

Covenant for Gathering Anew: Building Use

The Episcopal Diocese of Central New York

Parishes may complete this Covenant to request permission from the Bishop to use church buildings within the Step 2 guidelines published by the Diocese at cnyepiscopal.org/faithful-response-coronavirus.

Completed Covenants may be sent to the diocesan office via email to kmcdaniel@cnyepiscopal.org.

Affirming that God is calling Central New York Episcopalians to live into our shared vision of a **world healed by love**, we renew our commitment to love God, one another, and all God's creation by:

- Sharing God's love and hope with our communities in this uncertain time;
- Keeping Jesus' command to "remember the least of these"--the most vulnerable members of our community--by limiting physical contact and initiating practices to slow the spread of infectious disease;
- Continuing to provide people with the very best pastoral care now and in the months to come;
- Continuing prayer, worship, and formation, whether gathered in-person or online.
- Continuing community outreach ministry where this is safe and feasible;
- Following the diocesan guidelines published at cnyepiscopal.org/faithful-response-coronavirus;

We covenant with God and one another to care for our communities through our faithful response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

(Please provide written responses to the following questions to demonstrate your commitment to upholding diocesan guidelines and requirements for safety within your ministry contexts.)

1. We confirm that we have reviewed the [New York State Interim Guidance for Religious & Funeral Services During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#):

We have done so

2. We confirm that we completed the New York State Business Affirmation (available at <https://forms.ny.gov/s3/ny-forward-affirmation>) on this date:

We have done so

3. We confirm that we have completed a Safety Plan and conspicuously posted it in the church building (view the [NY Forward Safety Plan Template](#)):

We have done so.

4. We will maintain connection with those who do not gather in-person by:
 - Continuing to livestream all Sunday services
 - Continuing to offer daily morning prayer via FaceBook Live
 - Continuing to have Zoom Coffee Hour
 - Producing a weekly email newsletter from the rector to the parish.
 - Mailing the newsletter to those who do not have email
 - Mailing service bulletins to those who cannot attend.
 - Calling parishioners to check in on them.
 - Offering teleconference services regularly to shut-in community members without internet access.
5. We commit to cleaning and disinfecting our building thoroughly before re-entry and to cleaning and disinfecting common spaces before and after each use. Our plan to carry out such cleaning and disinfecting is:
 - We have removed as many soft furnishings as we can to limit the need to clean these surfaces.
 - We have removed shared books from pew racks.
 - Our sexton will clean all common spaces after each use using products listed on this CDC site: following products:
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>
 - We will also space uses of our worship spaces in time. The CDC indicates that spaces that have been unoccupied for 7 days or more will only need routine cleaning, because the virus that causes COVID-19 has not been shown to survive on surfaces longer than that.
6. We will ensure that renters and outside groups and individuals using our building uphold diocesan guidelines and the parish's plan by:
 - We will post these guidelines at each entrance to the worship space and the building entrances.
 - We will communicate directly with leadership of outside groups via:
 - Verbal communication

- Email communication
 - Printed copies of the guidelines and plan
7. We will continue to encourage and invite stewardship by:
- Broadly disseminate our Tithely link and online stewardship information
 - Continuing to produce stewardship videos and messaging to the congregation.
8. If someone who has been in the church building contracts COVID-19, we will communicate with our congregation and with anyone who may have come into contact with that individual, while upholding that individual's privacy, by:
- Keeping a list of all who attend every parish event
 - The rector communicating with the parish that an exposure may have happened on a given date and time.
 - Using the advance sign up sheet for events to cross-check attendance.
9. If someone who has been in the church building contracts COVID-19, we will conduct an intensive cleaning prior to its next use by:
- We will immediately close the building to all staff and visitors, and not re-enter for at least 24 hours, as recommended by the CDC here:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>
 - If possible, the building will remain closed for 7 days, after which the CDC indicates that extra disinfection will not be necessary.
 - Our sexton will wear appropriate PPE, including gloves, mask, and coveralls, and will use CDC-approved products as listed here:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>
 - We will follow the CDC guidelines found on the page listed above
10. We will communicate diocesan guidelines and the parish's plan to the congregation by:
- Posting our plan and a link to the diocesan guidelines on our web page.
 - Sharing the link to the plan and the diocesan guidelines on our facebook page

- Describing the plan and sharing the link to the plan in the rector’s weekly e-newsletter.
- Having printed copies available at in-person parish events.
- Mailing a copy of the plan to parishioners without email access.

We ask for God’s grace and help as we faithfully follow Jesus faithfully as a community of love and faith in these difficult times.

Parish and City: **St. John’s Ithaca**

Signatures:

By typing your name and the date below, you are signing this Covenant. This Covenant should be signed by the priest (where applicable) and wardens of your parish. If there is only one warden, please ask a vestry member to sign.

Priest:	Megan Castellan	Date:	7/30/20
Warden:	Sara VanLooy, Senior Warden	Date:	7/30/20
Warden:	Matthew Sanaker, Junior Warden	Date:	7/30/20