to read the Metropolitan's letter by clicking [here](#). (It is also attached to this email.)

**To celebrate these announcements at Saint John's,  
we will make the following changes, effective immediately:**

**Masks and social distancing will no longer be required to attend our worship  
services,  
and there will be no more "Liturgy groups."**

Since it may take some of us a little time to get used to these changes, there will be five ways to participate in Liturgy on Sunday morning for the near future:

- 1.** Gathering in the Nave (main part) of the Church where additional chairs have been set up.
- 2.** Finding a place in the Narthex where chairs will remain set up for as long as they are needed.
- 3.** Worshipping in the Cathedral basement where live video will be broadcast and chairs will be set up for as long as they are needed.
- 4.** Joining by livestream.
- 5.** Finally, we will reserve the North wing off the Nave (on the far left as you enter)

for high risk people who are unable to be vaccinated for medical reasons (and for others who need a bit more space for a while).

We will continue to provide good air circulation in the Cathedral during our gatherings. Those who choose to wear a mask may do so. We will also have coffee and simple snacks outside on the Church lawn after Liturgy. And as before, we will adjust all of this as needed to serve us in gathering to worship. Please, feel free to let me know any of your thoughts and concerns.

We all have a lot to process as we re-gather and emerge from this long Covid year. There are also many different opinions and different experiences people have had. For now, though, perhaps the best words we can keep in mind are these familiar words from the Divine Liturgy:

***"Let us lay aside all earthly cares....,  
and with the fear of God and with faith, draw near."***

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Marc