



ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

Metropolitan Gerasimos • Presiding Hierarch Father Joseph Chaffee • Parish Priest
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ST. GEORGE THE
TROPHYBEARER

June 5th, 2020

Dearly Beloved Parishioners of St. George,

The present Covid-19 pandemic has impacted us all, disrupting our lives, affecting our families, our livelihood, our schooling, our travel, our lifestyle and for some, even their health. Some have lost loved ones. This crisis has been a dark cloud hovering over our world for too long.

As Christians we remember that we have another cloud hovering over us as well, protecting us, that “great cloud of witnesses” St. Paul reminds us of, the Saints in Heaven, the Church Triumphant, who are praying for us. Through their prayers, a ray of hope is now shining through the clouds: our parish is reopening her doors!

To facilitate the reopening of our parish and provide a clean and safe environment for our faithful parishioners during these unprecedented times, our beloved Metropolis of San Francisco has diligently set forth several guidelines (with some direction from the CDC and the California Department of Public Health) that will be put in place for now. Please read all the guidelines carefully and share them with others in your household. These are practical ways that we may “love our neighbor”, and they too may love us.

We look forward to you joining us this Sunday, whether via live-stream or at Church. We are one Parish family, the Body of Christ, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, will remain that way forever. Wishing you a blessed Pentecost,

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Joseph Chaffee
Parish Priest

Danny Andrews
Reopening
Communication Lead

Namaz Habroun
Parish Council President

Guidelines for Those Attending Church

What You Need To Know Before Attending Church

1. Elderly Parishioners—Because we love our elderly members, those who are 65+ year of age, or have serious pre-existing conditions are requested to stay home and join us in the service via live-stream.
2. Younger Parishioners—Families with small children are encouraged to be seated in the Hall. Movement in the church will be much more challenging should they be seated in the pews. It might also be a challenge for them to learn to wear masks.
3. How Are You Feeling? - If you or anyone within your household are exhibiting any signs of illness, or any of the symptoms of COVID-19 ([here](#)), or even any symptoms not related to the virus, we insist you stay home and rest. What is most important is keeping you and your family healthy and safe.
4. Online Services—We will continue to live stream our services on Facebook ([here](#)) YouTube ([here](#)), and on our website ([here](#)). If you are not connected, please call us!
5. Face Masks—Please bring a face mask: Everyone will be required to wear one inside or outside of the Church. If you do not have one, a limited supply of face masks will be available at the church during the initial re-opening. Face masks are not required for children under 2 and parental supervision is required for children 3 - 8.
6. Hand Sanitizer—Please bring some hand sanitizer with you. There will also be hand sanitizer available at the gate entrance as well as at the Narthex and Hall.

When You Arrive At Church

1. Welcoming Table – Everyone will come to the side gate and be welcomed by the Greeter/Screeners at the welcoming table. They are there to welcome you, answer any questions, assure we are feeling well, remind those not wearing a mask to put one on, and offer hand sanitizer as needed. Parish Council members will be there as well to answer any questions, and usher you into the Church or Hall.
2. Divine Liturgy Hymnals—These are available for downloading on smartphones and tablets online from our website ([here](#)). Free hard copies will be available as well: everyone is asked to personalize them and take them home, and bring them with them each Sunday.
3. VIP Service – Please allow the Ushers to escort you into the Church or Hall. They will open all doors for you. If you need to use the handrails please do so, they will be wiped down for your safety (as will any door handles used etc.).
4. Social Distancing - All parishioners are required to practice social distancing (i.e., keep a distance of 6 feet from anyone other than members of your own immediate household) when present inside and outside of the Church.
5. Greeting Each Other - We know you have been away from each other for over 3 months, however we ask that you refrain from hugging, kissing, hand shaking, or any physical contact. We know this is difficult to resist. A simple bow is a wonderful gesture of love for your fellow parishioners as well as for the icons.
6. Church and Hall Capacity – due to our State Public Health requirements, our Church building capacity has been temporarily reduced to about 35 people, so to accommodate more of our flock, we will be live-streaming the service into the Hall where chairs have been spread out 6 feet apart to hold another 60 comfortably.

