

August 20, 2021

Dear Church Family,

As you all know, we again find ourselves in the middle of a severe and deadly surge of COVID-19, this time with the Delta variant wreaking havoc across most of the Southern United States and beyond. With this highly contagious and rapidly spreading variant, positive cases are rising, hospital ICU's are filling or full, and death rates are again climbing. Both vaccinated and unvaccinated are susceptible to illness, though very few of those who are fully vaccinated are becoming severely ill or dying.

The Session met Thursday evening to discuss what if any action we needed to take in light of this recent surge. We learned that Lookout Mountain Presbyterian Church will require masks during worship for the next six weeks. Other churches in our area are also returning to masking and some social distancing.

For the next six weeks, the SEPC Session **1) strongly requests that everyone worshipping together in our sanctuary voluntarily wear face masks** during worship and fellowship time each Sunday morning. The same request holds for Sunday School and other gatherings in the church larger than three or four people. **2) Masks will remain strictly required during worship in the Fellowship Hall** for the foreseeable future.

After six weeks, the Session will revisit this issue and reassess our decision.

We believe these precautions provide a tangible way for us to care for and show love to one another. Thank you for your patience and for your prayers.

For the Session,
Jay Green