

Dear Bean's Corner Family,

As we continue to build back our in-person gathering and as guidance on best safety practices changes, I want to share with you an update of how we'll be approaching things going forward. Before I give specifics, here are some general principles that have been guiding us.

1) We value the gathering of believers, by the best means available. Hebrews 10:24-25.

Our earnest desire is to gather in-person, and we will work toward this as much as possible.

We

also recognize that gathering together in the building may not be the best option for some in our

fellowship. We will continue to stream online as a way to stay connected when gathering doesn't work.

2) Our Mission is still the Mission. Matthew 28:16-20.

The way we respond to this crisis impacts our gospel-witness. Therefore, we will be diligent to make

decisions that enable a God-honoring, neighbor-loving presence in our community. We will not allow our response to this crisis to become a barrier to making disciples.

3) We will pursue God's wisdom to guide our decisions. James 1:5-6; Ephesians 5:15-21.

All decisions will be prayerfully made, leveraging as best we can the wisdom of God promised to us in

Scripture.

4) This is not a religious liberty issue for us; therefore, we will follow the regulations and guidelines

issued by civic officials. Romans 13:1-7; 1 Timothy 2:1-4.

Currently the Church in our community is NOT being singled-out with restrictions and regulations

based upon our profession of faith in Jesus Christ. In fact, we are blessed with a cooperative working relationship with them. Therefore, we do not regard current restrictions as a religious liberty issue; thus, Scripture calls us to honor the authorities that God has established for our good. Please, pray for these officials as they carry-out their responsibilities.

5) We will not operate in fear, but in love. Deuteronomy 31:8; John 13:34-35; Romans 12:10; 1 Peter 4:8; 1 John 4:18-21.

All precautions determined by church leadership to be necessary for physically gathering together

again will be established in love for each other and for our community, as opposed to fear of a virus,

fear of a government entity, or fear of people.

6) We embrace unity over and above our own personal preferences. John 17:20-26; Ephesians 4:1-6.

Our unity in Jesus is directly tied to both our ability to glorify God and to the credibility of our witness

in the world (John 17:20-26). We who are the Church are called to exercise humility, gentleness and patience with one another when our personal preferences do not align; this is how we “walk in a manner worthy” of our calling (Ephesians 4:1-6). Though our preferences for how and when we reenter the church may not be met, we will embrace unity

With these all in mind, these are the changes that we are implementing this week:

- **Masks will be optional** for everyone, throughout the building. Everyone should feel free to wear a mask or to choose not to wear a mask, anywhere in the building, with one exception:

- **Masks will be required** for the rows in the back right-hand side as you enter. This provides opportunity for those who may be vulnerable & desire to sit with those wearing masks. *Please do not sit there unless you are ready and willing to wear your mask.*

- **Social Distancing removed**

- **VACCINATIONS**: We do not believe that vaccination status should be a cause for division in the church. Thus, we will NOT be asking anyone about their vaccination status in order to determine whether they can enter the building, or whether or not they should wear a mask. We trust each person to make a responsible decision with regards to these issues.

- **Livestream** of our worship services will continue.

One final thought:

As followers of Christ, we are all entitled to walk in love with each other! Not all of us will yet feel safe gathering without a mask. Therefore, **we are asking EVERYONE, regardless of vaccination status, to demonstrate love by bringing a mask with you to church.** If you feel comfortable NOT wearing your mask, please keep it in your pocket; if you end up talking or in fellowship with someone who is wearing a mask, please walk in love by offering to wear your mask for that conversation. This is a simple way to love and care for the body of Christ.

I am excited to see as many as possible as we continue to move forward. Let us be a beacon of light to one another and our community as we display Jesus to all those around us.

I love you all!

Ira on behalf of our Leadership Team.