

## **MASKS AT ST. JOHN**

**Starting June 2, 2021**

In light of recent changes to the CDC's mask guidelines, and in view of the Governor's date of June 2, 2021 to begin rolling back some of Ohio's mask mandate, we are also modifying our mask guidelines for church and worship.

We implore everyone to understand that there are no easy answers to the issues that have been raised by these new guidelines, and that we therefore forebear with one another in this matter in Christian love. We can't please everyone, so the best we can do is try to navigate these uncharted waters, and allow every person to make the decisions they feel are necessary for themselves.

### **NEW FACE MASK POLICY**

Starting June 2<sup>nd</sup>, masks will be optional in worship. We will not try to distinguish who is vaccinated and who is not. Signs and bulletin announcements asking people to wear face masks will be removed.

When deciding whether to wear a mask, we ask everyone to use their discretion, keeping in mind...

- 1) the *"royal law according to the Scripture, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself,'" (James 2:8)* that we may always do for one another as we would want others to do for us; and,
- 2) the new CDC guidelines which state that 1) if you have been vaccinated, you can safely resume the activities you did prior to the pandemic without wearing a mask or social distancing; and 2) if you are not vaccinated, you should continue taking all precautions (from cdc.gov website).

### **CONTINUING COVID PRECAUTIONS**

For the time being, we will continue with other precautions that have been in place during the pandemic. We will...

- make face masks available for those who wish to wear them;
- make hand sanitizer available;
- use the 'continuous line' approach for distributing Holy Communion;
- use the individual cups only for Holy Communion;
- have Pastor and assistants masked for Communion distribution;
- receive offerings in the narthex before worship (we may begin having them carried forward soon during the service);
- encourage physical distancing in the pews (don't be bashful about sitting forward);
- make drive-through available Communion after worship on Communion Sundays;
- make a live-stream and a parking lot radio broadcast of services available for those who not comfortable attending in person;

In addition, we will continue for the time being with no greeters or acolytes, no pastoral greeting at the sanctuary doors after worship, and no water fountain access (bottles of water are available instead).