

The last 6-7 months have been extremely challenging in many different ways as individuals, as families, and as a congregation. COVID-19 and all the fallout from the year have impacted all of us, and one thing 2020 has heightened in our country as well as our church is division.

By God's grace, to this point you, as the body of DCRC, have loved and treated each other with dignity and respect, and we have not had much division that has threatened our church. Of this, we are very thankful to God for his working in you!

With that being said, some tensions and division have arisen and come to our attention over masks and their usage/non-usage in our building and worship services. What concerns us regarding our current situation is two-fold:

- First, the unity of the church, especially regarding the way we as a body speak to and treat each other and any visitors as representatives of Christ.
- Second, the health and safety of all our church family.

We cannot allow masks and any issues connected to them to divide our church. We have a much higher calling to Christ and his kingdom!

So, what do we do?

First, we ask you, DCRC family, to continue lifting us up in prayer. We seek to follow God and his Word first and foremost and allow him and his wisdom to lead us and his church.

Second, we ask you to join us in seeking to follow and exemplify Christ. Christ lived his life (and died his death) with a completely God and other focus. Jesus was not self-focused or concerned with his own wants or needs. He did everything to serve and glorify God and then to serve others. May we join him in glorifying God and in setting aside our own wants, desires, and even freedom for the betterment of the "other."

Third, please join with us in enacting this plan regarding masks.

Starting Sunday, September 27, the basement fellowship hall will be designated a "mask required" zone for the Sunday morning worship service. This space will be for people who want to worship in the fellowship of other believers but also be certain that everyone present will be wearing a mask and be socially distant. Masks will be required in the fellowship hall. No exceptions. Those who wish to use this space may enter the building through the front, east door and then exit the same way.

For the main entryway and the sanctuary (including the balcony), nothing will change. Masks are expected to be worn when entering, exiting, and moving around the building as well as for the duration of the worship service.

We recognize there are exceptions to the mask mandate, including health reasons, and we seek to honor those as well. So, if you cannot wear a mask for such reasons, please worship with us in the sanctuary.

One of our goals was to create a plan that would be safe, would respect the intent of our governing authorities, and would allow the most people to feel the most comfortable in gathering for worship. We feel this plan does so although admitting, it is imperfect and may change as we hear from you, especially those who have not felt comfortable coming to church thus far. We welcome your constructive feedback.

We look forward to continue leading this congregation and partnering with you in ministry for God, his kingdom, and his glory so that disciples of Jesus Christ may be raised up in the faith!