**COVID Guidelines for Tables**

**Practical Guidelines for Each Community**

At the end of the day, the medical professionals tell us that there is no such thing as a zero-risk outing right now. That will not be true forever, but it is for now. With that in mind (and pursuing our values of Wisdom, Unity, and Embodied Presence), what follows are some practical guidelines that we strongly encourage each Community to follow.

**Safety Precautions:**​ Many health professionals are talking about risk and safety through the lens of “time, space, people, place”—risk increases the longer we are with a group of people, the smaller the space between us is, the more the number of people increases, and when groups meet indoors. With that, here are some basic precautions we recommend that each Community implements:

* Meet Outside when possible​. In following with the guidance of medical professionals, we recommend that for the time being whole Communities only meet in-person if they can be outside.
* Keep social distancing​. Please do your part to keep a conscious 6 feet of distance from those of other households.
* Wear masks when distancing is not possible.​ Health officials are recommending that individuals wear a mask when social distancing is not possible. If members of your Community are not able to maintain 6 feet of distance in the place you are meeting, we would recommend wearing a mask for the sake of protecting others.
* Wash hands and sanitize surfaces​. Remember to have each person wash their hands before and after coming together. Since the virus can last on surfaces, it is also important to clean and sanitize spaces in which people will be and have been.
* Bring your own food​. If the Community is going to eat together (including your Communion elements), we recommend that each person brings their own food and utensils.
* No pets​. We ​*love*​ our pets, but like children, they aren’t great at social distancing and can carry COVID-19. Because of this, we recommend that pet owners either leave their pets at home or keep them on a tight leash, being sure to not let them interact with anyone.

**Children:**​ To no fault of their own children are not great at social distancing. Because of this, caution needs to be taken when it comes to figuring out how best to include them. Each Community needs to come to their own decisions, but here are some best practices:

* Carriers​ – For young children, the best option is to keep them on your person using some kind of carrier.
* Pack and Play​ – For younger children, another option is to have each household use a pack and play of some kind to keep them socially distanced from other children and adults.
* Blanket System​– For older children (3—10 years old) who are able to stay put, an option is to set out a blanket that is socially distanced from other kids and adults and have the child stay on the blanket.
* Rotating Parents & Sitters​ – For two-parent households, the safest option is to rotate which parent goes to Community and which stays at home with the child. For single-parent households, it may be wise to rotate babysitting amongst Community members. We know that missing a Community night is not ideal, but for everyone’s safety it may be the best option for the time being.

**Those Who Are Sick or Unwell**​ – If anyone is not feeling well or showing any symptoms of being sick, we highly suggest that they stay home. It is not about whether or not they feel up for meeting; it’s about not exposing others to any form of sickness.

**Elderly, Immunocompromised, & People Who Have Contact With Those Populations:** ​The most at risk groups are the elderly and the immunocompromised. For a season, we would recommend that they and those who have contact with them choose ​*not*​ to join in-person gatherings for a time and then, when they do, that your Community practice dedicated adherence to the above guidelines.