



## COVID-19 Q&A

From the Pastors, Staff, and Elders:

Chuck Colson wrote a book titled, “How Now Shall We Live?” That’s the question we’ve been asking every day for the past year and a half as we consider life at SSBC with you, our brothers and sisters. This document is intended to clarify SSBC’s *current* position and practices. As our situation changes and new directives are given by the Commonwealth, the Elders and staff will continue to evaluate, communicate with the church, and respond accordingly.

This issue is charged with strong perspectives including disagreement, fear, and occasionally anger. Our desire is to be a church united around the mission of Christ even when there is disagreement. We recognize that our current position may lead some of our church family to keep their distance for now. Therefore, we will continue to provide a live stream of our Sunday services. We also desire to maintain a relationship of care and discipleship until everyone feels safe to gather.

Finally, as followers of Jesus Christ, who laid down His life for us sinners, we are bound in every situation to love our neighbors as ourselves. We are responsible to place the needs of others first. There are many among us who might be afraid, or confused, or struggling, or lonely. So we urge you to consider how you can love your fellow worshipers. May we gladly live the words of Jesus, *Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you are also to love one another* (John 13:34).

### **What are the current COVID-19 guidelines for places of worship in Massachusetts?**

As of May 29, 2021, all restrictions have been lifted from places of worship in Massachusetts. What was previously labeled *requirement* is now labeled *recommendation*. There is no new guidance for places of worship since May 21, 2021. Every time the Commonwealth has issued new requirements for places of worship, the Elders and staff have evaluated and implemented them accordingly. Since the current direction from the state is in the form of *recommendations* and not *requirements*, the Elders and staff trust each person to make the right decisions for their own health and concerns for their safety.

## **If masks are required for kids in school, why aren't they required in Children's or Youth Ministry?**

Massachusetts requirements for schools are not universally applied to all spaces that host children's programming. Since the state has not issued requirements for children's programs in places of worship, SSBC's children's and youth ministries operate by the principle that every person is capable to make the best decision for their own health. If you deem it best for your child to wear a mask, your choice will be actively supported by ministry staff and volunteers. For CDC guidelines on masks please visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

## **Are we requiring vaccinations of staff and ministry volunteers?**

No we are not, nor are we collecting information on peoples' vaccination status.

## **What should I do if I am a close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19?**

Please consult CDC guidelines for close contacts. When in doubt, worship from home and please do not attend church events until you are certain you are in good health.

## **What should I do if I attended church and then tested positive for COVID-19?**

If you show symptoms or test positive within 48 hours of attending an SSBC ministry, please consider contacting the church office so we can notify appropriate people while maintaining your confidentiality. For CDC guidelines on close contact please visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html>