

The Rector's Corner

Why I Will Wear a Mask to Church

Dear friends, as we all know, face coverings have been made mandatory in the New Brunswick government's Renewed and Revised Mandatory Order. Paragraph 15 says: "In every public indoor space, everyone must wear a face covering that covers their mouth and nose at all times, except when eating and drinking." Included in this are "places of worship". Given this order, I will wear a face shield in our Services, and humbly ask that you would do the same. I also offer the following reasons for your consideration:

I will wear a mask to Church for the Lord, as an offering of my will to Him. It will be a little sacrifice for His glory.

I will wear a mask because it is a small thing – very small in comparison to what others are suffering in the world. I am not living in a refugee camp; my house has not been blown up or burned down; my family has not been shot; I am not starving...so I will wear a mask and pray for those in need.

I will wear a mask as an act of charity – a token of love for my sisters and brothers in Christ who have health conditions and compromised immune systems; and for the Church Wardens who stand by the door. It will be a way for us to build up the Church, the Body of Christ. As St. Paul told the Church in Corinth, *"And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it."* (1 Corinthians 12.26)

I will wear a mask in obedience to our government because that is what the Lord tells His people to do. In His Word, through St. Paul, He says, *"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."* (Romans 13.1). And, since wearing a mask does not demand anything that is contrary to our beliefs, I will gladly wear it.

I will wear a mask as an act of faith in what the Bible teaches. O lest my rights become a stumbling block to someone else: "Take care," said St. Paul "that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak". (1 Corinthians 8.9) He was addressing a question in the Church about whether it was okay to eat meat that had been sacrificed to idols. For some, it was no big deal since idols are not real, living beings; but for others who were coming from a background that believed idols actually possessed life and power, this was a major issue. Therefore, St. Paul said, "If food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble". (1 Corinthians 8.13) In the end, as he put it, "knowledge puffs up, but love builds up" (1 Corinthians 8.8).

When all is said and done, if you cannot accept the government's order, there is the option of participating in the Service via the live-stream. We have been blessed to be able to continue throughout the pandemic in worship, in Bible Study, with St. George's Outbound, with Men's Meetings, with Community Meals, with Vestry Meetings and with the live-streaming. Let's do what is required to continue, for there is much to be lost.