

St. John's Episcopal Church, Walpole, NH

Vestry Disaster Policy

Adopted 10 August 2009

In the event of a natural disaster or epidemic/pandemic, the Vestry of St. John's Church, Walpole, supports the decision making authority of the Rector and Wardens to act as follows:

Public gatherings (services and meetings)

- The Rector and Wardens and/or Vestry will make the decision to cancel the Eucharist or other meetings based on information available to them, in conjunction with the Town of Walpole, as to the severity of the event
- No potluck dinners will be held during times of high risk of disease infection
 - Coffee hour—Coffee only, use paper cups
 - No food preparation
- Community programs and non-essential gatherings will be cancelled when the infection risk is moderate or higher
 - includes Soul Friends, Art After School, Knit & Nibble, Bazaar work sessions, etc.

Liturgical

- Highest infection risk—No meeting at all
- High but less severe risk --Change liturgy to Morning Prayer rather than Eucharist
- Moderate risk—Celebrate Eucharist, but do not offer the Common Cup
 - don't allow the decision to intinct or drink from the Common Cup be a communicant's voluntary decision
 - Members of the altar party will wash hands in the sacristy
 - Option—offer the chalice – Priest dips host in cup and distributes to communicant
 - During the Peace, encourage people to nod or bow rather than shake hands or hug

Communication Publicity

- Make state and town disaster information, H1N1 info, etc., available to congregation (handouts)
- Print reminders of Vestry policy for disaster in leaflets, newsletter, on stjohnswalpole.org
- Ask people to stay home if they have a cold, fever, sneezing, or other signs of flu
- Collect Emergency Contact info for parishioners (voluntary)
- Update phone list so that Vestry can maintain contact with parishioners
- Post Charles Montgomery's "How to Prepare a Disaster Plan" on stjohnswalpole.org

Home and Hospital visitations—

- Rector and Eucharistic Visitor are encouraged to not make home visits to H1N1 influenza infected persons
- No visits should be made to hospitals or nursing homes that are *under quarantine*