

COVID Policy Updates –

As many of you know, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) updated their COVID-19 guidance on Thursday, May 13 and Governor Roy Cooper announced immediate changes to North Carolina guidelines the following day. As promised, the Church Council, made up of all the ministry leaders within our church, met on Monday, May 17 to review and assess our COVID-19 policies and protocols in light of these changes.

Over the last 15 months, our decisions have continually been made through council and consensus. Thus, we appreciate your patience as it took a few days to organize a meeting in order to gauge the impact of this updated health guidance on our church family and to consider the best way to apply these updates to our church functions and operations.

With that said, our Church Council has now amended the previous church policy from April 26, 2021 to align with the updated recommendations from the CDC and North Carolina government in a way that reflects our prayer, guiding principles, and biblical guideposts.

As a reminder, our prayer and guiding principles as leaders of the various ministries and groups within our church have not changed. We continue to pray that we, as Green Level Baptist Church, can glorify God as the church family He has created and called us to be, faithfully serving Him, one another, and our community. We do not believe this virus has changed our identity or mission, so we have, prayerfully and thoughtfully, sought to take incremental steps forward as a church family. This meeting and these policy changes were no different.

Further, we continue to seek to listen to and apply the guidance of healthcare officials in a way that best serves our church in line with our two core biblical guideposts: (1) in humility, we are to outdo one another in showing honor and (2) in love, we are to count others as more significant than ourselves. These biblical guideposts flow from our guiding Scriptures during our discussions: Romans 12:10 and Philippians 2:3-5.

Below, you will see the previous church policy as it was amended this week. New text is in ***BOLD italics*** and deleted or changed text is highlighted and struck through.

Effective Immediately for Facilities

1. Remove 48-hour time between room usage. *(There will no longer need to be a period of 48-hours between using the same room or space inside the buildings.)*
2. Remove additional COVID sanitation & cleaning protocols at the discretion of the Properties Committee. *(Any additional cleaning or sanitation previously recommended by the Church Council is now up to the full discretion of the Properties Committee.)*
3. Water fountains will be turned on.

Effective Immediately for Sunday Morning Worship Services

1. Cease online registration for Worship Services. *(Seating will be first come, first served. Overflow space will be available once sanctuary seating capacity is met.)*

2. Members and guests may seat themselves during Worship Services with greeters available to assist as needed. ***Physical distancing signage will remain in place for one month from Sunday, May 23 and will be removed at the Connections Team's convenience after that time.***
3. After Worship Services, members and guests may exit the Sanctuary on their own without waiting for guidance or assistance from greeters or ushers.
4. Celebrate baptisms and offer the Lord's Supper as planned and agreed upon by the Senior Pastor and Deacons.
5. Instrumentalists will be added back to the worship services on Sunday mornings at the discretion of Music Ministry leadership in discussion with the Senior Pastor.

Effective Immediately for Ministries, Committees, and Groups

1. The Children's Ministry Council, under the leadership of the Children's Ministry Director, can and will determine policies related to children and their programs, including Awana, Sunday School, etc. ***Any mask policies decided by the Children's Ministry Council will only apply to children if they are checked in for a ministry activity or event under the care of our staff and/or volunteers. If the child is under a parent's supervision, the parent is responsible for deciding if their child will or will not wear a mask at church or at a church sponsored event or activity.***
2. The Youth Ministry Council, under the leadership of the Associate Pastor with Students, can and will determine policies related to the Student Ministry. ***Any mask policies decided by the Youth Ministry Council will only apply to students if they are under the care and supervision of our staff and/or volunteers. If the student is under a parent's supervision, the parent is responsible for deciding if their child will or will not wear a mask at church or at a church sponsored activity.***
3. ***Starting Sunday, May 23, 2021, masks will be optional at worship services and adult ministry events, but we encourage those who are not vaccinated to continue to wear one.***

Masks are recommended, but not required indoors at the **consensus of the adult attendees during group gatherings, excluding Sunday morning and Wednesday evening ministries where masks are still required.** Considering Romans 12:10 and Philippians 2:3-5, leaders will consider the needs of others when planning. **Further, committees and groups are encouraged to meet outside whenever possible.**

Effective Immediately Regarding Meals and Food Service

1. ***Meals can be served indoors or out without restrictions.***

Effective June 1

1. ***We will allow eating and meals, except buffet style meals, indoors at a committee or ministry group's discretion beginning June 1st.***

Additional Clarification

- At this time, we will still require masks on Sunday mornings and during Wednesday evening activities knowing these are (a) our largest meeting times and (b) when we most frequently welcome guests from our community.