

Greetings Eastside Church,

Paul wrote about love in 1 Corinthians 13, which is about relationships among followers of Jesus and how we should love like him. He said, "Love is patient, love is kind" (v4). "It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres" (v7). This is the heart from which Eastside has made all of our decisions related to Covid-19 guidelines. Our goal has also always been to provide a safe and warm place for us to worship God together and continue Our Mission to *REACH, TEACH, MEND & SEND!*

This past week, the Centers for Disease Control reported that vaccinated people would no longer have to wear masks or keep socially distant, with a few exceptions. Governor Cuomo said that New York would follow the CDC's recommendations.

What does this mean for Eastside? Currently, people have been asked to wear masks and social distance when inside our church building. With the new CDC guidelines, we are making the following adjustments in our policy beginning next weekend, **Sunday, May 30:**

- People who have been fully vaccinated (+2 weeks) may go without masks in our facility.
- During worship services, half of the Worship Center will be designated for those who wish to continue wearing masks and maintain social distance; while the other half of the Worship Center will be designated for those who choose not to wear masks. We also will continue to provide our Virtual Live-Streaming Service for those who choose to watch from home.
- People who are working in close proximity with children or youth must wear a mask even if you are vaccinated, out of compassion for our young people who are not yet able to be vaccinated.
- We will operate on the honor system – no one will be checking for proof of vaccination.
- Pre-registration and Health Assessments for worship services will no longer be required. We do ask that each person self-assess. If you are not feeling well, please stay home and watch virtually on-line.
- Everyone is asked to maintain the utmost respect, courtesy, and kindness toward one another, whether or not people are wearing masks or have gotten vaccinated.

Thank you for your prayers, patience, gentleness, love for one another, and support for leadership in our decisions as we continue to navigate the challenging dynamics of our times. Our heart is to respect everyone, understanding that there are strongly held positions on this issue. We hope that with the temporary options we are providing for everyone you will continue to join us for worship!

With Grace and Love,

Pastor Jeremy