

The Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh



August 26, 2021

Dear Friends in Christ;

As I near the end of my tenure as your bishop, I was looking forward, as I am sure you all have been, to enjoying my final days among you with fewer restrictions due to Covid-19. Sadly, this was not to be. Once again we are facing a surge of cases in our region, mainly from the highly contagious Delta variant. After consulting with many leaders—lay and ordained—across our Diocese, I ask us all to adopt again, until further notice, a few simple practices which we know are effective in limiting the spread of the virus:

- Whether or not you have been vaccinated, please wear a mask while indoors for worship or any other function in any of our churches.
- Please maintain physical distance of six feet between your household group and those nearest you.
- Please do not administer a common cup. Distribute the Sacrament in one kind according to whatever protocol you have used during prior periods of increased risk.
- Congregational singing, as long as you are masked, is perfectly acceptable. If you gather outdoors, I suggest that masks be considered optional.

I know this all may feel like a step backward, but it is one that I believe is necessary. Hopefully, if we are careful, this period of restriction will be brief, and we can all look forward to greater freedom. In the meantime, let us all do what we can to take care of ourselves and our neighbors.

I did not intend to be writing something this sober, so close to my retirement, and I promise this will not be my last word to you! Betsy and I look forward very much to being with as many of you as can be present for the Pig Roast this Saturday at Christ Church North Hills, from four to seven p.m. In the meantime, please know that you are in our prayers every day.

May God continue to bless and keep you and those you love safe and well.

Faithfully your bishop,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dorsey", with a small cross symbol to the left.

(The Right Reverend) Dorsey W.M. McConnell, D.D.
VIII Bishop of Pittsburgh