

Reopening Task Force (ROTF) Update-January 4, 2022

With the ongoing surge in COVID cases, and more critically, COVID hospitalizations, the ROTF has continued to monitor the situation. We have made the following recommendations:

1. We will continue with a single 10am service until we feel it is safe to offer additional worship opportunities. Anyone not comfortable with being with others in person can watch the service online. Social distancing should be maintained at all events.
2. Masks must be worn in the church when around others, regardless of your or their vaccination status.
3. We will suspend food and beverage activities, which encourage mingling of unmasked individuals.

Information on Masks

Some Highland members have asked about what masks they should use to best protect themselves and those around them. There is no one “right” answer. However, there is very good evidence that masks that are called N-95 offer a much higher level of protection than cloth or typical drugstore paper masks. True N-95 masks are quite expensive and must be custom fitted to work optimally. These are what doctors and nurses use in the hospital setting. There are also masks called KN-95 masks, which are probably slightly less effective than true N-95 masks but are much cheaper and more comfortable. These masks were approved for healthcare personnel when N-95’s were in short supply earlier in the pandemic. These masks are no longer approved for healthcare personnel, but still offer those of us in the public a higher level of protection at a reasonable cost and improved comfort. Alas, there are counterfeit KN-95’s in abundance even on places like Amazon, and some of the KN-95’s coming from China do not meet US standards. Here is one source that sells masks that were previously approved for healthcare personnel; there are many others but beware of counterfeits.

<https://bonafidemasks.com/powecom-kn95/>