



St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Dear People of St. Paul's,

The Safety Protocols Task Force has continued to watch safety recommendations and state guidelines as we prayerfully discern how to keep our congregation safe. Given that New York State lifted all restrictions in June, and Pittsford zip code's vaccination rate is near 90% of eligible people (with surrounding areas close behind), ***we have decided to lift masking restrictions in the church building.*** We do ask that, ***if you are not vaccinated, you continue to wear a mask.***

Anyone, of course, is still welcome to wear a mask if that makes them feel more comfortable; we commit to being a judgement-free zone, will not be asking people about their vaccination status, and will trust that people are making the best decisions for both themselves and their neighbors.

Other decisions of which to be aware:

- We will now allow singing, though there will be less singing at the 11am communion service in order to keep the service shorter.
- Groups (outside and internal) may use the building, following their own protocols for safety.
- Coffee hour will happen outside as long as weather permits, and as long as someone signs up to provide it. Receptions, e.g. after a funeral, will also be permitted.
- We are removing the ribbons on the pews, allowing people to sit wherever they like.

For unvaccinated people, especially children: as weather permits, on the **fourth Sunday** of each month, the **11am service will be outdoors** on the lawn along Washington Ave. This communion service has a particular eye toward children and their needs, but is open to anyone. (It's fun!)

Our goal remains to return to a single service at 9:30am that will include both singing and communion, and that will be livestreamed. We have a group of people working with a company to install livestreaming equipment, which will make it easier to return to our usual one service. Due to the high demand of this sort of installation, this likely won't be in place until the fall at the earliest. We are hopeful that those who are able will return to attending in person so that we can reconnect with each other, hear and sing our praises live (it's such a different experience!), and most of all, share together in the holy sacrament.

Lay ministry: with our service moving closer and closer to "normal," we are in great need of lay ministers each week! Please be sure to sign up early and often to serve in the various areas of lay ministry. If you've never done it, we are happy to train you! There is always a link in the weekly emails.

Thank you for your faithfulness during this past 16 months. God is good for bringing us to this place, and for accompanying us up to this point and beyond!

In gratitude,

Pastor Johanna