



CUUC COVID Safety Committee

UPDATE FEBRUARY 2023

As we have monitored the post-holiday COVID surge, it has thankfully gone as expected: there was a peak of new cases in the first week of January, followed by a steady decline. Thankfully, there was no associated surge in COVID-related deaths during the same period.

As the holiday surge has dwindled, we have returned to the metric levels that the CDC characterizes as “Low Community Risk.” While we will continue to monitor the situation, **the COVID Safety Committee is now recommending to the Board that we target the date of Sun Mar 12 to transition to a masking-optional service policy.** As before, we continue to recommend a well-fitting N95 mask for anyone who has been advised by their doctor that they are in a higher-risk category, and of course ask anyone who is not feeling well to remain at home and take advantage of our online service broadcast. The committee will continue to monitor health data and make further recommendations as necessary if conditions change in the future.

We recognize that some congregants would prefer we keep a strict masking-required policy, and understand that tolerance and risk varies for every individual. At the same time, our risk assessment is that, for someone wearing an N95 mask, in our large, ventilated Sanctuary, our Sunday service is still comparatively one of the lowest-risk environments people are moving through in their day-to-day lives in Westchester. Even if we remove the hard requirement of masking for all, we believe this will still be the case in the current environment.

For our Religious Exploration programs, we will be considering the masking requirements on a class-by-class basis, based on individual discussions with classroom leaders.

The Board will review this explicitly in the week preceding the Sun Mar 12 service. If you have questions or concerns, you may reach out to Christian Force, Co-Chair of the COVID Safety Committee (force2k1@gmail.com) or Creighton Cray, Board Chair (creighton.cray@gmail.com).