



# ATONEMENT

## LUTHERAN CHURCH

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*“Sharing the love of Jesus by glorifying God and extending His kingdom”*

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July 29, 2021

*“...God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.  
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change...”*

*--- Psalm 46:1-2*

Dear Members and Friends of Atonement,

We were blessed to be able to return to worship in the sanctuary on May 30, but we promised then that we would continue to monitor the ongoing situation with COVID-19 and respond with safety measures appropriate to the level of risk. The last few weeks, **we have seen that risk rise considerably in our area** with an increasing number of cases caused by a new variant. Still, with over half of Pasco county residents vaccinated we feel that indoor worship can continue safely as long as we take precautions to minimize possible spread of the virus.

To meet this new challenge, church council met on Monday July 26 and voted to put in place a policy that all people will **wear masks in worship services starting Sunday, August 1**. On July 27, new guidelines came out from the CDC affirming that decision. According to CDC Director Rochelle Walensky, “In areas with substantial and high transmission, CDC recommends fully vaccinated people wear masks in public, indoor settings, to help prevent the spread of the Delta variant and protect others...” The CDC continues to recommend that unvaccinated people wear masks and social distance at indoor gatherings.

Please come expecting to wear a mask at worship. If you forget, we have masks on hand. For those who prefer, the live stream will continue to be offered for the 10am service. You can watch it on our website ([www.discoveralc.com](http://www.discoveralc.com)) or through Facebook

or Youtube. We will still have a “social distancing” side and a non-social distancing side for seating in the sanctuary. We will be minimizing close contact in the worship space by continuing with our “contact-free” methods for passing the peace and distributing Holy Communion. Special fans will be in operation inside the church to help with air flow and filtration. Our “Clean Team” will be sanitizing the worship space following the service.

At this point, council has not set any restrictions for other groups meeting at the church. In other words, they are **currently allowed to use their own discretion** to make decisions about mask wearing for their group. We have both large and small groups meeting there, with some meeting primarily outdoors. All groups meeting inside are asked to sanitize after their meetings, with large groups (30 or more) asked to use a chemical fogger with disinfectant.

It has been a real challenge dealing with the ups and downs through this period of pandemic. We have enjoyed 2 months of worship back in the sanctuary, and we hope and pray that may continue. We also **hope and pray that this time of increased risk may soon pass over us** with everyone remaining safe and healthy. We will get through this together – we have the strength of our mighty God with us, our sword and shield and our mighty fortress.

We are grateful for your patience and understanding in these difficult times. As always, we appreciate your prayers for the members and leaders of Atonement, and for all who suffer from COVID-19. Thank you especially for helping us keep those most vulnerable as safe as possible. By doing so, we live out our baptismal promise “*to serve all people, following the example of our Lord Jesus Christ*” (**Lutheran Book of Worship**, p. 201).

Peace and health,



Pastor Scott Lindner



Council President Salli Stupp-Conover