

Ecumenical Protocols for Worship, Fellowship, and Sacramental Practices: New CDC Guidelines

From our Conveners (5/13/2021):

The latest CDC guidance for masks and social distancing is for what INDIVIDUALS CAN do – not what CONGREGATIONS (in which both vaccinated and unvaccinated people gather together) SHOULD do.

As a Consultation we are committed BOTH to CDC guidance AND to the principle that we will not cause stigma about either illness or vaccination status. We encourage compassion for all who are sick and vaccination, at the soonest time possible, for all who are unvaccinated.

Many congregations include people who are unvaccinated, including children, older persons who have not yet been able to be vaccinated, and some who have refused vaccination. Unvaccinated people of any age can get the virus and spread it to others who are unvaccinated.

When we are among those who may be unvaccinated, we recommend being as the unvaccinated for the sake of the unvaccinated-- for their safety, and to avoid stigmatizing them.

We are one body in Christ, no more protected than the least protected among us.

In concrete terms, whenever we gather in groups that may include non-vaccinated people, we continue to recommend that all wear masks, that households remain six feet apart, and that congregational and choral singing be avoided indoors.

Ecumenical, interdisciplinary guidance for in-person worship.

Sponsors: *Candler School of Theology, Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, The Liturgical Conference, Styberg Preaching Institute, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*