

March 16, 2022

Dear Valley of Peace Members,

Thank you to our congregation members for your thoughtful feedback regarding the Valley of Peace Mask Policy. The Valley of Peace Church Council reviewed all feedback shared in the survey and personal conversations. On March 15, the Council voted to move from requiring masks to recommending masks. **Starting on Sunday, April 3, masks will be recommended for worship and small group gatherings.** This may change with the information provided by Hennepin County and from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

This was not an easy decision for council members, and the vote was taken after much discussion and prayer. The vote to change the policy from requiring to recommending masks was a narrow margin, with seven council members voting in favor, five council members voting against, and one council member abstaining.

We recognize that news of the updated mask policy will be well received by some and a source of sadness for others. There is grief in the reality that no matter what, not all people feel comfortable with in-person ministry. We are sorry for this. Please know that you are valued in this community no matter how you worship or participate. We will make every effort to continue to strengthen relationships and share the love of Christ with all people.

Online worship and online access for most of our ministries will continue to be provided. We know that this is not a substitute for in-person relationships. We encourage all Valley of Peace members to continue to connect with one another. We have learned in this time that the church is no longer just about the people present in the building. The church includes and embraces people who worship from their homes, cars, patios, and pews.

The council is open and committed to continued conversations regarding masks, inclusivity, and the health and wellbeing of all members and guests. Please continue to pray for our congregation and reach out to a council member or Pastor Ashley with your ideas, comments, and questions.

Thank you,

Pastor Ashley Osborn & the Valley of Peace Church Council