

January 7, 2022

Dear Redeemer Family,

Thank you for being gracious as we all navigate living in community during COVID. We are especially grateful for the humility, love, kindness, and patience that you have shown to one another during this time.

While everyone in our church family acknowledges the importance of safety, health, and care for our members and guests, we also understand that our larger church body has multiple opinions and perspectives on how we should engage and respond to this pandemic. As a leadership team, we also must acknowledge that we, too, view this challenging season through different lenses and are at different places on the spectrum of response to COVID.

Putting aside personal preferences and thinking about how to best shepherd our diverse family of faith, we want to communicate the agreed upon guidelines that have helped determine our decision-making with COVID protocols. And while we acknowledge that no guideline (apart from God's Word!) is perfect, this alleviates the burden of making decisions based on personal opinions and convictions.

From the beginning of the pandemic, Session has determined that the guidelines we would strive to follow come from the San Diego County Public Health Recommendations for Religious Organizations. This external authority has shaped our decision-making and has resulted in key decisions like facilitating on-line services in the early days of the pandemic, hosting outdoors services, and providing masked and unmasked indoor services. Our Executive Director of Operations has a weekly meeting with a committee that consists of San Diego Public Health Representatives, Physicians, and Church Leaders in the San Diego area, to discuss the guidelines being given so we remain up-to-date with any changes taking place.

According to the [San Diego Public Health Guidelines for Religious Organizations](#), within indoor church services masks are currently optional for those who are vaccinated and required for those who are unvaccinated; however, they strongly recommend that everyone wear masks as Omicron cases rise. We will continue to follow these San Diego Public Health guidelines as we provide options to ensure a safe worshiping environment.

We ask that, together, we all commit to navigating this season with unity, humility, respect, and love towards one other regardless of our views surrounding COVID protocols. As a leadership team, we know our decision-making process will not always

be perfect or meet everyone's expectations, but protecting those at risk while providing options for worship continues to be one of our top priorities.

We also want to acknowledge and appreciate those on the frontlines of this pandemic, especially medical workers and educators. This has been an incredibly difficult season and we are extremely thankful for your service, dedication, and commitment to our community. We know that your work often goes unnoticed and we want to express our appreciation, love, and prayers for you.

As we leave the Christmas season and begin this New Year, this quote by Bob Goff is a great reminder for all of us: *"The way we love each other when we leave the manger says a lot about who we found when we got there."* May the world know us by our love and kindness (John 13:35), even as we navigate through these uncertain and challenging times. As Pastor Paul mentioned this past Sunday, no matter what changes come, what is unchanging is God's covenant love for us in Christ.

Prayerfully,  
The Session and Leadership at Redeemer



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