



# MESSIAH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

*We seek to answer God's call to love*

Senior Pastor: Andrew Plocher  
Associate Pastor: Molly Eversoll

Parish Administrator: Jennifer Dodge  
Administrative Assistant: Julia Kettle

March 18, 2022

Siblings in Christ,

I am delighted to share with you that on March 17<sup>th</sup> our Church Council made the unanimous decision to change our policy at Messiah to "masks optional" and to permit food and drink once again.

For the last two years Messiah's leadership has prayerfully sought to be faithful to God and neighbor. We recognize that for some this decision comes way too soon. For others this decision has been requested for quite some time. The Church Council did not make this choice lightly. We want everyone to feel welcomed and empowered to continue to mask if they wish.

To this end, the balcony has been designated for those who wish to continue masking during worship. We will also continue to provide hand sanitizer and masks at our main entrances. If you aren't feeling well, please err on the side of caution and stay home. Let us continue to care for one another as we make this transition.

Two years ago, we were in the middle of Lent when COVID-19 first interrupted our journey to the cross. We find our journey again interrupted, this time by war in Ukraine. We invite you to reflect on the last two years. How are you feeling? Over the last two years, are there spiritual practices you have started or some you have stopped? How can this Lenten season be a return to what nourishes you spiritually?

These last two years our community at Messiah has undergone significant changes. We have welcomed many new members, we had some members join the church triumphant, and we saw a few members move on to other communities. During this time: we have continued to proclaim the Gospel, care for our neighbors, raise over \$40,000 for Room at the Inn, and begin our streaming ministry that reaches hundreds of people every Sunday with the love of Jesus. What is undeniable is that we have continued to grow in vibrancy and vitality.

Thank you for being a part of this community. Thank you for your grace, flexibility, patience, persistence, and financial support. Most of all, thank you for your prayer.

As we look forward to the days ahead, we also stand ready to shift again if necessary. We are prayerful that will not be required, but also could not have imagined the rollercoaster of change that we have navigated these past years.

Friends, as we take this step together, be gentle with yourselves and others. We look forward to seeing your faces again, to laughing over cups of coffee, to potlucks, and to the connection that comes with seeing one another without a mask. We will be finding ways to celebrate this shift in the days ahead and look forward to sharing those with you, too.

In Christ,



Pr. Andrew



Pr. Molly

