

Way of Grace Pandemic Guidelines—Update (May 2021)

Way of Grace Family & Friends,

In light of revised guidance from public health officials, we are pleased to announce updates to our pandemic guidelines. These updates will take effect on Sunday, June 6, 2021. Please READ CAREFULLY:

1. Per CDC guidelines¹, starting in June, mask-wearing will be optional for those who are **fully vaccinated**².
2. Though not included in the CDC's guidance, we are extending the same status to those who had the virus (symptomatic) and have a **current, positive antibody test**.
3. If you have not been vaccinated or do not have a current antibody test, **our original guidelines remain in effect: please continue to wear a mask** at all times while on campus on Sundays (or any Way of Grace event).
4. For the time being, we will continue to use a socially-distanced room arrangement on Sundays, and are requesting that each person **continue social distancing** out of respect for others³ and a commitment to caution.

Like every other business or institution, these guidelines will work based on an 'honor system', that is, confidence that each person will be honest about their vaccination status, etc. Again, if you have not been vaccinated or do not have a current, positive antibody test, *please continue to wear a mask and practice social distancing* (to minimize the risk to others, as well as for your own sake). In light of these revisions, PLEASE consider the following **additional guidance**:

1. **The pandemic is not over.** The virus continues to be present and active in our community (that's one reason we are waiting until June to implement these revisions)⁴. Let's continue to be vigilant and careful as the church gathered and 'scattered' (e.g., please do not attend if you have any covid-like symptoms, or have been exposed to someone recently infected).
2. **You are welcome, masked or unmasked.** We are committed to respecting each person's health status, safety choices, etc., and hope you will join us in making each other feel comfortable and cared for.
3. **We will continue to reassess.** While we recognize differing opinions and preferences in this area, and the reality of 'covid fatigue', in a health crisis such as this, our commitment remains compliance with our public health officials⁵. Thus, if our situation worsens and official guidance reverts to more restrictions, or if it improves and we can relax regulations even more, we hope each member in our faith family will be not be caught unawares and will be ready to make any necessary adjustments.

Praise God for these new steps forward, and for the leaders, scientists, doctors, etc., through whom he has worked. May He continue to guide and guard his flock at Way of Grace, through this and every trial!

1. "Fully vaccinated people can resume activities without wearing a mask or physically distancing, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance". (from <https://www.cdc.gov>)

2. i.e., starting two weeks after the second dose of a two-dose vaccine, or two weeks after receiving a one-dose vaccine.

3. While the inclination of many is hugs and handshakes, please respect the space of those who are choosing to maintain distance.

4. The CDC still ranks Maricopa County in the "substantial risk" category, and the Maricopa County Covid dashboard similarly places Buckeye in the "high" to "substantial" level—with some recent outbreaks at local schools.

5. "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities." (Romans 13:1a)(cf. 13:7; Titus 3:1; I Peter 2:13-17)