



"I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." Isaiah 43:19

July 2, 2020

Greetings, Siblings in Christ,

We miss worshiping together in the sanctuary at Christ Church ~ but continuing to worship virtually is the right thing to do for now. As we move into the fall, we will revisit the possibility of regathering for in-person worship sometime later in the fall, taking into account the on-going guidance of the Commonwealth and our Diocesan Leadership. That's the conclusion of the Christ Church's newly-formed "Regathering Committee," which consists of the Rector, Vestry member Annie Russell, and parishioners Myra Anderson, Joe Barr, Abby Carr, Brian Mukherjee and Nancy Stern.

This approach is consistent with guidance from our Diocese, which has said "we strongly encourage congregations to refrain from in-person public worship and to continue virtual opportunities for all aspects of church life." It's important that we keep each other's personal health and safety at the center of our conversation, particularly given that houses of worship have been documented sites of virus transmission. Our guiding principles are to put the safety of the church community first, to consider input from our church community on decisions, and to be guided by data, not dates, as we consider regathering in the future.

The team met for the first time June 30, 2020 to discuss the current status of our remote worship, review the activities of tenants, staff and visitors, and outline options for the future. We are following the direction from our Diocese and its bishops in "A Journey by Stages: Gathering, Serving & Growing in Massachusetts During & Beyond a Time of Pandemic." ([linked here](#)) Despite the positive trends (downward) in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts at this writing, that could easily change. In addition, it's clear that not all regions of the country are emerging from the crisis, and there's no need to put anyone at risk now. In addition, we have changes underway now to our physical plant ~ upgrades in the chapel and the installation of our new organ, and chancel lighting improvements ~ to plan around. Our plans will include soliciting feedback from the parish on our current virtual offerings, via Facebook and Zoom, as well as gauging your desire to return to church when possible, given the significant restrictions that will be in place to ensure social distancing and safety.

To quote the Diocesan guide, we are "encouraged to think of these stages as seasons of a journey that may take months or years." The Committee and Vestry will continue to monitor the situation closely and liaison with the Diocese to determine the appropriate timeframe and process for reopening. As we move forward together, any of the members of the Committee welcome your feedback and input. We are both hopeful and patient, as we consider what is desirable and what is possible in our journey forward together.

*Faithfully yours,*

The Christ Church Regathering Team

Myra Anderson, Joe Barr, Abby Carr, Brian Mukherjee, Annie Russell, Nancy Stern, and Nick Morris-Kliment, Rector.