



# COVID-19 Policy Update

November 4, 2021

Love for neighbor has been, and continues to be, both the primary and motivating concern for all discussions and subsequent decisions related to gathering in person for worship. Paul's writing that "love does no wrong to a neighbor (Romans 13:10)" continues to guide the Congregation Council.

Members of St. Mark's Lutheran Church,

I am writing on behalf of the Congregation Council to bring you a very important update regarding our COVID-19 policies. After considering the current CDC recommendations, together with advice from Dr. Dennis and Dr. Jorn, your Council has adopted a new policy and procedure to address the implementation or relaxation of COVID-19 safety measures. The new policy uses CDC defined metrics such as transmission rate, 7-day averages for new cases, 7-day averages for positivity rate, and others to establish when certain protocols (masks, distancing, etc) need to be implemented. As a result of this new policy and the metrics defined within it, as well as current CDC data, the following updates are effective immediately.

1. Any person who has been fully vaccinated against covid-19 will no longer be required to wear a mask or to social distance either inside or outside of any church facility at any time. "Fully vaccinated" means that a person has received all

recommended doses of the vaccine (including any recommended boosters) and at least two weeks have elapsed since they received the final dose of the vaccine. However, any person age 2 or older who has not been fully vaccinated will still be required to wear a mask and social distance from all others except those in their family unit.

2. Any person who has been fully vaccinated and who wishes to continue wearing a mask and social distance, for whatever reason, may do so. All others should respect each member's decision about these matters.

3. If you know that you have been exposed to someone with covid-19 in the past 14 days, please refrain from participating in church activities unless you A) have been fully vaccinated against covid-19 and show no symptoms of the disease, or B) you have had covid-19 illness within the previous 3 months, have recovered, and remain free of covid-19 symptoms.

All of the above changes will be made effective immediately.

4. Anyone who has a fever or is feeling ill is encouraged to remain at home and worship with us online. This was previously announced, and it remains unchanged, even if you are fully vaccinated.

5. We will continue with no immediate change to communion.

6. Fellowship time after services will resume, on a purely voluntary basis, and it will be held in the Fellowship Hall instead of Hart Hall.

7. We are currently classified, by the CDC, as a county of moderate COVID-19 transmission. If we begin to have another increase in COVID-19 cases locally and CDC reclassifies us as an area of substantial or high transmission, we will immediately return to our previous practices of masks required for everyone, social distancing, and no fellowship time after service per our policy. If that happens, I will make an announcement to inform you of the change.

The updated policy will be made available in the Narthex you have any questions about this, please feel free to call me (904) 673- 0048 or email me raybooth55@gmail.com. We look forward to seeing you at St. Mark's!

Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Peace,  
Ray Booth, Congregation President