

At the Board of Trustees Meeting on April 19th the Board passed the recommendations of the Covid Reopening Task Force:

Dear BOT,

This evening (March 16th) the COVID Task Force met to discuss the issue of requiring masking during in-person activities at UUCQC.

For context, last December, the task force asked the BOT to accept the recommendation from the COVID task force to:

1. Adopt and align our mitigation strategies with the CDC
2. Recalibrate our phases of mitigation to match the recommendation by the CDC

Our request was approved.

Last month, the CDC updated their criteria for recognizing the severity of the spread of COVID-19, and modified their alerts to measure “levels of community transmission.” This update was largely driven by the availability of home COVID tests, vaccination status and awareness of the lack of recognition of the stressors on our health care systems.

While all these updates seem pragmatic, it certainly caught us of-guard, and we were unprepared to fully reopen with the new levels of transmission (because we suddenly found ourselves in low and moderate spread) from what we had just experienced of a surge from the omicron variant.

So we pivot.

In order to continue our alignment with mitigations recommended by the CDC, [we are requesting use of masks be aligned with the CDC recommendations are as follows:](#)

LOW

- Wear a mask based on your personal preference, informed by your personal level of risk.

MEDIUM

If you are immunocompromised or at high risk for severe illness

- Talk to your healthcare provider about additional precautions, such as wearing masks or respirators indoors in public
- If you live with or have social contact with someone at high risk for severe illness, consider testing yourself for infection before you get together and wearing a mask when indoors with them.

HIGH

- Wear a well-fitting mask indoors in public, regardless of vaccination status or individual risk (including in K-12 schools and other community settings)

- If you are immunocompromised or at high risk for severe illness, wear a mask or respirator that provides you with greater protection

One item we noted in the change made by the CDC is a shift from emphasizing protecting others in your community to protecting the individual.

We'd like to also emphasize that our community comes together as a community. For those among us who are most vulnerable, unable to develop the immunity needed or not eligible for the vaccines that science has brought out, **we encourage congregants to use masks**. We ask of our congregants to be considerate, and include others safety in empathy and compassion. This is the difficulty of our recommendations. Protecting our whole community requires everyone's participation.

When we formed the reopening task force many months ago, we had the following goals:

Goals to be Accomplished by Re-opening

All of this supports good emotional & community health:

- Sense of community and connection
- Easier to be welcoming to newcomers
- Making music together
- Performing rituals
- Inclusion for those not comfortable with technology
- Donations increase
- Allow events
- Sharing of food/drink

Without a doubt the subject of wearing masks has been a challenge.

In Community,
The COVID Task Force