

May 11, 2022

Greetings from the FPC COVID-19 Re-Entry Task Force:

More than two years on into the COVID-19 pandemic, we continue to meet and did so again this evening. Our efforts arise from a commitment to responsibly and respectfully care for one another. Going forward, as we all continue to cope with the pandemic, we continue to encourage everyone to operate from a position of care and respect, with an understanding that as the pandemic situation changes, so may our guidance. The goal is to help keep one another well.

In early March, the RETF removed masking requirements, number limits, spacing requirements, and food service limitations at FPC. To date, Alamance County has either been in the green or yellow category of CDC's characterization of Community Levels of COVID-19. We are currently in yellow; every other county in NC is in green.

As such, while the overall burden of viral disease is much lower than our experiences of the Delta variant and the early days of the Omicron variant, it is still present in the community and bears monitoring. The pandemic is not over.

So we come to you with a reminder of our ask from March — please continue to *proactively and consciously consider those around you as well as your own risk for severe illness from COVID-19*. There are members of our community who because of age or other health factors, may not be vaccinated or may carry an elevated risk for a severe outcome if they become infected with COVID-19. Please keep them in mind as you choose your own course of action.

And, while wearing a mask on campus is no longer required, we continue to *strongly encourage the use of masks*, especially if you are at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19. We also ask anyone who is unvaccinated to please wear a mask. FPC will continue have masks available for those who need them.

By removing our number limits, spacing requirements, and food service limitations, we have opened our facilities up for use by church and community members alike. Nonetheless, being mindful of these concerns when planning and attending events at FPC is also *strongly encouraged*.

Additionally, and perhaps of particular relevance as we move into the summer and a season of travel, we continue to encourage you to be vaccinated and boosted. The risk of severe illness and death is much, much higher when one is unvaccinated. And boosting provides significant additional protection. So please stay up-to-date with your vaccines.

Lastly, if you have symptoms, please get tested and follow your medical provider's advice with regard to limiting your exposure to others. Testing when symptoms arise can also mean that you can access anti-viral treatments which are very effective in attenuating the severity of illness if started early.

Going forward, consider reviewing the local COVID-19 situation much like you would the local weather forecast. Below we provide a link where you may access the current data for Alamance County (on the CDC website). The key elements to review are 1) the case rate/100,000 population, 2) the COVID-19 hospitalization rate/per 100,000 population, and 3) the percentage of staffed inpatient beds in the hospital that are occupied by patients with COVID-19. These elements are what go into the Community Level characterizations that CDC promoted at the end of February (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/community-levels.html>).

Here is the link where you may find Alamance County specific data:
https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view?list_select_county=37001.

And as we will not meet again before Ron Shive's retirement, we collectively want to offer thanks for his committed engagement with the RETF.

Thank you for caring for one another. Be well.

FPC COVID-19 Re-Entry Task Force

Chair: Lucy Kernodle

Members: Gene Grimley, Beth Hooten, Wendy Lunsford, Allison McHugh, Kris Moffitt, Bruce Shields

Ex-Officio Members: Taylor Barner, Patrick Murphy, Charlotte Nance-Allbright, Ron Shive