

June 22, 2021



Praise the Lord Everyone

On last Sunday, I announced to our congregation, those who call Apostolic Faith Church their home and me their pastor along with so many others who are connected with our ministry by technology or other means changes in our Covid policies. The announcement was my initial sharing with them regarding guidelines for the Covid, Sars 2 virus and our Covid protocols which have served us over the past year.

I believe [our guidelines](#), have served us well. We have been blessed to utilize the knowledge and resources the Lord has provided us to keep us relatively safe throughout this pandemic. You have been tremendously cooperative in our efforts to keep everyone as safe as possible, while continuing to do ministry that is God-directed and cutting edge. Many of you have been a part of ministries, birthed out of the changes imposed by the pandemic that continue to bless and enrich the lives of so many. ***God Bless You.***

Overall these efforts, along with your cooperation and the favor and Grace of God has resulted in a relatively low rate of persons connected with our ministry contracting Covid-19 and dying of this disease. While we are thankful to God for this, we stand committed to continue to reduce and by His grace eradicate this threat to our health and well-being.

Our guidelines have been modified from time to time. This has been based on changing levels of the virus in our local and state areas, different risks of transmission, and most importantly, the availability and distribution of safe and effective vaccines. As you are probably aware, I have been personally involved on a number of levels in regards to the virus, the development of safety protocols, followed closely on different task forces the development and safety and efficacy testing of the vaccines, and their release and rollout to the public. **Our church served as a site for vaccine distribution and over a period of weeks was involved in the distribution of close to 5,000 doses.**

Presently, a safe and effective vaccine is available to anyone in the United States with few exceptions.

As we have taken our Wellness surveys at our church over the past month, more than 80% of you have indicated that you have been vaccinated. For this we are grateful. As of today, the infectivity rate which represents the risk of Covid infection in Chicago is less than 1%. The effectiveness of the 3 available vaccines have been shown to reduce the risk of serious infection from Covid in a fully vaccinated person to less than 1%.

In light of these very positive facts, and genuine prayer we are now putting in [place the following guidelines](#) that we believe will benefit us all in enjoying corporate worship and at the same time keeping us safe.

1. We will no longer do temperature checks. Since the first week of taking temperatures, we have had one positive out of 10's of thousands over the past year. If you have a fever, we are asking you not to come to in-person services.
2. Masks are optional if you are fully vaccinated. Removing masks for some who have been vaccinated may be a process, so feel free to make your choice.
3. If you have been fully vaccinated, you can sit anywhere without observing the 6 feet distancing guideline.
4. Those who have not been vaccinated should wear a mask for their own safety.
5. Those who have not been vaccinated should sit at the 6 feet distancing recommendation, again for their own safety.
6. Children 2-12 should wear a mask. We are anticipating an approved vaccine for these children to be announced in the near future.
7. The wellness survey is no longer mandatory, but I am asking you to fill out a modified survey that will ask your vaccination status. This is to allow us to chart the progress of our congregation's vaccination status.

Praise God for the progress that has been made. We all realize that this is a transition period. Please be patient and kind to your fellow parishioner. We will have to adjust to knowing who wants to touch, shake hands, hug, "tell your neighbor," etc.

We are continuing to look at how to begin to have choirs, corporate meals, and other critical ministry practices. It should not be long.

**Human contact is a God-given need, and we look forward to the day when it can be done without restrictions.**

Please feel free to call or otherwise contact the church with any questions or concerns.

Please continue to pray for our church and our world. Remember, we are still His WITNESSES! Let us move forward together with grace and understanding with this in mind.

Your Pastor,  
Bishop Horace E. Smith, M.D.