

COVID-19 Protocols

September, 2021

The following document is intended to provide an outline of our latest COVID-related protocols, as well as attending assumptions and expectations. While not exhaustive in terms of identifying all situations and questions, it should give you a sense of our general “playbook.” These protocols are intended for any and all activities held on the St. Luke’s campus, regardless whether church or rental activities. (This document will be shared with “outside renters” and the expectation is that they will be responsible for implantation and compliance.)

My great thanks, as always, for the contributions of our COVID Steering Committee, whose expertise, wisdom and considerations continue to guide us.

If you have additional questions, please feel free to email me at trich@stlukeseq.org.

General COVID Protocols Intended to Mitigate Risk of Transmission

1. No one should enter the buildings or attend St. Luke’s events if experiencing any of the symptoms related to COVID.
2. All definitions and requirements regarding “close contacts” according to the RI Department of Health should be followed. (Note: See definition and requirements of “close contact” below.)
3. For all church-related meetings, rehearsals, classes, and worship held indoors it is expected that masks will be worn regardless of vaccination status.
4. If meetings, rehearsals, classes, and worship take place outdoors, masks remain required for unvaccinated and are optional for vaccinated.
5. Every attempt to maximize ventilation and air quality will be made for classes, rehearsals, meetings, and worship.
6. When possible, classes and rehearsals will take advantage of outdoor spaces.
7. Contact Tracing Records will be kept for two weeks for all St. Luke’s activities. Those committee and ministry leaders running meetings should make note of attendance and within 24 hours provide the office with such information.
8. If an individual has attended a St. Luke activity and tests positive for COVID within 48 hours of attendance, then she/he must inform either Christina, Tim, Tanya, Rodney, or Theresa.

Additional Program-specific Protocols

Youth Faith Formation and Nursery

1. Godly Play Advance sign-up is requested (but not required) for attendance. Sign-up is available at our website. Consistent with our general policy, all students will be required to wear masks while indoors. For the foreseeable future, both the 9:30 and 10:10 classes will meet in the upper auditorium to maximize social distancing. Whenever possible, after the storytelling component, the class will move outside for reflection time and snacks (prepared for each individual child). Classes will be limited to no more than 12 children.
2. All other classes will be held either in our largest available indoor spaces or outside.
3. The nursery will be open for children under the age of 3. Again, advance sign-up is requested (but not required) for attendance. Sign-up is available at our website. There is a limit of no more than 6 households to be represented in the nursery. Snacks will be offered in cups and distributed by the nursery attendants only. Play-things will be closely monitored and not shared between children. They will be cleaned between each session. Masks will not be required for nursery-age children. Masks and vaccinations will be required for all nursery attendants, both paid and volunteer.

Choirs

1. Choir rehearsals for youth will be outside when possible and reasonable, and, when inside, in a socially distanced space.
2. When rehearsals for any of the choirs are inside, masks will be required regardless of vaccination status.
3. For any of the choirs, when rehearsals are outside, masks are optional for vaccinated individuals and required for unvaccinated persons.
4. During worship all choirs will be expected to wear masks.

Important Definitions, Expectations, and Understandings

1. Close contact is defined as anyone who is within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative 15 minutes over a 24 hour period (regardless of vaccination status or masking).

2. It is expected by the Department of Health that if one is designated a “close contact” and vaccinated, then she/he need not quarantine but should take a PCR test immediately and 5 days after contact.
3. It is expected by the Department of Health that if one is designated a “close contact” and unvaccinated, then she/he is to quarantine for 7 days, get a PCR test at day 5, and remain in quarantine until day 8, at which time, if without symptoms, she/he may return to church-related activities.
4. It is our pledge that we will do all that we can at St. Luke’s to mitigate risks and provide households with thorough, clear, and timely information.
5. It is our expectation that should an adult or youth test positive for COVID within 48 hours of attending an event at St. Luke’s, the office will be notified immediately. The office will then share this information with those who have been “close contacts” (without disclosing the name of the “positive” person)
6. It is our expectation that each household will honor these protocols as a minimum mitigation and management standard, and then make whatever additional decisions seem best for each individual member.
7. These protocols are based upon the following critical understandings:
 - A. Vaccinations are highly effective at preventing serious illness requiring hospitalization.
 - B. Unvaccinated children (12 and under) without additional health concerns are less likely to experience serious illness requiring hospitalization than adult counterparts.
 - C. Nursery aged children are less likely to spread the virus amongst one another than adult and teen counterparts.
 - D. Masks (especially those such as a KN95 variety) help mitigate the risk of transmission.

Sources

1. The Rhode Island Department of Health Playbook (found at reopenri.gov)
2. Playbook information from one local Rhode Island independent school
3. Playbook information from one Rhode Island day care provider