

June 19, 2021

Dear Bethany Family,

...all creation is groaning... (Romans 8:22)

Over the last several months, vaccination rates in the United States increased and COVID-19 cases decreased. Guidance from the CDC on May 13, 2021 provides that fully vaccinated people can resume activities without wearing a mask or physically distancing, except where required by federal and state laws. What does this mean for us at Bethany?

At Bethany, we exist to love. Therefore we shall recognize there are legitimate reasons for some to continue wearing a mask around others. They may not have been vaccinated yet or have family members who are still at risk. Because of love, we want to honor those who continue to wear masks. In that spirit, our Staff Team will continue to wear masks during our Sunday service while engaging others in ministry.

At the same time, we want to balance mask expectations with the greater freedoms vaccinations are providing. This means, beginning this Sunday, June 20, we will no longer be asking those who choose not to wear a mask to put one on during church services and events. We anticipate some will wear masks for the foreseeable future, while others will choose not to. Both options are okay.

We are encouraged by the progress California is making through the pandemic. However, with the tragic loss of over 500,000 Americans, this last year has been painful and disorienting for many. Creation is still groaning. Our neighbors are still groaning. Please continue to pray for the parts of the world that are being hit the hardest by coronavirus currently. Places like Mongolia, Argentina, and Columbia. Since Bethany exists to love, may the love of God in Christ remain our goal with one another, whether wearing a mask or not.

On behalf of Bethany's Pastoral Team,

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