Dear Friends in Christ,

I would like to provide you an update regarding worship at Christ Church. In general, taking into consideration our present Covid-19 environment, worship at Christ Church is going very well. In March, we pivoted quickly to adapt to the challenges of the Virus by moving all of our services online. These services provided a way for us to keep connected, but they also unexpectedly brought new people into our community. Today, our services connect us to people in our region (Westerly and Stonington) and all over the United States and overseas. We have viewership in England, Australia, Bahrain, and India (yes, my mother and cousins are watching). We are also finding that people who could not come to worship with us in the church are now able to pray, listen to scripture, and sing hymns with us as they watch online. In other words, we are reaching many more people than we ever had before. I think the Covid-19 challenge has allowed us an opportunity to
connect with many more people. And so I believe that we will continue to have a robust online presence even after the Covid-19 challenge is a distant memory.

Although our online presence is growing, many of us long to have in-person services again. So in early June we started a taskforce for In-person Service Coordination; this committee chaired by Sarah Starkweather came up with guidelines to safely start in-person services at Christ Church again. The guidance we have developed is in keeping with Federal and State requirements, and our Diocese has also endorsed these guidelines. On Saturday, July 11, at 5 pm, we had our first in-person communion service. It was in the Rite I tradition; although this is a communion service, we did not have communion distributed to the congregation opting instead to use the Spiritual Communion Prayer after consecrating the bread and wine. Over the past two weeks the In-person Committee has developed procedures to move to the next phase for the Saturday 5pm service, adding the distribution of communion of one kind (bread only). This coming Saturday August 1st, we will be following these procedures as we distribute communion to the congregation during the service. I know the process seems to be proceeding very slowly for some but our desire is to keep us all healthy during the Covid-19 challenge.

Further evolution will happen at the Saturday 5 pm service; we plan to introduce in-person music. Although congregational singing will not be allowed because of both State and Diocesan restrictions, our Music Director George Kent will enhance the service with beautiful music with the help of a soloist. We are currently working on procedures to allow this to happen safely for all (including our musicians) by August 15.

Please remember, while our in-person service developments continue, we will continue to offer our online worship opportunities. Currently, we have the following online worship services: Morning Prayer on Wednesdays at 10 am, Compline at 6 pm on Wednesday and Saturday nights, and our 10am
Holy Eucharist service. We are also working toward offering our 10am Holy Eucharist service as an in-person service beginning on Homecoming Sunday, September 13. We hope to use what we have learned through the development of the in-person 5pm service and apply it to this service.

Through our work in developing all of our services, we hope to accomplish many objectives. Primary among our hopes is to enable our congregation members to connect to God and each other. Through these connections, we hope all of us will find joy in worship. And although we are now worshiping differently than we might ever have imagined, I know we are also drawing strength from God, the center of our worship, to face our challenges. Please keep us in your daily prayers as we adapt to meet the changing needs of our community.

Yours in Christ,

Sunil+

The Reverend Sunil Chandy
Rector
Christ Church Westerly
Dear family and friends at Christ Church,

We will begin offering “in-person” worship services at Christ Church on Saturday, July 11th, 2020, at 5:00 p.m. The service will be the Rite I Eucharist with spiritual communion in the same form we have been sharing spiritual communion in our online services.

A Reopening Working Group, comprised of a number of Vestry members and others, has been working for the past month to address all necessary issues in order to be in compliance with guidelines published by the State of Rhode Island and by our Diocese to re-open houses of worship. Please read the following to see the actions we are taking.

1. We will continue to live-stream our Sunday and Wednesday services for online worship, as well as all the other online offerings you have been enjoying, including the daily Food for Thought, and Monday Bible study and Sunday morning coffee hour via Zoom. Although we are excited to be opening again for worship “in-person”, we strongly recommend that the elders among us and those who have underlying health conditions, consider not attending at this time. In addition, if you have any symptoms of the virus or do not feel well, please observe the guidelines and do not attend these “in-person” services.

2. Worship will be at 25% capacity. We have determined the capacity for our sanctuary is about 400 people, meaning 25% capacity would be 100 people. The 25% limitation and the requirement for social distancing may mean we are unable to welcome everyone who wants to attend.

