

Beloved Community,

Greetings from the Reopening Task Force. We continue to hope, as you do, that the grip of COVID – 19 on our lives will soon be over.

Current Events:

This week, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott signed an executive order that will end the state-mandated face mask requirement on March 10.

Throughout the pandemic, the health and safety of our members has been our top priority. While the number of new daily COVID-19 cases are down, they are only down to the level we saw during the spike after July 4th, 2020 of 500 – 600 per day in Dallas County. At this time, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) does not recommend relaxing our caution to avoid large groups.

Congregational Vaccinations and Immunity:

We are very aware that vaccination numbers and natural immunity are rising rapidly in our vulnerable members. We encourage all of the adult members to get their vaccination when they are able. We are looking forward to a time when any adult will be able to be vaccinated. **All three vaccines are viable options and the sooner you receive a vaccine the better to grow immunity from the virus.**

The Task Force will do a confidential survey of active members' vaccination and immunity status to allow us to calculate our congregation's immunity percentage. Knowing the vaccination rate will help us to make the best decisions possible regarding in-person worship.

COVID-19 in our Area

The members of the Reopening Task Force, in conjunction with Pastor Mike Gregg, are carefully monitoring the number of new daily COVID cases in the greater Dallas community. If the number of new cases continues to drop after the decision by Gov. Abbott, then we will be able to move forward to a phased opening of the church. The new case rate is a 3-week lagging indicator of spread of the virus. It takes about 3 cycles or 9 weeks to evaluate a downturn in the number of new cases.

When we return to in-person worship, we anticipate the core protocols of our response to remain in place. They are:

1. Wash your hands or use sanitizer frequently during the day. When your hands are soiled, wash your hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds.
2. Wear a Mask or face covering when with persons not in your household even when meeting in outdoor places.
3. Maintain a physical distance between you and others, both inside and outside and wear a mask.

These protocols are consistent with the Texas executive order, which specifically states that nothing in the executive order precludes business or establishments from requiring employees or customers to follow additional hygiene measures, including the wearing of face coverings (Article 4, Executive Order GA-34).

RLBC Reopening Taskforce:

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