The *Thriving in a COVID-19 World Task Force* for the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester recognizes the need to adapt as circumstances change throughout our diocese. Please see the memo below developed by the *Regathering Group* led by the Rev. Dan Burner of the Task Force. It is our hope to remain vigilant and informed so that we prioritize the health of our parishes and surrounding communities as a way to witness to the love of Jesus Christ. If you have questions or need clarification please contact the Diocesan office.

Guidelines for Suspension of in-person Church Services

Based on the fact that most COVID-19 statistics are based on the number of cases per thousand, parishes in the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester should be prepared to suspend in-person services for a minimum of two weeks, including at least two Sundays, upon learning from their county's Department of Health that a person who has attended a service has tested positive for COVID-19 and that all others who were in attendance at that service need to be identified for contact tracing. The case or cases identified would need to be monitored to determine its progress for impact on the resumption of services.

Additionally, parishes need to be prepared to suspend in-person services if their local county COVID-19 infection rate rises above 5% on any day. We cannot wait for a trend to become evident; we must respond at the first indication that there is a possible spike and observe the two-week two-Sunday period which complies with the incubation period of the virus.

Resumption of in-person services would be based on the county returning to a maximum of 2% cases over a seven-day period in the county in which the parish is located, and resolution of any cases in the parish.

For purposes of tracking your county go to:

https://covid19tracker.health.ny.gov/views/NYS-COVID19-Tracker/NYSDOHCOVID-19Tracker-Map?%3Aembed=yes&%3Atoolbar=no&%3Atabs=n

Once there, select your county and look at the data for the last day recorded. Take the number of positive results from COVID tests and divide it by the total tests for that day. This will give you the current infection rate.