3. We will not run our fans during the service to avoid circulating contaminated air, and the paper hand fans we have provided in past summers will not be available. We will open doors and windows to the extent possible given outdoor noise that interferes with the service. You should be prepared for warm conditions in the sanctuary.
4. Regarding social distancing and face coverings all individuals who are not part of a “family” group will need to sit six feet apart. Seating will be clearly marked in our pews to assure that we maintain proper social distancing, and ushers will be available to assist. Masks will be required to attend our worship services. Please bring your own mask. We will have a small supply of masks in case someone shows up for the service but does not have a mask.

5. We will comply with restrictions on choirs and singing by not having our choir participate in worship, and there will be no congregational singing during our in-person services. We are exploring options so that we can have music in our in-person services in the future. Any music during our worship services will comply with all guidelines in effect at that time.

6. Hand sanitizer will be available at the entrance and exits of the church, and there will be other hand sanitizing stations available throughout the church.

7. The order of worship will be available in our weekly e-blast so you can follow it on your phone or tablet during the service. There will be no printed bulletin available at church. The Spiritual Communion prayer will be printed and left in the pews for you to use at that point in the service. Prayer books will be available because we have been advised that virus transmission is unlikely from printed material that has not been touched in at least a week. If you are concerned about this, we encourage you to bring your own copy of the BCP.

8. The parish house bathrooms will be available for use during worship. The Sanctuary and the bathrooms will be cleaned each week by our cleaning service.

9. We will set up a station at each entrance for you to place your offerings. Worshipers will be instructed to place their offering in the plate/basket without touching the plate/basket.

10. In order to ensure that worshipers are aware of these procedures, and that attendance does not exceed our reduced capacity, we will use an online registration tool for sign-ups in advance. A link to that site will be sent to you. You open the link and answer the questions that are asked. If our sign-ups exceed the maximum number we can have at the 25% capacity limit, we will do our best to find a way to accommodate those who wish to join us for “in-person” worship.
11. Entry and exit protocols have been established to preserve safe social distancing. You may enter through either the main entrance or the Elm Street entrance. The parish hall entrance should not be used. Upon entering there will be hand sanitizers. Ushers will direct you toward the sanctuary and to your seat. Following worship, the ushers will release the congregation in an orderly manner to maintain social distancing. Assisted by the ushers, you may exit through the either the main entrance or the Elm Street door. Please be mindful of maintaining social distancing when entering and leaving the sanctuary.

At this time, there will be no gathering following the in-person service. As noted above, Sunday morning coffee hour is available via Zoom.

The Reopening Working Group

Barbara Capalbo
Lisa Kitchen
Natalie Pukas
Tom Quaratella
Rich Roy
Molly Schonenberg
Sarah Starkweather, Chair and COVID Coordinator

Fr. Sunil Chandy, Rector
Betsey Rice, Senior Warden
Caswell Cooke, Junior Warden

June 30, 2020
Covenant for Regathering

I promise, to the best of my ability with God’s help, to abide by the guidelines of the Diocese of Rhode Island for participation in church as we regather during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In faithfulness to the Baptismal Covenant (BCP p. 304-305), I will strive to:

Love my neighbor as myself, I will...

- Wear a mask or scarf over my nose and mouth at all times in church buildings, except momentarily to receive the sacrament or lead worship by an assigned speaking part, and follow public health guidelines for hand sanitizing and disinfecting.
- Only attend worship if I am non-symptomatic for the COVID-19 virus or any other transmittable disease that could compromise the health of another person also attending.
- Abstain from attending if doing so would put me at greater risk due to my own health status.

Respect the dignity of every human being, I will...

- Make no physical contact with people beyond the members of my own household.
- Maintain a six foot or more distance from other members of the congregation.
- Respect any requests for distance, masking, cleaning, and disinfecting to ensure the safety and comfort level of others.

Seek and serve Christ in all people…

- Support the decisions of my diocesan and congregational leaders.
- Stay connected with others in my community by telephone, video chat, mail, or other means.

This is our expectation for all those who wish to worship with us in person. By participating in our worship, you assume responsibility for following the above, and acknowledge the risks of participation in an in-person gathering.

June 2020
If you’ve been watching any summer T.V. you’ve probably heard that relentless jingle inviting you to “Sail away on the Block Island Ferry, and leave your troubles behind...” It is tempting during this short window of summer in vacation wonderland to want to get away and rest and refresh ourselves, to enjoy a change of scenery and activity. Especially after these last several months.