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7. Weekday Liturgy—A weekday Divine Liturgy will be offered most weeks for those who would prefer to come then. Please check the church calendar on our website for dates. You may find it [here](#).
8. Parish Bulletins—will be distributed electronically via email and posted on our website. You may find it [here](#). No paper bulletins will be distributed at this time.

When You Enter Church

1. More VIP Service – Please wait to be seated – A Parish Council Member or Usher will escort you to the pews. Please note that you will not be seated at your traditional Sunday pew during this time.
2. Seating in the Church or Hall—Seating will be assigned on a first-come, first-serve basis with appropriate physical distancing of 6 feet apart. Members of the same immediate household (under the same roof) are permitted to sit together. When seated in the church, please remain in the seat given to you.
3. Leaving During the Service—If you need to leave during the service, please use the adjacent isles. If others must move to let you out, please signal to an usher and allow them to assist you. In the Hall one may move around as needed as long as physical distancing is adhered to.
4. Veneration - We ask you to not kiss the icons, the cross, the kiss of peace, the Holy Gospel or the priest's hands. To venerate the gospel, cross, or an icon, please bow your head reverently and make the sign of the cross.
5. Candles—After Entering the Narthex - Parishioners will be guided to the candle stand. Hand sanitizer will be available at candle stand. The Parish Council members will assist you with lighting candles.
6. Church and Facilities will be kept Immaculate – Maintenance Staff will clean and disinfect the Church before and after each service. Restroom facilities will be limited to two people at a time. Attendants will be present to clean and disinfect the restrooms after each use.

Receiving Holy Communion

1. Partaking—Holy Communion will be administered in the usual manner. You may however receive the Holy Gifts by tilting you head back and opening you mouth wide, so that the priest may pour/drop the Holy Communion into your mouth.
2. Extra Care—Please be very careful while partaking of the Holy Communion, and lick your lips carefully afterwards. Please refrain from using the Communion napkin to wipe your lips, otherwise: the priest will have to replace it each time.
3. Antidoron—There will not be antidoron available during Holy Communion. The Priest will offer antidoron as usual at the end of the Divine Liturgy. (It is not necessary to reverence the hand of the priest at this time).
4. When to Approach—Because we are called not to exceed the capacity of the Church at any time, we will offer Holy Communion at two separate times. The faithful seated in the Church will be ushered to the Chalice at the usual time, while the faithful seated in the Hall will be ushered in following the service after the Church has been dismissed.

Guidelines for Those Attending Church

5. Orderly Manner— Please follow the guidance of the Parish Council Members and Ushers. Space yourself according to the markings on the floor. After the faithful in the Church approach the Chalice, they are then to return to their seats. After the faithful in the Hall are ushered in to approach the Chalice, they are then to head home. We ask that those with small children or special needs be given priority.
6. Face masks—Parishioners may remove their masks momentarily when it's their turn to receive Holy Communion. During Holy Communion the Priest will wear a mask.
7. Cough or Sneeze—If one needs to cough or sneeze at anytime (due to an allergy, etc.), please do so into your arm. If it persists, please step outside until it subsides.

After Services and Leaving Church

1. Memorials – Memorials will be offered WITHOUT the koliva until further notice.
2. Our Offering—There will not be a passing of the tray. Offerings should be prepared before we come to church and may be placed in the candle slot or in the basket in the Narthex. Electronic giving is also available on our website or card reader in the Narthex. The link for online giving on our website is [here](#).
3. Coffee Hour— Following the Service, the faithful will be ushered out of the church or hall. In accordance the state guidelines, there will be no social gathering after the Church. While we understand you may want to greet each other, please continue to use safe practices and proceed directly to your cars. Please do not socialize in front of Church or in the parking lot.

We understand that these procedures and guidelines may be difficult to understand. We respectfully request that you follow the instructions from the Parish Council Members and Ushers during church services. These changes are required to return to in-person worship with as much security and safety as possible, for the well-being of our entire community. Signs will be placed around and inside the Church to guide Parishioners. We are monitoring the government guidelines and will notify you of any modifications that need to be implemented.

We look forward to seeing you again!

Thank you and God bless you!