



Dear Friends,

I spoke with some of the members of the regathering team. We acknowledge the recommendations of the Bridge phase in Illinois and new guidelines from the CDC and are beginning to make some changes in our safety practices at St. Paul UCC.

The past and current Covid-19 safety guidelines at St. Paul take into account all of our congregants, including our children and the most vulnerable. We feel it has been our responsibility to keep our congregants of all ages and abilities as safe as possible.

With all of this in mind, the following are updated guidelines:

- * We will not be taking temperatures from this point forward.
- * This Sunday, May 16, we will have spaces for 75 in attendance at the 9am service. On May 23, we will increase that number to 100 for Confirmation Sunday and are looking at increasing the number after Illinois moves into phase 5.
- * After May 23, we will not be registering for the 9am service.
- * We are no longer requiring masks at our outdoor worship. Masks continue to be encouraged, especially when group singing. We also ask that we continue to practice distancing.
- * We highly encourage masks at our indoor services which includes worship, weddings, funerals, etc. We look to start congregational singing

during the month of June, and this will help us comfortably start the process. Again, we ask that we continue to practice distancing.

* Masks will be required by both adults and youth wherever youth are present (as many 12-15 year olds still aren't fully vaccinated and vaccines aren't available to those under 12). We will require masks for all adults and youth at VBS in June.

* With groups approximately 15 or less, if all have been vaccinated, the members are not required to wear masks. Of course, masks are always encouraged, especially for our friends who have underlying health conditions.

This updated list of guidelines will continue to be evaluated and updated as needed - whether the situation continues to improve or (as we hope not) take steps backwards. (Our executive council has also been consulted in regards to these guidelines and will continue to be a part of the process.) Thank you for all that you have done and continue to do to ensure this pandemic comes to an end and for your patience as we navigate what we hope are the final months of this pandemic.

Friends, as 1 Corinthians 12 states "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ." We recognize that we are all members of the Body of Christ, valuing each member of our congregation, and working together to create a healthy path forward for all.

Blessings,
Rev. Michelle Torigian