This year summer vacation is likely to be a “staycation,” something that usually turns into work with a different name. Now that “work is home and home is work,” taking a break from work is a critical part of self-care, but “getting away” is not so easy, or even safe. When you are staying in the same house or apartment you were working from only yesterday, it is hard to “unplug” and disengage.

I recently took a week off, at home, and spent my time doing things I normally do not. The first was to clean up my email and put it aside. There was time to declutter my den and desk, and haul a lot of useless stuff to the dumpster. But there was also quality time outdoors with my family, trips to the beach, porch sitting, favorite foods, crossword puzzles and the New Yorker Magazine. And baseball is back! I stayed up late, got up late, and for a few days didn’t even turn on the computer. I did not go as far as my friend who takes his watch off the first day of vacation, but it must be equally as liberating.

The most unusual and out of the ordinary experience was not “doing church” in any form - but I give thanks for the change of pace and focus, the company of loved ones, and the gift of a holy rest.

Onwards,
Anne
A warm thank you to The Reverend Sandra Haines-Murdocco!

Dear Friends at Christ Church,

Please join me in celebrating the ministry of The Reverend Sandra Haines-Murdocco at Christ Church. Over the years with Sandra, I have found her friendship and wisdom profoundly inspiring. I know many of you have found her to be a nurturing pastor as well. As you read the attached note, you will understand that her ministry is calling her elsewhere. However, please be aware that she will always have a home here at Christ Church. We are profoundly grateful for her ministry here and wish her well on her new endeavor!

Sunil Chandy+

25 June 2020

Dear Sunil,

As you prepare to reopen Christ Church, I thought it best to let you and the congregation know, officially, that I will not be continuing as a member of the staff. I have been wrestling with this decision for some time and the Covid-19 crisis gave me the opportunity to put things in perspective. At this point in my spiritual journey, I am feeling called away from parish ministry. I have served in parish ministry, in various capacities, for 32 years. I have loved my time at Christ Church and in the several parishes I have served, but now I feel called to express my priestly ministry in other venues.

You have a wonderful ministry at Christ Church and I’m proud to have played a small part in supporting you in that ministry. You and the people of Christ Church will always have a special place in my heart and in my prayers.

God Bless,

Sandra (Don’t call me Sandi or Mother) Haines-Murdocco+
Pastoral Care

The Pastoral Care Commission wants you to know we are here and care for you.

We are definitely dealing with a different time with being in the throes of the pandemic due to the active corona virus - Covid19. Due to the ability of the virus spreading to others especially by upfront conversation, we are not able to visit in your homes. We are however, available by phone and will be more than happy to speak with you. If you call the church office at 401-596-0197 a message can be given to any member of the Pastoral CoVid Outreach Team who will then contact you. The team has been actively calling parishioners to check on them and offering support. If you have not been called and feel the need to speak with us, please don’t feel you are left out. Call the office. We do not want to miss anyone!

Please help us keep our prayer list current! Take a look and send any updates to communicate@christchurchwesterly.org. Also, contact us if you would like to be placed on the Thanksgiving List of Healing. Thank you,

The Pastoral Care Commission.
BLACK LIVES MATTER RALLY
A message from Kristy Allardyc...  
Christian Formation is the lifelong process of growing in our relationship with God, self, others and all creation.  
During the time that we have not been able to have in person Sunday School, Alison Patton, Lisa Ornberg and Dana Pancaro have been making Sunday School videos for the younger classes and posting them on our Facebook group for the children. In each lesson we tell a Bible story/lesson and guide the children in crafts, science, and snacks that go with each lesson. We are extending an invitation for the older children to also join this group. We feel that the older children would also enjoy it, especially the 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders. To join the group do a search on Facebook for Christ Church Sunday School - Westerly, RI.  
During the summer we have dedicated each week to a day of creation. To get the full effect you might want to start with day 1.

We also continue to gather in Wilcox Park for Sunday School every other Sunday, weather permitting for lessons, crafts and socially distant fellowship :D! This past week we created pinwheels showing God’s gifts for which we are all grateful.

As we look forward to the fall, and hope for Sunday school to resume, please consider volunteering your time as a Sunday School teacher. Even if you are able to only commit for certain Sundays or as an assistant or Substitute, I’d be very grateful!!

