

First Baptist Church, Raleigh
Risk Management Guidelines
5-25-21

Our staff and the Risk Management Team met on Tuesday, May 25, to discuss the status of our ongoing plans for the continued reopening of the church. Due to the increased availability of a vaccine and new CDC guidelines concerning fully vaccinated people, we are recommending the modification of certain existing safety protocols. One important factor that we considered is that our children and many of our youth are not yet eligible to receive the vaccine. Our church has always provided a safe and nurturing environment for all members, most especially our children and youth. Our Risk Management Team believes that this must remain one of our highest priorities.

We would remind everyone that the wearing of masks continues to be one of the most effective measures to mitigate the transmission of Covid-19. Therefore, **all people who have not been fully vaccinated should continue to wear a mask at all church events.** In addition, we encourage all who are eligible to be vaccinated.

As we discussed our plans, we kept the following considerations in mind:

- Although research has shown that fully vaccinated persons have a greatly reduced risk of contracting or transmitting the virus, a substantial percentage of our adult population has not yet been vaccinated.
- Our children and youth, under the age of 12, are not yet eligible to receive the vaccine, and are therefore among the most vulnerable.
- Our church welcomes all, both vaccinated and unvaccinated.
- To protect all of our members, especially our children and youth, the safest course of action is for all, both vaccinated and unvaccinated, to wear masks in all public areas.

Recommendations

1. Protocol Changes (effective immediately)

- Sign-in is required for all programs, services, or events.
- Masks are required for all:
 - When entering church/in public places (halls/elevator/restrooms).
 - In mixed venues (adults + children and/or youth).
- Fully vaccinated adults can remove masks when in a room with adults; those not vaccinated are encouraged to still wear masks.
- Children & Youth will continue wearing masks at all events, both indoors and outdoors.
These protocols apply to all areas of the building.

2. Recommendations effective Sunday, June 6

- Those in chancel and pulpit areas will not be required to wear masks as long as all providing leadership in those areas are fully vaccinated. If any leaders in these areas are not fully vaccinated, then masks will be required for all. Upon leaving these areas, leaders must wear masks.
- Vaccinated members of the sanctuary choir will be allowed to sing from the choir loft without masks and to rehearse without masks in the choir room.
- Sunday School - All adult Sunday School classes will be permitted to meet in-person again, though each class may decide when it is ready to do so. Each class will also decide on the mask protocol inside of its meeting room. If a class decides its room is too small, every attempt will be made to find a larger room.
- Seating will be allowed on ever other pew (signs designated). Family units can sit together. A six-foot space is required between nonfamily units on the same pew.
- Hymnals and Bibles will be available in the pews, but we will not yet pass offering plates or communion elements.
- We continue to wrestle with these decisions and are constantly monitoring changes as we are eager to continue moving forward. The Risk Management Team will continue to meet as needed to reassess our response to the information and data coming from our congregation, medical professionals, and community.