



CHURCH OF THE
GOOD SHEPHERD
episcopal

The Rev'd M. Edwin Beckham
Rector

March 5, 2022

Flock, the vestry has conferred and voted by e-mail since yesterday morning and we are excited to announce the following updates to our COVID-19 safety protocols, keeping in mind that the mandate from the Diocese of Atlanta Pandemic/Re-Gathering Task Force that we've been operating under since last summer is to, at a minimum, comply with CDC guidelines for appropriate safety measures, based on the local status of the pandemic. We continue to operate under that mandate and are able to alter our safety measures because of the reduced presence of the virus in Newton County – **on March 3 the county dropped from “High” to “Medium” Community Level under the CDC’s new guidelines.**

Effective immediately, we are amending our safety measures at Good Shepherd as follows:

- As long as our county remains below the "High" Community Level in the CDC's guidelines issued Feb. 25, **face coverings are no longer required of everyone indoors at CGSE. They continue to be welcome for anyone.**
- Masking indoors is encouraged for anyone "at high risk for severe disease" (see CDC definition), including those not up to date on vaccines.
- People with possible COVID-19 symptoms, a positive test, or exposure to someone with COVID-19 should wear a mask at all times and stay home from church and other indoor gatherings until completing CDC-recommended isolation / quarantine / testing criteria.
- In the church, the transepts will remain reserved for socially distanced seating.
- Everyone should remain cautious about social distance indoors, to minimize exposure, especially exposure of children under 5-yrs-old.
- Out of an abundance of caution regarding the Eucharistic elements (bread & wine), clergy will continue to mask when at the altar presiding at the Eucharist.
- Out of an abundance of caution, for now the consecrated wine of Holy Communion will continue to be distributed via individual cups, filled from the common vessel(s) on the altar.
- Out of an abundance of caution, we ask individuals/family pods to maintain one shoulder-width apart at the altar rail.
- Out of an abundance of caution regarding repeated, close, face-to-face exposure, clergy and Eucharistic Ministers will mask for the distribution of Holy Communion.
- Food & beverages may be consumed indoors, but with no self-service/buffet. Someone will need to prepare items and/or plates and serve it; with the exception of coffee/tea. People are asked to sanitize their hands as they enter the Parish Hall or before food/beverage consumption anywhere.
- We will open exterior doors, weather permitting, for greater ventilation.
- There is no change to outdoor practices, where mask-wearing and avoiding food consumption have not been required since last summer.

Thank you for your patience and perseverance!

The Good Shepherd Vestry: Adrian Page, Jonathan Hulgan, Tammy Camfield, Peni Kehoe, Erik Thompson, Carla Prater, Fr. Edwin (ex officio)

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serve compassionately, and grow spiritually."*