



AN UPDATE AND RECOMMENDATION ON COVID-19 GUIDELINES

November 13, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ,

Over the past several months, we have all been challenged in new ways to love our neighbors as ourselves. We have all had to discern and discover new abilities, new ways of being connected while apart, and new avenues of innovation as we live more fully into being the Body of Christ during a time of pandemic. The journey has been long and we continue to be faithful.

Over the past few days, we have seen a dramatic increase in cases of COVID-19 in the state of Missouri and across our nation. Levels of hospitalization and mortality have also seen a sharp increase. Upon the advice of the Diocesan Pandemic Task Force, I strongly encourage communities of faith that make up the Diocese of Missouri to return to either a virtual or a hybrid model of worship (10 or less people gathering in worship spaces) during this significant spike in COVID-19 cases.

Each community of faith here in the Diocese of Missouri has worked carefully, prayerfully, and diligently to care for our siblings in Christ during this time. Whether continuing to worship virtually, in-person, or a hybrid model, you have demonstrated the sacrificial love of Christian fellowship. Because of your deep love of others and careful attention to the diocesan guidelines, we are doing well and I am delighted to let you know that there have been no super-spreader events in any of our communities of faith.

Please know that I am grateful for each of you and the many ways you have adapted and adjusted to our present reality. I know that it has not been easy adjusting to this time of pandemic. Your careful and prayerful decisions to be about the business of loving as Christ loved us has helped keep each other safe. Thank you.

We may not know what the future holds, but we know who holds the future. We know that God is still God and that we hold fast to hope surrounded by the love of Jesus our Savior.

May we continue to love as we are loved in Jesus, our companion and guide.

Yours in Christ,

+Deon

P.S. An additional resource during this time comes from the [Harvard Global Health Institute](https://globalepidemics.org/key-metrics-for-covid-suppression/) which tracks COVID-19 rates by state and county, categorizing them into green, yellow, orange, and red: <https://globalepidemics.org/key-metrics-for-covid-suppression/>.