

COVID-19 Helpful tips after the CDC's latest updates

(includes portions from Lisa Allgood, Executive Presbyter Presbytery of Cincinnati)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated.html>

If you've been fully vaccinated:

- You can resume activities that you did prior to the pandemic.
- You can resume activities without wearing a mask or staying 6 feet apart, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance.

So – what to do at church?

First, understand the virus is NOT gone – we will be dealing with this for some time to come, and epidemiologists have declared this to be an endemic virus – it will circulate in humans probably forever in some way. Hopefully more and more people will get vaccinated, but the hoped-for “herd immunity” will not be attained as long as we have adult vaccination rates of 30-40%. And we proved at the beginning of the pandemic that large crowds of people un-masked can become super-spreader events even if only one person is spreading virus.

Sessions are at liberty to remove masking requirements. You are ALSO at liberty to *continue* to require masks or outdoor worship and/or distancing. Personally, I would still recommend to keep singing and choirs very limited and masked, and I would still recommend distancing. It would be very hard to only permit vaccinated people to attend indoor worship. It's up to you to decide whether you do Fellowship/coffee hours, but again – that's a higher risk activity.

As for the Presbytery, we are opening our resource room and facilities for meetings. The chairs of each committee are determining how they'd like to proceed. Most of our committees have become efficient at Zoom meetings and will continue to offer a hybrid option for meetings. If all continues to go well, we plan for our November Stated Meeting to be in-person (w/a live-stream component). The office has been operational for some time, but we will continue to be watchful.

Yes, the world is opening back up. I ask you, however, to prayerfully consider all we've learned and experienced over the past fifteen months. Keep in consideration some of the statistics shared on the high degree of significant permanent damage this virus does to all organs of the body, and think about what it will take to take care of each other and those in our community.

Go safely and slowly,
Debbie

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