

May 22, 2021 Southridge Church Update of COVID Guidelines

Through much thought and prayer, the Church Council and called workers of Southridge Church have discussed, developed, and adopted the following plan. While we realize that this plan likely is not ideal for anyone, we hope that it can be a blessing to all of us. We humbly ask for your willing support of it as we seek to promote unity among God's people to whom we minister. We ask God to bless it and trust that he will.

COVID Facility Guideline Update - Sunday, May 23, 2021

- Plexiglass shield on altar comes down – worship leaders will speak without a barrier during worship.
- Arrangement of seating is no longer social distanced, except for one section in the east side of the gathering center (please allow this to be used by parents with children and others more comfortable with some distancing).
- Face masks for all people are still requested during publicly attended education, worship and fellowship events on Sunday mornings while indoors.
- Face masks are optional when indoors throughout the week (Monday – Saturday) for events such as small-group Bible study, office visits, parents picking up preschool children throughout the week, cleaning, Sunday preparation, etc.
- Food served after worship continues to be prepackaged and requested that it be consumed outside.
- Reserving a spot for Sunday worship is optional but still appreciated.
- When we have communion worship services (9:30 AM), communicants, who so desire, will be invited to the altar area to receive communion as a group. Others may still commune from their seats. Prepackaged communion kits will continue to be used for all.

Some Key Factors Considered in this Plan

- Our church leaders have not and don't intend to make plans that are solely based on local government recommendations/restrictions. Rather, their plans incorporate many influences, including the following:
 - God's will, expressed in his Word (this dictates all the other influences).
 - A desire to continually feed souls with God's Word and Sacraments and create regular opportunities for God's people to gather and encourage each other.
 - A desire to protect the vulnerable, especially children and the elderly.
 - An understanding that God does not spell out exactly how to apply the truth of his principles in all circumstances. Where he doesn't, there is Christian freedom.
 - Love for the members of our congregation and community.
 - Respect and honor of our governing officials.
 - Jesus' example of doing all these things.
- We hope to soon make mask wearing optional. These guidelines are an ongoing discussion among our council. A gradual approach toward removing restrictions may be wise.
 - This gives time for those who want to be vaccinated to get vaccinated.
 - Those less than comfortable with removal of restriction can ease into it and gain confidence rather than potentially being pushed away.
 - New information is constantly coming out. This gives time to learn from others before placing ourselves in a position that may need to be walked back.