

# Gloria Dei

## LUTHERAN CHURCH

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September 2, 2021

### Update on Covid-19 Safety Measures

Dear Members and Friends of Gloria Dei,

We are grateful that we have been able to return to in-person services since June, and that we have been able to do so safely. The low case rates in July coupled with our large sanctuary space allowed us to return to congregational singing and relax strict adherence to the wearing masks over the summer months. Although the good vaccination uptake on the North Shore is helping to keep case rates reasonably low in our neighborhoods, the fourth wave of COVID-19 fueled by the more transmissible Delta variant means that we need to remain vigilant. As a community of faith which seeks to live out Jesus' mandate to love one another, we must remain committed to protect the vulnerable in our midst and provide as safe an environment as possible to all who come through our doors.

Therefore, following the Public Health Order issued on August 25 specifying mandatory masks in all indoor public spaces, our expectation is that everyone 12 years and older will wear a mask in all areas of the church building at all times and throughout worship services on Sundays. This recommendation applies to both unvaccinated and vaccinated individuals. Although being fully vaccinated reduces the likelihood of severe disease, studies show that fully vaccinated persons—who may be asymptomatic—may still transmit the virus. Masks are most effective in protecting us when everyone wears them.

As we move into the fall, in addition to donning our masks again, we are reminding everyone to continue practicing our other basic layers of protection:

- Before coming to church assess yourself for symptoms of COVID-19. You can do this by visiting the BCCDC resource here - [http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID\\_public\\_guidance/When\\_to\\_get\\_tested.pdf](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/When_to_get_tested.pdf)
- Please stay home if you are sick or feeling unwell.
- When you enter the church building or sanctuary, please wash your hands with soap and water or use the hand sanitizer provided at the entrances.
- Give others space. While we are free to no longer strictly enforce the 2 metre rule, please be considerate knowing that not everyone will feel comfortable being close to others.

We also encourage everyone who has not yet been vaccinated to get the vaccine. You can walk in to the ICBC Claim Centre at 255 Lloyd Avenue from 9am - 7pm on Sept. 1-5, and Sept. 7-18. COVID-19 is now a vaccine-preventable disease, like the flu, measles, and whooping cough. Vaccinations are the best prevention measure against COVID-19.

As we continue to gather in-person for Sunday worship into the Fall, here are the practices we will be following:

- We will wear our masks except when leading the liturgy/prayers/readings or providing music leadership.
- We can engage in congregational singing while wearing our masks
- Offering plates will continue to be placed in the narthex rather than passed around
- Communion in both kinds will be distributed in individual single use cups

- We will continue to refrain from hand-shaking or hugs during the passing of the peace except between families. A nod or smile will convey our goodwill for one another

Our hope is that we will be able to relax these protective measures as vaccination uptake increases and the fourth wave subsides. We are grateful for each one of you and your kindness and consideration for one another. Continue to keep us in your prayers as we continue to pray for you.

Your Covid Safety Committee,

Candace Storm, Jason Assam, Marianne Cross and Pastor Vida