

6 January 2021

Dear St. Stephen's,

Given recent rapid increases in numbers of infections of Covid-19 and the news of a more contagious variant of the virus spreading in our nation, I am making the decision for us to return to Phase I for the coming month. This return to Phase I will begin Monday Jan 11th. I will be able to communicate this decision on a number of platforms this weekend including this letter, on our website, in our announcements, in our bulletins, and in person during worship and online service Saturday and Sunday.

What this means: We will have only our Sunday morning 10:30am worship time, broadcast, as it is now, on Facebook Live. It will be available on our website and on FB following the service for watching at other times.

The only people who will be present in the church to assist with worship include: Myself, Mike for music, cantor(s) for singing, and a Eucharistic Minister for readings and prayers, and Mark our camera/tech helper. We will NOT have a Saturday night service, nor will we have Wednesday morning service.

This morning, 1/6/21, the Catholic Church Diocese of Tucson has decided to suspend services in person for a month. Last night the evening news reported that Arizona has the highest per capita infection rates in the world. Out of an abundance of caution, I believe it is prudent for us to take a time-out and do our part to try to reduce the possibility of infection either among ourselves or with those we may come in contact with.

You may contact the church via phone (520-458-4432) or email (revallison@ststephensaz.org) and we will get back to you. You may also contact me directly via text or phone call: 9am to 6pm 562-743-3784 (c), emergency after 6pm call 520-355-2436 (h).

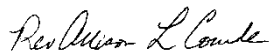
I regret that this is happening among our communities and I remain hopeful for improvements through vaccines and staying at home whenever possible to reverse our current trends. As soon as you are able to be vaccinated, I encourage you to do so. If you have concerns about the safety of the vaccine, we just published several pages of explanations from reliable and trustworthy medical doctors about the vaccines. Please see our website for that document to download.

I will be offering some online opportunities for us to engage with each other for support and spiritual growth in the coming weeks. I welcome your ideas or requests for such topics to discuss and explore together.

Thank you in advance for continuing your financial support of our church through mailing in your contributions. Although we will not be using the church as much in the coming month, the usual bills will still need to be paid, and the staff and I are still working – just most of the time it will be remotely.

Peace,

The Reverend Allison Cornell



Rector, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church