

COVID-19 Update

Dear friends,

In light of the [updated guidelines from the CDC](#) for fully vaccinated people and the [updated guidelines from Michigan Department of Health and Human Services](#), we are making three changes to our building use precautions:

1. The maximum occupancy of the sanctuary and fellowship hall is being increased to 40 for adult groups effective immediately while maintaining our previous precautions.
2. We will be suspending our required pre-registration for worship. Attendees will be required to sign in and provide contact information for contact tracing purposes as required by the Michigan Health Department.
3. We are requiring only unvaccinated persons to wear a mask in the building.

As it has been since the beginning of this pandemic, the focus of these safety guidelines has been on protecting our congregation – especially the most vulnerable. With that in mind, we ask you to continue to follow all other previously published precautions including [pre-screening questions](#), social distancing, no food/beverages, and handwashing/sanitizing.

We appreciate the efforts of our congregation so far in this pandemic and their commitment to protecting the health of our shared community. Whatever our policy is, while it may inconvenience some, we are trying to keep people safe. We will continue to monitor changing health guidelines and modify our policies as necessary.

This congregation has exhibited great flexibility and fortitude as we have persisted in ministry over this past year. Thank you for your efforts.

What public health indicators were used to make in-person worship and building use decisions?

Our primary guide has been the guidelines from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the statewide restrictions set by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (full guidelines [here](#)). Additionally at a local level, Washtenaw County has seen a decrease in positive tests and daily case levels and has graduated from an “E” to a “D” risk level on [the state’s safe start dashboard](#). As before, we will continue monitoring public health data and adjust our response as necessary to best care for the health of our community.

What precautions are being followed for indoor in-person gatherings?

We will continue adhering to all other previously published precautions including the use of [pre-screening questions](#), requiring unvaccinated persons to wear masks inside the

building, maintaining physical distancing of six feet, and thorough cleaning practices. Additionally, to best maintain physical distancing, attendance will be limited to 40 persons with the seating arrangement clearly designated on the pews. Attendees will be required to sign in and provide contact information for contact tracing purposes as required by the Michigan Health Department. A detailed description of all the church's COVID-19 precautions can be read [on our website](#) at any time.

Why are we no longer required to pre-register for worship?

Pre-registration was set up as a way to equitably allow people to sign up for the limited number of seats available during worship. No one wanted to have to turn people away when we hit our seating capacity on a Sunday morning. With the move to allowing 40 people in the building at a time, we feel pre-registration is no longer needed. If, however, we begin to have more than 40 people attending worship, we may reinstate the pre-registration process.

Are there any differences in precautions for those who have received a COVID-19 vaccination?

In accordance with [updated guidelines from the CDC](#) for fully vaccinated people and the [updated guidelines from Michigan Department of Health and Human Services](#), people who are fully vaccinated will not be required to wear a mask in the building. People are considered fully vaccinated if:

- Two weeks have passed since the second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna coronavirus vaccines.
- or two weeks after a single dose of the Johnson & Johnson coronavirus vaccine.

However, the CDC notes that for people who take immune-weakening medications or who have health conditions that weaken the immune system, they may not be completely protected from the virus even after they have been fully vaccinated. For those people, the CDC suggests talking to a health care provider about the best ways to stay safe from COVID-19.

Please be aware that one of our staff (who is required to be here in worship) is immunocompromised and therefore at greater risk. In order to care for that person and for those we may not know are vulnerable, please continue to conscientiously follow the safety guidelines as an expression of our love and care for our neighbor, including maintaining six feet of distance between those not in your household, being aware of any symptoms and staying at home if you feel sick or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, and frequently washing or sanitizing your hands.