



# ALL SAINTS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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June 12, 2020

Beloved parishioners of All Saints Greek Orthodox Church,

It is with great joy that I announce that we have received the blessing of His Eminence Metropolitan Savas of Pittsburgh to move into the “Metropolis of Pittsburgh Green Phase.” While our time in the “Yellow Phase” was short lived, we provided ample evidence that the faithful of All Saints are willing and able to follow guidelines for the safety of themselves and others.

So, what does this “green phase” mean? You will need to read all the attached and posted documentation, however, here are some important highlights:

- The attendance restriction of 25 people/per space has been lifted. We are now allowed to fill our church to **50% capacity**. Certain areas and pews are still blocked off, but adequate distancing will still be enforced to meet this requirement.
- First and foremost, we welcome back all our faithful members of All Saints. **Those of you who have been restricted by your age are now welcome to return home to your parish.** Those 65 years of age and older are asked to do so with precautions and it is suggested that those with underlying and pre-existing conditions consult their medical physicians before returning. By entering the Church, you do so knowing all the risks involved.
- Anyone who is sick (even non-COVID related symptoms), is severely immunocompromised, has been in contact with someone who has COVID-19 in the last two weeks are still asked to refrain from coming to church for the safety and well-being of those in attendance.
- As a precaution, a non-touch thermometer will be used to take your temperature as you enter the church. Someone may not realize or identify the onset of a fever or illness; this will help keep the risk factor down.
- All attendees must wear masks. Yes, short moments of reprieve are understandable, but masks are required to be worn by all attendees except for the chanters and clergy.
- As you enter the church, the names of all in attendance will be recorded and held on file for one month. This is to help in the event of a COVID 19 outbreak within our community.
- Please arrive on time! Just like you do for work and school, there will be a window of opportunity to enter the church. Please do so by 10:15am. Late arrivals and distractions could lead to someone being missed on our attendance list, a temperature not being taken, etc. and could be a serious matter in the event of a COVID outbreak in our community. Anyone who arrives after this time may be asked to go and worship in the overflow social hall depending on capacity.
- As you enter the church please be prepared with your weekly offering. No baskets will be passed at the end of the service... You have two options: 1. To drop all your day's offerings in the candle tray at once when you walk in. 2. To drop it in the new free-standing candle baskets that will be in the Narthex as you depart.

- Veneration: The faithful may return to their customary practice of venerating icons and sacred objects if they choose, or they may continue to reverence them by bowing, depending on their comfort level.
- **Holy Communion:** Our Ecumenical Patriarchate has stated, that *“The Mother Church of Constantinople knows empirically from its two-thousand-year existence that Holy Communion is ‘the antidote to mortality’ and remains firm in its Orthodox teaching regarding the Holy Eucharist.”* Your Clergy have been directed to commune the faithful in the fashion that is customary to our orthodox traditions, whether it be “Russian style” with the head tilted back, or the way you grew up receiving. This issue is non-negotiable. I know there are many opinions and hesitations regarding the reception of Holy Communion, nevertheless the Church through its hierarchy is the ultimate authority on this matter. Those of you with hesitations receiving will not be judged by your clergy or anyone else in the community for not doing so. Please do not feel pressured nor pressure anyone else on this matter. Reflect on these words recited by the clergy as the gifts are presented to the faithful, “With the fear of God, with faith, and love draw near.” As a precaution for those around you, please wear your mask as you approach the chalice, remove it to receive Communion, consume your antidoron, and then place your mask again over your face as you move amongst the congregation.
- Although permitted by the metropolis (with restrictions) coffee hours will not resume at All Saints. This will be revisited as the summer progresses. Also note that the social hall will still be used as an overflow worship space.
- Please note that these policies are also the guidelines that will be followed for any weddings, baptisms, and funerals. Yes, less restrictions could possibly be on the horizon (depending on the date of your event) but it is best to prepare accordingly.

For the time being in this new phase, there will be no registration process. It is our goal to slowly begin to fill our church to its 50% capacity. If we begin having an issue and fill faster than we imagine, a new registration process will be put into place to accommodate all demographics within our parish. For those of you who have registered using Signup Genius over the last few and for the next few weeks, thank you, however, please note that you no longer need to do so.

I would like to personally thank all of you for your continued prayers and patience. I had mentioned that it is through patience and prayer we will begin to get back to our normal routine especially our normal worship routine. Yes, there are still restrictions in place, but these are for your safety and the safety of those around you.

I look forward to seeing you all over these next few weeks!

With Prayers of health and safety,



Rev. Dn. George F. Athanasiou  
Assistant Clergy