

April 2022 - Updating BLC COVID Protocols

The Bethlehem community is diverse with regards to COVID vaccination status and risk-factors. COVID variants are also diverse in the severity and transmissibility of infections they cause. We seek to provide an environment that allows people of various risk levels to participate in community together and we place the highest priority on creating a safe and inclusive worship environment. When determining guidance, we recognize that not all people have the same risk tolerance. *We encourage all people in the Bethlehem community to obtain all vaccines for which they are eligible.*

Bethlehem looks to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to determine levels of risk. When there is a change in the CDC risk levels the Re-Opening Committee will convene to determine what changes to protocols, if any, will be made.

[CDC Guidance for Monroe County](#) is currently LOW.

- Three risk levels: LOW to HIGH. Risk level is determined by measuring hospital beds being used, hospital admissions, and the total number of new COVID-19 cases in an area.

The following changes are effective immediately. The Re-Opening Committee will next meet on Tuesday, April 26, 2022 to determine what next steps, if any, will be taken.

WORSHIP and SINGING - We will continue to provide opportunities to livestream worship whenever possible and we encourage anyone who is sick or experiencing COVID-related symptoms to share in worship through livestream.

Masks are required when gathered for worship.

- Worship leaders may remove their masks when in a leadership role (ex. speaking, praying, chanting).

ALL OTHER CHURCH ACTIVITIES – We trust individuals to gauge their own comfort with risks and will post information about CDC mask guidance. As a result of this change all non-worship and singing activities at BLC will be mask-optional. We continue to practice love and care of our neighbors by honoring one another in making choices to wear masks or not. We will obtain KN-95 masks to share with people who wish to continue to remain masked while participating in activities at BLC.

- In-person, indoor fellowship activities may resume in designated areas (eg, on Sunday mornings, coffee hour can resume in the Fellowship Hall; a small group may agree to share snacks while meeting in the adult ed room).
- All food and beverages must remain in the designated space and not be brought into other rooms.
- All Faith Formation activities are mask optional.

