



## COVID-19 Statement on Vaccinations and Ministry Policy Update

Saint John's Lutheran Church encourages vaccinations. There is nothing in our Lutheran tradition and piety that supports the refusal of any form of medicine or treatment based on a conviction of faith. We believe the same God who created our bodies to heal and gifted us with an immune system also provides the creativity and wonder behind achievements in science or medicine. We believe God is active, bringing about the healing of the world, through our immune systems and the achievements of vaccines. We believe this is the very same God who gives us the faith to trust him at work in both.

The latest statistics for our county indicate that less than 50% of the eligible population have received at least one dose of vaccine. There is also new evidence that suggests, while the vaccine is effective against the Delta variant, unlike other variants the vaccinated can spread this highly contagious Delta to others. The latest data from the CDC urges that those who choose to not take the vaccine are putting themselves and others at much greater risk of contracting and spreading COVID-19 than those who are vaccinated.

This church also acknowledges that a great deal of misinformation about the effectiveness and potential side effects have adversely impacted public trust in the vaccine. Therefore, we urge our members to make sure your reasons for not taking the vaccine are founded in facts and clinical evidence. The CDC has created a web page that is dedicated to debunking some of the misinformation, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/facts.html>. When in doubt, ask your doctor.

This church respects everyone's personal choice on this matter. We strongly support the right of every person to choose what is best for their own, or their children's, physical wellness. At the same time, this church believes that every member of our congregation is called by our Lord to the moral obligation of defending and protecting the physical wellness of those whom God places in our sphere of care and service. Therefore, we have enacted policies and procedures for the staff and the congregation to honor each person's choice and to protect one another. We are operating now under Phase 2 of our return to indoor, in-person, worship, and ministry. For information about Phase 2, see our website: <http://saintjohnss.com/in-person-worship>

Presently, our community's level of transmission is rated as "moderate", or yellow. For practical purposes, this means there is no change required of us regarding our most current, Phase 2, mask and indoor ministry policies and procedures. Should this level change to "substantial", or orange, we may need to adjust our policies and procedures accordingly. Please watch our website, Facebook page, and your email inbox for updates.

Sincerely,

*† Pastor Rich*

*Allen Fritz*  
Council President