Be well!  
Kristy

AUGUST TRIVIA

Some Saints and Scholars for the Summer  
1. Aug 11 is when Clare, Abbess of Assisi, is observed. Who was she?  
2. Aug 28 is the Feast Day of Augustine, Bishop of Hippo. What do we know about him?
1. Clare has a long history with St. Francis of Assisi. In the late 12th c., the church had become weak and spiritually impoverished, and it was during this time that Francis renounced his wealth and established the order of Franciscans. At the first gathering of the order in 1212, Francis preached a sermon that was to make a radical change in the life of one of those there- the 18 year old Clare. Born in 1194 to a wealthy family, she was inspired by Francis’ words with the desire to serve God and to give her life to the following of Christ’s teaching. She sought Francis out and begged to join his order, placing her jewelry on the altar as an offering. He could not refuse, and placed her in a nearby Benedictine convent. Soon after, she was taken by him to a poor dwelling beside the church of St. Damian of Assisi. She would later become Mother Superior of the order, and governed there for 40 years, caring for the sisters and doing whatever Francis directed. She died in 1253 and Aug 11 was designated as her feast day.

2. Augustine, perhaps the greatest theologian in the history of Western Christianity, was born in 384 in Roman North Africa, in what is now Algeria. In his restless search for truth, he was attracted to various philosophies, and was constantly engaged in an inner struggle with his personal morals. Finally, under the influence of his mother Monica, he surrendered to the Christian faith in the late summer of 386, and was baptized by Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, on Easter Eve in 387. After returning to North Africa in 391, he was chosen by the people of Hippo to be a presbyter, and four years later he became their bishop. His spiritual autobiography, “The Confessions of St. Augustine,” written shortly before 400, is a classic of Western spirituality. He wrote his greatest work, “The City of God,” after Rome had been sacked by the Visigoths in 410. He died in Hippo on Aug 28, 430.

Other notable dates: Aug 6 is the Transfiguration of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and it also happens to be the anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, Japan. As we observe the 75th anniversary of the end of WWII this month, prayers for world peace would be appropriate. There are several suitable ones in the back of the BCP for your consideration.
Christ Church Virtual Worship Services
Available Saturdays, Sundays and Wednesdays

MORNING PRAYER
WEDNESDAY MORNING 10AM
FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM LIVE

CHRIST CHURCH

Compline

6pm Live
Every Wednesday & Saturday
Facebook & ChristChurchWesterly.org
For more detail please navigate to:

https://www.christchurchwesteny.org/eventcalendar/

August 2020
Christ Episcopal Church

CLERGY

The Rev. Sunil Chandy, Christ Church Rector
The Rt. Rev. David Joslin, Rector Emeritus; Bishop in Residence
The Rev. Erik Larsen, Assistant to the Rector
The Rev. Sandra Haines-Murdocco, Priest Associate
The Rev. Deacon Anne Burke, Deacon

STAFF

George Kent, Organist & Choirmaster
Jacquelyn Smith, Parish Administrator; Wedding Coordinator
Dorothy Adams, Office Assistant
Kristy Allardyce, Director of Christian Formation
Madeline Therrien and Sarah Gruhzit, Childcare Coordinators

VESTRY

Betsey Rice, Senior Warden
Caswell Cooke, Jr., Junior Warden
Sarah Starkweather, Clerk
Stephanie Blanchette, Treasurer

Fred Allardyce          Doug Lawrence
Barbara Capalbo        Emily Mugge
Mike Evering           Natalie Pukas
Katherine Hoxsie       Thomas Quaratella
Lisa Kitchen           Richard Roy
Paul Kuhn              Molly Schonenberg

Service Hours
(To Be Resumed Post Quarantine)
Saturday 5:00 p.m.
Holy Eucharist spoken service
Sunday 8:00 a.m.
Holy Eucharist spoken service
Sunday 10:00 a.m.
Choral Eucharist
w/Children's Chapel and Nursery Care

Wednesday 7:00 a.m.
Holy Eucharist
Wednesday 10 a.m.
Holy Eucharist
Wednesday 10:45 a.m.
Bible Study

COME JOIN US!

7 Elm Street | Westerly, RI 02891
401-596-0197
christ-church@verizon.net