



First United  
Methodist  
Church of Kalamazoo

April 27, 2022

Dear People of Kalamazoo First United Methodist Church,

Dr. William Nettleton, Medical Director of Kalamazoo County Health Department released a very helpful [statement on March 31, 2022](#), addressing the question, "Is the pandemic over?" He reviews the three phases of the COVID-19 pandemic cycle: readiness (pre-surge), response (surge), and recovery (post surge).

World-wide the pandemic is not over, however, our Kalamazoo community is within the recovery cycle. As COVID-19 evolves we can expect that this phase will be longer lasting. It is a time of monitoring conditions, encouraging vaccinations, strengthening community support, and encouraging people to make best choices for their individual situations.

**In this recovery phase FUMC will now have a "mask optional" practice.**

- Masks will not be required within the church as a general practice.
- They may be required by select groups or activities based upon the needs of those who gather. This will be designated by the leader of the group or activity.
- *All persons should feel comfortable continuing to wear masks anywhere and anytime if they prefer to do so.* Loving our neighbors means accepting, respecting, and understanding that we have a range of comfort levels and individual circumstances.
- Masks will continue to be available at the doors off the parking lot.
- If you are feeling unwell, please join us [online](#).
- We expect that all persons who are able, will be vaccinated.

Please be aware that this policy and practice has the potential to change should community circumstances change or as we potentially move into a readiness (pre-surge) phase of the COVID-19 cycle.

Throughout this pandemic we have valued most highly the practice of loving our neighbor. Let us continue this in thought, word, and action as we continue to navigate the challenges of the pandemic.

Shalom,

Pastor Julie Kline

Lori Owen-Rogers, Church Council Chair

Derek Wheaton, Church Council Chair

Tammy Eaton, Co-Lay Leader

Donna Dunyai, Co-Lay Leader

Lisa Batten, Co-Reconciling Team Leader

Mary Whittaker Duncan, Co-Reconciling Team Leader