



June 25, 2021

Dear Members and Friends of First Church

In a year of many firsts, changes and challenges, this congregation is about to embark on a new experience with much joy and celebration: First Church will be opening its doors again for live worship on Sunday July 4. The Deacons are excited to be part of this joyful and celebratory time, and want to share with you some information as to how our worship life will work, once we begin to welcome folks back within our church walls.

While many of our friends and neighbors cannot wait to walk into the Sanctuary and reclaim that favorite pew, we do expect some in our community will continue to worship virtually; some maybe for a brief period of time and some may continue permanently.

In addition to our physical re-opening, our ministry leaders have been working hard to adapt our worship to support an ongoing remote worship along with our live Sunday services. We want our tradition of radical hospitality to extend to folks who will continue to participate remotely on Sundays, to ensure all can access our time of worship, even if their physical presences is not possible due to issues of health, accessibility or distance. It is our goal to make remote worship an extension of our Sanctuary service, so that those worshipping virtually can share sacred time and space with those who are participating physically.

This, like many experiences over the last many months, in and out of church, is a new challenge and opportunity for this community. Your Deacons support this effort to incorporate this additional facet into live worship, as it extends our mission and message far beyond our old physical barriers. We have faith that this will lead to a more inclusive and opening church experience not only to our current members but to others in the community who are not able to join us physically on Sundays. We know that learning how to share space with folks in both live and virtual platforms simultaneously will take a little time and patience but we are confident that we can overcome any obstacles with enough faith, joy, ingenuity and hard work.

We will be communicating again in the next few weeks with more specific detail as to what may change in Sunday services, and we welcome your thoughts, input and most of all your prayers as we take these next steps together.

In Joy and Faith
The Deacons of First Church