

Saint Demetrios Church Welcomes You Back!



Fr. Steve, Olga Bookas & Parish Council



"Let us not give up assembling together..:"

Hebrews 10:25

PHASE ONE

Information regarding the Re-opening of St. Demetrios Parish – Effective May 31, 2020

WHAT TO EXPECT

How our church experience will be temporarily modified in this phase:

1

LIMITED ATTENDANCE

State and local regulations limit the number of people who are permitted to gather for liturgical celebrations to 50 people or less.

2

SOCIAL DISTANCING

State and local regulations require the parish to designate seating areas that abide by current social distancing guidelines, which require at least six feet between households. You may not be able to sit in your regular area. Everyone will be asked to depart immediately following worship.

3

WORSHIP ADJUSTMENTS

Your experience during services will feel different than before the start of the pandemic. There will be smaller crowds. All attendees, over the age of five, are required to wear face masks. You are asked to reverence sacred objects, and/or greet one another by bowing instead of kissing. These temporary measures help ensure the safety and comfort of all.

4

HOLY COMMUNION

Our Orthodox Christian faith and worship remain unchanged at their core. However, with pastoral sensitivity toward all parishioners during this unique time, you will receive specific instructions from Fr. Steve and the Parish Council members in attendance, regarding Holy Communion.

5

COMMUNITY EFFORT

Father Steve has been praying for all of our Saint Demetrios parishioners and working together with the Archdiocese and Parish Council for the well-being of all our faithful. These temporary adjustments will be modified as things progress. In the meantime, they require extra dedication and work from our priest, parish staff and parish council members. Thank you for supporting us and moving forward together in a spirit of love.



BEFORE SERVICES:

What you are asked to do and understand before and as you arrive:

1

ADVANCE REQUESTS ARE REQUIRED TO ATTEND

In the State of Connecticut, worship services are allowed to take place with up to 50 persons (including the priest) present. Larger churches may require reservations, but at St. Demetrios, we do not anticipate to reach the 50 persons capacity as we are a small community. If anything changes, we will establish procedures to ensure all parishioners have opportunities to attend services if they wish.

If you have questions, you may call our Church Office at 860 583-3476 or Olga Bookas at 860 940-8716 and we will respond at our earliest convenience.

2

WHO IS NOT RECOMMENDED TO ATTEND

Those with any signs or symptoms of any acute illness (whether it is COVID or not) MUST stay home, as should those who have come into contact with (COVID-positive persons within the last 2 weeks. In accordance with State Guidelines, those who are at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19 (65 years or older, live in a long-term care facility, underlying medical conditions such as asthma, heart conditions, immunocompromised, diabetes, obesity, kidney disease, or liver disease) should not enter the church building at this time and should continue to participate in services on line. Questions should be directed to your healthcare provider.

3

PREPARE FOR OFFERINGS IN ADVANCE

To minimize the handling and exchanging of currency in the church, please consider bringing a prepared envelope with your offering and place it in the tray. If you like to light a candle, the Parish Council member will be wear gloves and give you the candles. A red candle will be brought upfront by a Parish Council member. We will not be passing a tray during services and we will have a stand with a tray to leave your offering. We appreciate it!



DURING SERVICES:

What you are asked to do as you enter and attend worship services:

1

ON-TIME ARRIVAL

Because our parish council will need to have you sign up, please arrive at 9:00 am for Orthros and 10:00 am for Divine Liturgy. The inside door will be open so we appreciate coming in quietly.

We will have the side Hall entrance doors open. The main Church doors will be locked. We ask that only one family unit at a time enter the Narthex - and that all others patiently wait outside (maintaining social distance) until they are able to enter the Church. Consider leaving personal belongings safely locked in your car. The parish council will monitor the front door area until all attendees are inside.

2

PLEASE BE RESPECTFUL

The Parish Council will do their best to assist you with candles and any questions you may have. Since we are **not required** to take reservations at this time, please use common sense for social distancing.

3

MASKS REQUIRED

All attendees over the age of five are required to wear protective face masks.

4

FOLLOW THE SIGNS

Entering the church, please enter by the right or left side. There will be no designated seating areas. These have been prepared in advance to provide safe social distancing and need to be respected for everyone's well-being.

5

YOUR SEATING AREA

No designated seating areas will be provided at this time, so please make spacing between individuals and family sections. Members of the same household may be seated in the same section without social distance between them. Everyone is required to remain in their seating area throughout the service except for receiving Holy Communion and for restroom needs, unless there is an emergency.

6

NO ALTAR BOYS OR CHOIR

There will be no altar boys or choir at this time. All altar boys and choir members are asked to please sit with their families in the pews.

7

HOW TO RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION

At the time for communion, Fr. Steve, with the assistance of the PC members, will give you specific directions as of how to receive Holy Communion. Please remain at your seating place until someone instructs you to come and receive Holy Communion

AFTER SERVICES:

What you are asked to do and understand after worship services:

1

MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCE ON EXITING

Please follow the directions provided by the priest and the guidance of any ushers regarding exiting with social distance.

2

PLEASE DEPART IMMEDIATELY

Much as this goes against our common practice following services, please do not congregate in the Narthex or other areas of the church building. All attendees are asked to directly depart following the service.

3

COFFEE HOURS-NOT YET!

Coffee hour, lunches and other social gatherings are not to be held during this phase. Please understand they will return as soon as possible when restrictions are loosened.

4

REMEMBER

Your positive support of the outlined measures for our re-opening, are meant to help us all be uplifted as we continue in prayer, hope, and strength in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

5

PRAY WITH US

We thank all who have participated in prayers and have sent requests to light candles. No weekday services will be attended in-person at this time until further notice. We continue to pray for the people who have been affected by the Corona virus and have lost loved ones. May their memory be eternal.

6

CONTINUE TO CONTRIBUTE - CONTINUE TO PRAY!

Please do your best to keep your stewardship contributions current and up to date as best as possible considering the current circumstances. Donations can be mailed to the Church Office.

7

THANK YOU!

Fr. Steve, Olga Bookas and the Parish Council members thank you for your understanding, support and cooperation during these temporary measures. We will continue to do our best to keep you informed as things move forward.

