



Emanuel's Lutheran Church & Day School

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

July 22, 2021

Greetings Emanuel's!

Amid so many great things happening around the church and through its ministries, we are continuously reminded that COVID's shadow that still looms among us. As variants increase the positivity rates in and around Seguin, there is a growing difficulty finding guidance and recommendations to make policy decisions because those in the trenches are figuring things out just as we are. We, your Executive Council and Pastors, are in conversation with other leaders as how best to prepare for the continued journey ahead. We, along with the full Congregation Council, will take up our current practices and shift, as needed. In the meantime, I ask for your help to make our place of worship, education, fellowship, and outreach the safest and healthiest it can be and remember the following with grace:

- **COVID is still very real** and present in our communities and populations are faced with the prolonged need to be vigilant and mindful of health practices. Emanuel's Council will continue to shape and hone our "We Are Better Together" policy to best manage COVID and its variants in our congregation.
- **Monitor yourself** and watch for symptoms of COVID and its variants and follow the CDC protocols by quarantining and contacting your doctor immediately. Remember to alert anyone you have been around because it's not about pointing fingers, it's about keeping our collective whole as healthy as possible.
- **Be advocates** for the sharing of scientifically accurate and researched information, especially when it comes to the vaccine. By doing so, you help our church members make calculated and informed decisions about their health and wellbeing. The church office has helped several of our members get vaccinated this year. Please call the church office if you have any questions about recent vaccination information.
- **Do unto others** what we would do unto ourselves. The decisions we make about getting vaccinated, washing our hands and using sanitizer, being mindful of our own health, and reminding others to be safe and use their best judgement about gathering, means lives might be saved.

While I cannot force you to do anything you do not wish to, I want to share that Kristen and I are both vaccinated and have been since March. COVID impacted my family in December when my Grandmother, Martha, died of complications due to COVID. Our church family has been directly impacted by COVID and we have had to say goodbye to treasured faces way too early. I do not want to guilt you into something, but rather encourage you. When you wash your hands for the "umpteenth" time, remember you do so just as much for yourself as for the person without an immune system. When you must wear a mask to travel or be in certain places, remember that you are doing it for the stranger you pass who is the primary caregiver for their aged parents. When food service is slow, lines are long, or items once plentiful are nonexistent, remember how much has been lost around our country and across the globe. We are a strong congregation, a determined lot, and as we live into continuously changing time, I ask for your prayers.

In God's grip,
Pastor Marcus