



**Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
Appleton, Wisconsin**

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Regarding Reopening
May 20, 2021**

1. Why are we reopening?

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) released new COVID-19 guidelines on May 13, 2021 entitled “Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People.” They now recommend that fully vaccinated people can attend a full-capacity worship service without wearing a mask or social distancing. (See following link: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>).

2. Did the CDC provide updated recommendations for churches answering many of our questions?

The last CDC recommendations for faith-based organizations are from February 21, 2021. We anticipate that they will be updating these recommendations but don't know when. (See following link: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/faith-based.html>). Once that information is made available on the CDC website, we will provide the updated information here.

3. In general, what is the CDC recommending and why the change?

Scientific studies are being done at an incredibly high rate and being reviewed and released almost daily. The accumulation of results from recent studies confirms that fully vaccinated people with the Pfizer, Moderna or J&J vaccine are at an extremely low risk of contracting COVID. Furthermore, if they do contract COVID, they are even more unlikely to be hospitalized and even more remotely unlikely to die of the disease.

4. So in a practical sense, what should people do if they attend worship services in person?

- a. Fully vaccinated means \geq 14 days after your last vaccination (your second shot with Pfizer and Moderna or your first and only shot with J&J).
- b. If fully vaccinated, people can attend without masks and social distancing.
- c. If not vaccinated or not fully vaccinated, people can attend but should mask and social distance. The medical experts suggest this is for both their health and the safety of others.
- d. Children < 2 years old can attend but need not mask.
- e. Children 2-12 years of age should mask and socially distance.
- f. Prince of Peace will respect those who mask and those that don't. We anticipate that in this transition time frame, emotions may run high. We can follow the Golden Rule and Love our Neighbor as Ourselves. (Matthew 7:12).
- g. If I am fully vaccinated but feel safer continuing to wear a mask, is that OK? Yes.



5. **What if you are feeling sick?**

Anyone feeling sick or with a fever should stay at home, regardless of the type of infection they might have.

6. **Can you walk me through how worship will go from the time I arrive until I leave for this Sunday, May 23rd?**

- a. First off...the scientific information is continuing to be updated and we expect the CDC and other respected experts will be making frequent updates to these recommendations. What you read today is our best thinking as of May 20, 2021 and expect regular updates and changes.
- b. **Upon arrival and entering the church:**
 - i. You may enter through the east (door #2) or west (door #1) entrances. Other doors will be locked.
 - ii. We ask that you use the hand sanitizer located on the walls at either entrance and in the Narthex upon entering the building.
 - iii. Yes, you can greet others, verbally or physically (handshake or hug) according to your comfort level. PoP will trust the congregation and leave this to everyone's best judgement. Anticipate that there could be some awkward moments as we gather after 14 months apart.
 - iv. If you forget a mask and need one, there will be masks available in adult and child sizes.
- c. **Seating yourself:**
 - i. If fully vaccinated, you can sit close to other people and do not need to mask. If you still prefer to social distance and mask, you can certainly do so.
 - ii. If not fully vaccinated, consider spacing yourself six feet or more from others. Considering the size of our sanctuary, this should be fairly easy to do.
- d. **What about singing?**

The CDC recommendations of 2-21-21 and 5-13-21 are silent on this question at this point. We hope the CDC provides guidance on this question soon. Once that information is made available on the CDC website, we will provide the updated information here. However, we considered 5 possible different scenarios for singing options during in-person worship services. The Minnesota Department of Health just released an 8-page recommendation **on May 18, 2021** (see following link: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/musicguide.pdf>). The document specifically states, "Congregational singing is allowed" (pg. 5 of 8). Based on this source and updated recommendation, PoP feels the best choice regarding singing in worship is the following: **Singing by the congregation is allowed. Fully vaccinated individuals do not need to wear masks, and unvaccinated individuals should be masked.**



e. **Offering:**

The safest approach at this time is to place an offering in the baskets on your way in or out of the sanctuary. We will not “pass the offering plates” during the service. Baskets will be available on lecterns just outside of the sanctuary. You may also place your communion cards in these baskets at the conclusion of the service.

f. **Communion:**

At this time, communion will be conducted with our disposable cups of wine and wafers. These will be placed in designated areas of the sanctuary, and ushers will be available to lead you to the appropriate place. Please throw away your disposable cups in the waste baskets at the back of the sanctuary at the conclusion of the service.

g. **On conclusion of the service and departure:**

This Sunday, May 23, we have the **Spring Congregational Meeting at 11:00 AM**. You may stick around for the meeting or head for home and attend the meeting via Zoom. Weather-permitting, we ask that you enjoy congregating and fellowship with one another outside. Congregating in the Narthex is discouraged. Coffee and other refreshments will not be served. If returning to the sanctuary for the meeting, we ask that you try to sit in the same place as you did for the worship service.

7. **Is the Nursery open for childcare?**

The nursery is closed at this time. Worship bags by the sanctuary entrance and the Prayerground in the Narthex are available for children to use during the worship service.

8. **Will we need volunteers?**

Yes, we will as it takes many people to hold a worship service including greeters, ushers, readers, communion preparation and servers, and so on. We are confident that people will step forward with eagerness to fill these roles as needed.

9. **What else can be done to minimize risk?**

Anything and everything that creates more space and better ventilation. This may include having more services (2 or 3) when we are able to, keeping as many doors open for natural ventilation as possible, and so on.

10. **Will we still livestream and record a service each week?**

Yes. The plan is to livestream and record the 9:40 AM service. How this might work if we have more than one service is still to be worked out.