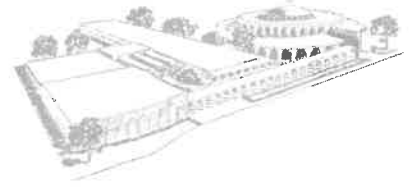




SS. Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Cathedral

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May 28th, 2020

Faith Stewards of the Ss. Constantine and Helen Cathedral,

We greet you in the peace and love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We have spent the days since the COVID-19 pandemic swept the nation and our world unable to gather as a church family for prayer, worship, and the reception of the sacraments. Through these difficult months, we have devoted ourselves to fervent prayer and entreaty to God for those sick with the virus, for frontline workers, for our civil and church leaders, and so that we could once again be united to our church family.

We believe that the day we have been praying for is steadily approaching. While we are not sure of a firm date when we will be able to welcome you all back into the church, we are working diligently to once again open our doors to you. We continue to pray that this day comes soon, and we ask that you join us in offering this prayer as well.

That being said, the experience of coming to church will be different once we are able to open our doors. There will be new requirements and procedures put in place to allow us to celebrate the Divine Liturgy as safely as possible.

Below is a list of these new protocols. Please read them over carefully. A greater familiarity with the protocols will result in an easier transition to the new worship experience at our Cathedral. You can also find more information on our website: ssconstantineandhelen.org. Please understand that these protocols are subject to change, and we will do our best to update you.

We thank you for your continued patience and prayer and hope to be able to announce a re-opening date soon.

In Christ's Service,

Fr. Theodore Poteres
Cathedral Dean

Fr. Dimitrios Burikas
Associate Pastor

Outline of New Safety Protocols at the Ss. Constantine and Helen Cathedral

Before Attending Service

- The church (or areas used for worship) will be sanitized before each service.
- The Church will only be allowed to hold as many people (100-150 max) as can maintain social distancing (6 feet distance).
- Due to the limited seating available, every person who is planning on attending services will need to register through the Church Office (219-769-2481) between 11am-1pm, Monday through Friday. Registration will be on a first come, first served basis. This will allow us to ensure that we can accommodate everyone. Those who come without registering will not be allowed to enter.
- According to the directives of the Metropolis of Chicago, the high-risk population and those caring for them should not attend services.
 - The Cathedral will be using a system of self-reporting. We will not be verifying your age or medical history at the door.
- Those who have tested positive for COVID-19, who are in the same household as someone positive for COVID-19, or who are feeling sick should not attend services.
- Services will continue to be streamed on our Cathedral's Facebook page and Youtube Channel for those who cannot or may not feel safe to attend.

Coming the Church

- Every attendee will need to check in upon arrival at the designated area in the Exo-Narthex. There will be a brief screening process (temperature check and four verbal questions) conducted at the sign-in table.
- Every attendee will need to wear masks (you must provide your own mask) at all times while they are in the physical area of worship, except when receiving Holy Communion. The only exception will be small children.
- Use non-contact greetings (waving, bowing of the head) with fellow parishioners instead of the traditional hugging, kissing, or shaking hands. Social distancing must be maintained. Please do not walk about the church proper to greet, talk, or visit with one another.

In the Church

- There will be hand sanitizer stations at the entry to the church, at the candle stand, at the entry into the Nave, and at the solea.
- There will be no veneration of icons, sacred objects, or the priests' hands.
- Parish council members will distribute candles to the faithful to light. You will be asked to sanitize your hands after lighting candles.
 - Parish Council members will light and place the 3-hour votive candles and 5-day red candles where you wish. Parishioners will not be able to take their candles to the iconostasis or the candle stand behind the choir area.
- No paper bulletins, monthly newsletters, or other items will be distributed to those in attendance.
- Due to the need to socially distance, a Parish Council member or designated usher will escort you to your seat. Please do not insist on sitting in "your spot", as the ushers' only concern will be maintaining social distancing.
- Every other pew will be available for seating with six feet in between each worshipper.
 - People living in the same household can sit together.
- There will be no liturgical books in the pews.
- There will be no distribution of antidoron, artoklasia, or kolyva.
- Holy Communion will be distributed at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy. Ushers will direct people to approach to observe social distancing. Sanitize your hands before approaching the chalice (sanitizer stations will be available on the solea).
- After receiving communion, families will depart directly from the side doors to their cars to return home. Please do not congregate in the parking lot.
- The Church will be sanitized after services conclude.

Please remember that it is your choice whether to attend church or not. It is your choice whether to receive Holy Communion or not. Do not be judgemental to those who do or don't.