

Holy Cross – Williamsport, PA. / COVID-19 Reopening Plan - May 27th, 2020

Christ Is Risen! Indeed He Is Risen!

Dear Holy Cross Family,

I have some great news! After all these weeks of waiting, His Eminence, Archbishop Mark has given his blessing for us to reopen the Church! I want to stress that this is the beginning of the process, and that some folks are hesitant about returning right now. This is understandable, and no one is being pressured to come back. If you feel that it is not the right time to return for Services, then we look to your returning when you are comfortable.

As you will see below, the reopening entails a lot of preparation, and we will be ready to open this weekend! After the first weekend, we may have to “tweak” some things as we proceed. It will be important that we know beforehand who will be coming, and you can simply email me priestserafim@gmail.com call the Parish office 570-322-3020, or text me 717.576.3503.

Once we hit “25,” that will be all we can allow for that weekend, but as you will see below, those who have not been the previous weekend have priority over those who were here. We are trying to rotate everyone if need be. We will then have a list for each Service and check you in when you arrive. Please be here before each Service begins and read over carefully (before you arrive) the plan below that we must follow. If you have any questions or concerns at all, please do not hesitate to let me know.

With Love and God's Blessing,

Fr. Seraphim

- The Church and Hall will be professionally sanitized before the reopening and cleaned weekly after services.
- We will allow 25 parishioners (+ the 5 “skeleton crew”) to attend services inside the Church building at a time.
- Groups of 25 can attend after they confirm via calling or emailing the Parish Office that they will be attending for each weekend. Those that did not attend a previous weekend have first choice on the next weekend, and we will keep records for each Service. We will reach out to those who do not have internet access.
- Only those who have been in the “skeleton crew” will be serving in the Altar or singing in the choir. This will only be temporary.

- No service books, papers or bulletins will be available to use; however, the bulletin will be available on the Parish website.
- Hand sanitizer will be readily available in the Church (and Hall), as well as antibacterial soap in the restrooms.
- All parishioners **must** wear face masks (age 10 and under exempt, disposable masks will be supplied if needed.)
 - *The celebrant, server and choir will not wear masks, but maintain social distancing as much as possible during the services.*
- We will keep ALL doors open so no one touches door handles.
 - *We will close the front doors at the start of the service (5:00 pm & 10:00 am) and prop them open at the end of services.*
- All the pews have been arranged to accommodate proper social distancing.
- Candles and vigil lamps will be handed out as requested by an attendant for the faithful to say their prayers and lite on their own (tapers only). The 7-day vigil lamps will be lit by the attendant.
 - *The attendant will have washed hands and donned gloves and a mask.*
- **FOR HOLY COMMUNION:** We will not be changing the way Holy Communion is distributed to the faithful. If you are uncomfortable receiving Holy Communion, again, there is no judgement or pressure. Father is available to discuss concerns if desired.
 - *Social distancing will be observed while in line to receive Communion. Marks will be placed on the floor to help keep the 6 ft. apart distance. An attendant will insure separation.*
 - *Each person in line will take their own tissue to wipe his/her own mouth following Communion and have a receptacle available to collect them afterwards. (These will be collected and burned after the service.)*
 - *Zapivka will be distributed. Only disposable cups will be used and filled by an attendant/server. Antidoron will be handed out one piece at a time by an attendant/server.*
 - *The attendant will have washed hands and donned gloves and a mask during the preparation of the Zapivka and its distribution.*
- The Cross will not be offered for veneration at the end of services. Icons and relics should not not be kissed or touched, rather, they will be venerated with a bow.
- At the end of the services all contact surfaces and restrooms will be wiped down with a CDC approved disinfectant. We do have a professional cleaning crew who will come into the Church (and Hall if necessary) and do a thorough cleaning.
- Special care will be taken with wiping down Holy Items by the priest or subdeacon, only using safe products for their cleaning.
- No Church School, Orthodoxy 101, Fellowship Hour, or any other “extra” activities. After services the faithful are asked to depart, keeping social distancing in mind.
- Father Seraphim and the Reopening Committee will be encouraging those who are advanced in age, have underlying health issues, are newborns, exposed to those who are ill, have concerns about social gatherings or having any type of

symptoms (no matter how minor) to remain home and watch the Services via Live Streaming.

- Health and Safety Guidelines will be posted inside the Church
- The Church will be open for private prayer for the faithful EVERY Saturday from 3:30 – 4:30 pm with a 25 person at a time maximum. This will be mediated by attendants.
- Live Streaming will continue on our Parish website homepage and Facebook page for those who cannot attend or are not comfortable attending at this time.