**SMALL GATHERING GUIDELINES July 28, 2020**

*These guidelines are developed for re-opening phases that allow for* ***groups of ten or fewer*** *to meet in person. They are contingent on the State Department of Health’s guidelines at the time of the event, and may be revoked.*

1. St. John’s is operating according to CDC guidelines while also taking into account our own principles for ministry. This means that while some small group gatherings may be possible, not all gathering is advisable, or preferable to an online format. Priority will be given to gatherings that suffer the most from meeting remotely, such as sacraments, counseling and physical projects such as quilting.
2. To minimize risk, all groups are asked to consider the following:
   1. Meeting outdoors greatly minimizes risk of transmission
   2. In indoor settings, larger spaces with good airflow are best.
   3. If more than one group is using the building simultaneously, efforts will be made to provide separate entrance and bathroom plans.
   4. All participants above age 2 should wear face masks covering nose and mouth. In cases where masks might be removed briefly (e.g. for medication or adjustment) particular care should be taken to keep distance and keep the interaction short.
   5. A minimum of six feet of distance should be maintained.
   6. Anyone with symptoms of fever, cough, nausea or body aches – even if they are mild – should stay home
3. Each group should ask itself who is excluded by their choice of format. Although some members may wish to meet in person, others may find it too risky, or would find following a conversation behind masks too difficult. On the other hand, if members cannot connect online, searching for an outdoor alternative may be a good step. As long as some members of a group are not ready to meet in-person, groups should seek ways to allow for both online and in-person connection.
4. All groups must schedule their building use with the church office and obtain permission before gathering. Access to the building will be permitted only for the time scheduled.
5. A group’s first meeting must have a staff host to explain building protocols.
6. Access to bathrooms, the church office, the kitchen and other previously “common” spaces may be limited.
7. Meeting leaders should have a clear communication plan for how participants will enter the building, which bathrooms are to be used, and how the event will end so that all participants are aware of the protocols.
8. Groups will be asked to wipe down tables, chairs and other surfaces they may have used before they depart with disinfectant and towels provided.