

A Safe and Joyful Return to Worship at St. John



St. John will open for public worship in small groups on Sunday, May 31. We understand that this is a challenge for all of us and we will get through it together. Thank you for your patience, your compliance and your support of these directives. They are temporary. If we all do our part, in church and outside of it, we can move together to the day when we will again congregate as a whole community, to praise God with one voice.



To attend a service, you must sign up with SignUpGenius. Because we can't all come at once, additional services will be scheduled.



When you make your plans to come to church, please arrive early and if you are sick, please stay home. We are doing everything we can to stop the spread of COVID-19.



Upon arrival, we're going to take your temperature and check you in. Masks are required with the exception of children 2 or under. No mask means no entrance into the church.



Ushers will direct you to your seat. Social Distancing will be practiced at all times in church. Up to 75 people can be in the church at one time.



Holy Communion is the Body and Blood of Christ. It does not transmit illness. Please close your mouth on the spoon.



Please do not congregate after the service is over. All non-liturgical parish activities, ministries and meetings will continue virtually.

All Services will continue to be live-streamed — we encourage those who will not be attending in person to continue to worship virtually.

We look forward to seeing you at church!

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General guidelines

1. If you have symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell), DO NOT ATTEND church and immediately seek medical attention for yourself and your household.
2. If you are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19, you are asked to refrain from attending service.

Live-Streaming of Services will continue

1. Live-streaming of our services at St. John will continue on Facebook and Livestream ([Click here to go to our Livestream page](#)). If you are not going to worship in person, we encourage you to worship virtually. For those who don't feel comfortable worshipping in person yet, there is no judgment whatsoever. We want you to do what you feel comfortable with.

Signing up to attend a service – For a full list of services, check stjohntpa.org.

1. Anyone who is going to attend a service must sign up via Signup Genius in order to attend. The Metropolis protocol requires us to record names and phone numbers of each attendee at every service in the event that a subsequent infection requires tracing. There are no exceptions to this. If you have a family of four, you will need to write each individual name down when you sign up. If you don't have a computer, call Deme Mekras (parish council member, 786-417-7256) or the office and we will sign you up for the service.
2. We will celebrate the Divine Liturgy on Saturdays and Sundays until we are able to return all together. You can sign up [HERE](#).
 - a. You may come to any Saturday or Weekday Liturgy as often as you would like.
 - b. For Sundays, please come every other week.
 - c. If you check SignUpGenius 24 hours before any service and there is room, please sign up.
 - d. If you sign up to attend a service and decide that you can't attend, please go into SignUpGenius and remove your name.
3. Paraklesis will be offered every Wednesday until we come back to "normal." You can sign up [HERE](#) to attend.
4. We have a few weekday Divine Liturgies. You can sign up [HERE](#).
5. When you come to the Divine Liturgy, **please arrive early**, as it will take some time to process everyone into the church (see below). Please be respectful and come on time. If you are attending the Divine Liturgy, please be here by 10:15 a.m. at the latest.
6. If you are one of the 10 "workers" at the Divine Liturgy, you do not need to sign up via SignUpGenius. Rather, Father Stavros or your ministry head will communicate directly with you. We will still need to record your names and numbers.

Social distancing protocol

1. Social distancing means that we separate ourselves from one another by a distance of at least six feet. We have carefully measured the church and places where people can sit. With social distancing, the church can safely accommodate 85 people. As long as social distancing is required, it doesn't matter what percentage of seating that the government says we can have, the number that our church can safely accommodate with social distancing is 85. This will include up to 75 parishioners and 10 workers (priest, chanters, altar servers, ushers, welcome ministry, nursing ministry, parish council member) at each service.
2. **All parishioners over age 2, except chanters while singing, must bring their own masks and wear them at all times. This is non-negotiable per the protocol of the Metropolis of Atlanta. No mask means no entrance into the church.**
3. All attendees must wash or sanitize their hands upon entering and exiting the church.

Upon arrival at church

1. We will be using ONE entrance to the church—the side double-doors that face the Kourmolis Center. All entry and exit to and from the church will be through these doors.
2. Before entering the church, the temperature of each person will be taken with a contactless thermometer by a designated person from the nursing ministry. If the person's temperature is above 100.4, he or she will be kindly asked to return to their home, both for their safety and for the safety of others. (Please see general guideline #1)
3. A member of the Welcome Ministry will check you in so we can verify who was in attendance at the service.
4. Please use the hand-sanitizer at one of the stations in the church.
5. Please do not reverence icons. Rather, bow as a sign of respect to the icons.
6. If you wish to make an offering, please place it in the basket that will be on a table outside. We will not be making change. You are encouraged to [give online](#).
7. We will not be lighting small candles. If you wish to light a seven-day candle, please let the usher know. They will light it and put it up by the icons when they have time, later in the service.
8. An usher will then direct you to your seat, starting in the back of the church and working their way to the front. This means that those who get here first will sit in the back, working toward the front.
9. You may only sit with people who live under the roof of your house.
10. Father Stavros will assign two people to serve in the altar at each service.
11. Memorials will be done without koliva until further notice.
12. Please download the Divine Liturgy book to your phone or device by clicking [HERE](#).
13. The Sunday bulletin will be emailed to the community before each Saturday/Sunday Liturgy.
14. The restrooms in the hall will be open. When exiting and entering the church, please only use the side doors.

During Holy Communion

1. Ushers will excuse people row by row to come and receive Holy Communion. We will excuse anyone on the sides and finally in the main section from front to back. We will not have babies or small children going first, they will be in line according to where people are sitting. Social distancing must be maintained at all times. People will go up the center aisle to receive and down the side aisles to return to their pews.
2. The faithful who are receiving Holy Communion will pull down their mask in order to receive Holy Communion. The priest will be wearing a mask while distributing Holy Communion.
3. When you approach to receive Holy Communion open your mouth to receive Holy Communion. When the spoon goes into the mouth, the faithful should close their mouth and make sure they swallow the consecrated Body and Blood of Christ. The red Communion cloth is to be placed under each person's chin by those who are assisting the clergy. Do not hold the cloth yourself, or pass it to the next person, or wipe your mouth on it. You may cross your arms over your chest, as other jurisdictions do, so as to avoid the temptation to touch the cloth with your hands.
4. The blessed bread (antithoron) will be given out at the end of church, not during Holy Communion.

After Services

1. After the dismissal, the clergy will distribute the antithoron wearing a mask and gloves and they will not offer their hands for reverence.
2. **For the continued safety of those attending church services in person, parishioners should immediately leave when the service is finished.** Do not congregate or socialize outside the church or in the parking lots. Coffee Hour has been suspended until further notice.

Other Parish Activities

1. All non-liturgical in person activities, ministries and meetings in the community will continue virtually until further notice. We encourage you to continue to participate in these ministries.
2. The church office is closed to the public but operates during regular office hours. You are encouraged to contact the office by email or phone and if necessary, by in person appointment, keeping social distancing requirements.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Fr. Stavros, Charlie Hambos, or a member of the Parish Council. We are scheduling two town hall meetings to enable you to bring your questions. They will be held on Thursday, May 28 at 7:00 p.m. and Friday, May 29 at noon. A zoom invitation will be sent via constant contact this coming week.

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