

Why Masks?

We've received good questions about masks at worship gatherings. It's clearly not a right vs. wrong decision, but rather a situation where a group of leaders must use their best judgment. We know most masks do not protect the wearer; however, medical professionals widely agree that they do help protect others if the wearer is infected (and may not know it yet).¹²³

We also understand that wearing masks is uncomfortable for some and traumatic for others. So this is not a decision we are taking lightly. It could also change as circumstances change.

These are NOT reasons why we are wearing masks:

- Because we are afraid of dying ourselves.
- Because we are overly concerned about liability.
- Because we think they will keep the wearer from getting sick.

These are reasons why we ARE wearing masks:

- People being hit hardest by the pandemic are the poor and vulnerable—those we should be trying to serve and protect.
- They are suffering not only in terms of health, but also economically as viral spread discourages people from all sorts of activities.
- Some transmission chains that start in our church will inevitably end in someone who is elderly or vulnerable.
- Many people in senior living facilities in the upstate consider Grace Church their church.
- Not only is their health at risk, but more transmission means that they will continue to be locked away from family and pastoral support.

While we are not responsible for whatever strategy our government chooses to pursue, we are responsible for how our decisions affect those that God has put under our spiritual care. And at present, we believe wearing masks inside, especially when singing, is the best decision to balance our competing priorities.

Reference the following articles for further information about the benefit of masks: [article 1](#), [article 2](#), [article 3](#)