



Dear Knox Family,

As we mentioned briefly in our announcement on Sunday, June 20th, we will be pulling forward some long awaited changes in our protocols for worship and other activities at Knox. These changes are due to the rapidly improving COVID situation in our county. The current COVID case rate in Washtenaw County is within the lowest level for the pandemic as established by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). At the same time, the estimated vaccination rate for those over 16 in the congregation with at least one dose is well over 70%. Per the CDC website, about 114 million Americans have had COVID infections and about 45% of these have subsequently received vaccinations. This means that close to 300 million Americans have either been vaccinated and/or had the infection. Barring any serious pandemic surges arising from viral variants (which always remain a possibility) we believe the following new protocols are prudent and will serve us well as we return to a more normal church life. We rejoice in these developments and are thankful for the Lord's providence.

We also rejoice that Knox has been protected from any known transmission of the virus related to our activities at the church building and are thankful for all those who have sacrificed to comply with the restrictions instituted. Seeking to generally align with the actions of our state government; as they have recently eliminated the statewide mask mandates and capacity restrictions, we will do the same.

Therefore, ***effective Sunday June 27th***, the following changes will be implemented:

We will eliminate all masking, capacity constraints and social distancing requirements at Knox, except as indicated below. The elimination of masking, social distancing and capacity constraints applies to worship services, office activities and all other facility usage at Knox. We understand and affirm that some members will choose to remain masked and we fully support them in this choice.

- ***The Knox Hall option will remain available for worship at least one more month*** The decision to extend this option beyond that point will be taken up by our Session. We look forward to repurposing Knox Hall for fellowship and refreshments at some point in the future.
- ***The early childhood wing will maintain masking requirements for childcare staff for a minimum of one additional month*** as more families with children transition to in-person services. We will be tracking the guidance from the state for risk mitigation for childcare centers to decide when to eliminate mask requirements for childcare staff. We will also be relaxing the scheduling requirement for childcare during the services over the coming weeks. Details on all of these matters will be communicated directly to families from the Children's Ministry staff
- We anticipate resuming Christian Education programs for adults and children in September.
- We continue to ask that members not attend if they are experiencing potential COVID symptoms. We would also ask that those developing symptoms shortly after a Knox event be promptly tested for COVID and report to the Knox office any potential exposures if testing is positive.

The Session will consider the matter of whether to continue the live stream option for the worship services, with regard to best serving the needs of the congregation and other ministry benefits, understanding the considerable investment required to maintain this activity. Feel free to speak to any of our elders if you have input on this decision. Visit the [Knox website](#) to see who is currently serving.

Finally, we want you to know that we have collaborated with an exceptional group of doctors and public health experts in the congregation to establish a process grid for responding to worsening COVID levels in our county should this arise. This will serve to guide us if another surge of the pandemic occurs. The county average daily case levels and test positivity rates will be monitored by Knox staff who will implement the necessary restrictions in communication with Session if the need arises. Let us pray together for God's mercy that this would never be required. In closing, we'd like to thank everyone for their patience, cooperation and countless acts of charity as we have navigated this challenging season. May our 'Divine Warrior' continue to lead us forward in the days to come.

In Christ,

Knox Reopening Commission