

Dear Friends,

As you may already know as of **June 26, 2020** our region of the state of Illinois has reached phase 4 of the Restore Illinois plan. What does that mean for our church? The reality is that the Covid 19 coronavirus is still active in our city and state. Additionally, there currently is not an approved treatment or vaccine for Covid 19. To gather together in groups safely we must continue to follow precautions outlined by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). This includes staying home and self isolating if you feel sick or have been exposed to someone who may have Covid 19, wearing a face mask, frequent hand washing, maintaining physical distances of a minimum of 6 feet, and refraining from physical contact such as hugging and handshaking. Additionally, those individuals over the age of 65 and those with chronic health conditions continue to be encouraged to use extra caution and not gather in large groups as these populations are at particular risk for suffering complications and death from the Covid 19 coronavirus.

I have been working with our vestry, staff, and lay leadership for several weeks to put into place the best practices for health and safety so that SCEC is less likely to be a site of a Covid 19 outbreak. We are committed to having all these safety measures and procedures in place before resuming in-person public worship. These things take time and effort. Now that we have reached phase 4 in the state of Illinois, we will begin to work diligently on setting a date for our first back to in-person worship service. Please watch for parish communications regarding service dates, times, and reservation requirements. **Until the time we announce we are moving as a parish into phase 4, we will continue to follow the phase 3 section of our plan.**

I know many of you are eager to worship in your spiritual home at our sanctuary. And many of you may wish to continue to worship remotely together through our Facebook livestream. Please know that the Facebook livestream of worship will continue throughout phase 4, as well as many opportunities for ministry meetings and gatherings via Zoom. No one should feel any pressure to resume in person ministry. For those eager to return to in-person worship and ministry, I ask for your patience, your prayers, and your participation on our Health and Safety team. Once we are ready, we will gather together in one place and via livestream, and Christ, who has always been with us, will continue to be glorified.

In Christ, Rev. Stacy+