

Greetings siblings in Christ,

Pastor Ben had us confess, "We are done," last Sunday as we reflect on our year plus of dealing with Covid. For well over a year we have had to rise up and make urgent decisions and it is exhausting.

Yet again we have come to that point.

Covid has now affected many OSLC families as it continues to spread. Testing sites are overwhelmed with patients and our hospitals and their workers are exhausted.

We realize that many of our OSLC family have had the opportunity to be vaccinated, which is why **we will continue to have in-person worship** even as the numbers soar.

We have been so appreciative of all the OSLC members who have worn their masks while in the building. Seriously- you are all so AMAZING! THANK YOU! It is because you are so great at doing this for your neighbor that we can continue to offer in-person worship.

Some things will change.

- Earlier as these numbers started to rise with the Delta variant we put restrictions on food and beverages in the building. This is still in effect. When we eat or drink masks come down/off, and that is not safe right now.
- Office hours may change with no notice. Minor cold-like symptoms will require us, and our families, to stay home to limit exposure and then test before returning to normal work hours. Is this a royal pain? YES! But we do this to keep everyone safe.
- Pastoral visits with members (in-person) will not be happening at this time. We do not want to bring this to anyone, especially those who may be struggling with their health. We will start our in-person visits again when it is safe to do so. Pastors will be happy to visit by phone or zoom.
- We will limit activities offered in person. All things that can take place by zoom or online will be encouraged at this time.
- All breath-related musical groups will be paused for now.
- Our Budget Review Meeting and Annual Meeting will happen in-person, but please stay tuned in case these will need to have a format change or the unlikely event that the Annual Meeting needs to be postponed until Sunday February 27th.
- Following Mayo's current policy, we will move to requiring surgical masks by Sunday Jan. 23rd until further notice.

We will continue to have in-person worship.

the following need to be considered at this time:

- If both pastors are in isolation or quarantine, worship will move to online only. Stay tuned for notice as late as Sunday morning.
- During this time we will move to one in-person service. The GIFT worship service will move online, at the same time (10:30), and it will be live (not recorded!).

We will re-evaluate all of these changes toward the end of February, with the hope that we will be in a different place with this virus and can move back toward fewer restrictions.

As always, we remain committed to helping our congregation serve God and our world through the ministry we have been called to, even in the midst of a pandemic. You are all doing GREAT work in an incredibly trying time.

And as Pastor Ben ended his sermon on Sunday, remember that, no matter what, God loves you!

- Pastor Ben, Pastor Nikki, and the Leadership Team