## GUIDELINES FOR LIMITED CHORAL SINGING DURING ADVENT/CHRISTMAS

October 27, 2020        Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia

At a recent meeting of the Medical/Legal subgroup of Bishop Haynes's Advisory Panel for Re-Gathering for Worship, musicians presented some information on a breakthrough that will enable some limited choral singing as we move into the Advent and Christmas singing.

The breakthrough is the design and availability of "Singer's Masks," a mask especially made for singers that will allow them ample room to sing comfortably while protecting those around them from potential infection due to droplets and aerosols. The masks are available from a number of sources, including the ones listed here:

https://www.broadwayreliefproject.com/singersmask

https://www.mymusicfolders.com/product/resonance-singers-mask-with-disposable-biofilters/

Here are some YouTube links showing various singers using them:

https://youtu.be/mcW1WJ2-mqs
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D_xbGfY8jes
https://youtu.be/N1NL0ycQf-Q?t=772
https://vimeo.com/466160774#t=360s
https://christchurchgreenwich.org/evensong-livestream/

After listening to the musicians, the panel made the following recommendations with respect to guidelines for choral singing:

1) Singers may sing in virtual or in-person services provided they are spaced (shoulder to shoulder) at least six feet away from each other and are all facing/singing in the same direction.
2) Singers must be 20-30 feet away from any other person in the congregation
3) Singers must wear a mask specially made for singers such as one obtained from one of the websites above.
4) The number of singers who can safely sing is dependent on the space and configuration of each church building, provided guidelines number 1-3 are followed.
5) Congregational singing is still not permitted at this time.

While these guidelines do not allow for everyone to sing, they do enable us to move in the direction of bringing choral music back into the church.

Please contact the diocesan office if you have any questions.