

Dear Beloved Children of God,

We first want to thank you for your patience, grace, and mercy during this pandemic. When Covid forced us to shut the doors of the church building in March, we did not know what to expect. The hard thing is we are not scientists, virologists, or government workers. We have the same access to information as everyone else and have done our best during this time.

We have vowed to pay attention to the number of new covid-19 infections, the number of deaths in South Carolina, Florence county, and the cities of Florence and Darlington, as well as information from the State and CDC. We have also talked to many of you and have heard the concerns of the congregation. Last week the CDC put out new guidelines, and as a result, we met after learning that most members of the congregation are already vaccinated. Based on all the information we have at our disposal, we believe that it is safe for us to put forth the following guidelines to help keep us safe as we take steps to reduce some of the restrictions we have had at the church:

- 1) We are going to be able to remove our masks on a **case-by-case basis**. We are asking for folks to wear their masks into the church for whatever activity they are participating in until we can make sure that every household or 90% of those in attendance are either vaccinated or have covid-19 antibodies. If we can meet that threshold for whatever activity you are attending, we will then remove our masks.
 - a. The way that we will be able to tell this is by you wearing your I am vaccinated pins so that pastor can inform everyone during the church service or the leader at the other events at the church if we meet the threshold to remove our masks.
- 2) We are also aware that it is hard for us to know whether our visitors are not vaccinated, therefore:
 - a. We are continuing to wear a mask when we walk in the church, and when we walk out the church.
 - b. We are going to continue to space out in the sanctuary and then use the last pews as overflow.
 - c. We will continue to keep communion the same way we have been so that if we need to have a service with masks on because we do not meet the mask removal threshold we can do so easily.
 - d. This means we will also continue to give our tithes and offerings in the same manner.
 - e. We are also going to continue spraying down behind us to care for our nonvaccinated siblings.

We are going to be keeping an eye on all relevant information, and we will continue to adjust what we do based on new information. Therefore, if numbers go up again, and other variants arise, it may cause us to put our masks back on, just know that is a possibility. This is a fluid situation.

Again, we want to thank you for your patience with us and we just want to remind everyone that we are trying to do the loving thing.

In Christ,

Your Church Council