

Redeeming Grace Baptist Church

COVID-19 Policy update

Sept. 9, 2021

Dear Redeeming Grace Family,

The spread of COVID-19 has had dramatic effects on everyone these last months. As facilities and groups re-open and resume meeting after the dramatic lockdown in the spring of 2020, Redeeming Grace has been making every effort to meet in community in a God-honoring way. In seeking to do this, we often encounter questions about specific guidelines and recommendations for individuals who participate in community with us in person.

At Redeeming Grace, we are seeking to honor the Lord and love others well. In the context of COVID-19, we are seeking to live this out in the following ways:

- We believe in the priority of the gathered community and doing so in a COVID-19 context means continuing to gather for in-person worship when it can be done lovingly and safely. Hebrews 10:25 – *“not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”*
- We believe that loving others in a COVID-19 context means taking precautions for the sake of those around us, not just for our own personal safety and preferences. Philippians 2:4 – *“Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”*
- We believe that being a gospel-centered community in a COVID-19 context means honoring those in authority over us by endeavoring to comply with Maryland state requirements, while recognizing that the people developing the requirements are imperfect humans in need of Christ’s grace just as much as we are. Romans 13:1 – *“Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.”*
- We believe that living in a COVID-19 context means bringing our efforts and decisions in prayer to God, the creator and sustainer of the universe, recognizing that He is ultimately the one who is sovereign over all things. James 1:5 – *“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.”*

Over the summer of 2021 we have seen the roll back of MD state mandates and then subsequently the resurgence of COVID-19 in our community, particularly the delta variant. In response, Governor Hogan has decided to NOT issue new state mandates but has deferred such decisions to the individual counties. While no present mandate exists, area school systems, including the King’s Christian Academy where we presently meet, have adopted masking approaches based on positive case rates per 100,000. Similarly, NAS Pax River recently adopted masking policies significantly above and beyond state mandates.

At Redeeming Grace, we have not required masks since the mandate has been lifted. However, as case numbers continue to remain at high levels according to the CDC and St. Mary’s health department, we have been reassessing our own practices and are offering the following guidance regarding masking at our public gatherings.

Beginning Sunday, September 12th, we are recommending that everyone above age 4 wear a mask at our public gatherings. This recommendation includes both the Equip and Worship hour or any other event that meets publicly at KCA. This recommendation comes as we've sought guidance from the CDC, the local health department, consulted with several RGBC members who serve as medical professionals, and had discussion with other area churches. We will continue to recommend masks if the case numbers in the county if the 7-day metrics remain above the 100 cases per 100,000 people. The metrics we are following can be found at the St. Mary's County Health Department website <https://smchd.org/covid-19-data> and CDC <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view>. When the 7-day metrics drops below the 100 cases per 100,000 we will relax our recommendation. We will provide any updates on our website or newsletter.

As always, we appreciate your help and prayers as we continue to wade through these challenging days. We are grateful that we can maintain a full ministry schedule but want to do so with in a safe manner.

In His Grace,

Pastor Adam

** Gratitude to Cornerstone Presbyterian Church for permission to borrow from their current policy as a model.
Rev. 8/27/2021*