

## **GSLC COVID-19 TASK FORCE AGENDA**

**May 16, 2021  
12:00 via ZOOM**

**Attending: Bob Beggs, Rick Blum, Pr. Chris, Sarah Iverson, Jared Stellmacher, Rick Thomas, Sara McCormack, Paul Friesen, Betsy Johnson, Kristi Jones, Diane Kohrs, Matt Wentzel, Stephanie Barth, Greg Simmons, Paul Hutson, Tracy Dahl, Sarah Schaettle**

*The meeting began at 12:02 with a prayer from Pr. Chris.*

**Dane County Data** - Paul F. talked about the Dane County Covid Data. He said Dane County has made the news of being the number #1 county in the country for vaccination. We're at 63%. However, we still need to make it to 80% to get to herd immunity.

*Our case rate in Dane County is about 20 a day, 4x less than a couple of months ago.*

*The news not as good in the rest of the state. There are about 500 cases a day, down from 1000 a day when we met last month. Still losing 10 a day to COVID. Highest rate of infection is 18-22 year old. 12-15-year-olds now eligible for the vaccine.*

*The numbers on campus are low, and they're heading back home. We hope to have all undergraduates vaccinated by September.*

*The CDC has also released restrictions for vaccinated individuals. Health experts are hoping this will encourage people to get vaccinated.*

*Paul had to go to a funeral of an ELCA minister yesterday at Midvale Lutheran. They were all wearing masks...but they were singing.*

**Dane County Guidelines** [https://publichealthmdc.com/documents/2021-04-29\\_Order\\_16.pdf](https://publichealthmdc.com/documents/2021-04-29_Order_16.pdf)

*New guidelines expected Tuesday, that may involve loosening of mask wearing.*

*Bob didn't think the guidelines really address most of what we're doing at church. He expects the big news Tuesday about masks.*

*Paul is hoping our discussion focuses on the most vulnerable as we continue to reopen.*

### **Approval of April minutes -**

**Tracy moves, Pr. Chris seconds. The motion is approved.**

### **Review of the past month -**

*Pr. Chris said we've taken over discretionary authority on smaller items. He thinks it's worked out pretty well. He said we're sorting it out as we go along. Our biggest discussions seem to be more on technology, not on COVID. We also had Mother's Day and two first communion Sundays.*

*We're still going to look at data for services to decide how to move forward with service schedules. Right now, we have an indoor service, we have an outdoor service and we have an online service.*

*Pr. Chris said Sarah I. says people will feel very grumpy if Dane County lets go of the masks, and we don't. We have some thankful members grateful to be home.*

*Rick B. said reopening the office in the morning has worked out well.*

*Sarah I. says things have gone well. We've adjusted as needed. The best thing I've heard in the past month is that this pandemic has challenged me the best way to love my neighbor.*

*Jared said that worship leaders have not been wearing masks in Madison because of the distance between staff and people attending.*

*Bob opened discussions from task force members. Kristi appreciated the space on the outside of the tent. Kristi said she would be surprised if Dane County went along completely with the CDC guidelines. She believes some epidemiologists think they may have reacted too soon.*

*Paul F. said we really need to listen to Dane County.*

*Bob said it was fulfilling to worship in person. Fellowship after services was quite significant, which may be an issue. People I've talked to have appreciated what we've done.*

### **Discuss the Future -**

- *Future Indoor/Outdoor Capacity - Rick T. said we could do 150 in Verona, and still feel we would have enough space. Bob asked whether we have enough capacity to Rick B. Rick says we haven't turned anyone away.*
- *Advanced Registration – Rick said he could go both ways. Matt W. said both National Guard and MPD have lax mask wearing. He wouldn't want to punish our patrons that don't wear a mask or not get vaccinated.*

*Paul H. says if Dane County can meet inside without masks and get rid of 6-foot separation, why would we not accept it?*

*Bob started with outdoor worship. Paul F. has no problem getting rid of masks outside, if the congregation knows that social distancing remains important. The concern would be hugging some who is unvaccinated. The highest risk now is our young students. Bob said I think we let people be people and make them make their own decision. Pr. Chris said I'm hesitant to restrict people, since there is so much vaccine available. Greg attended in person church last Sunday, and he did not see any effective social distancing. Maybe it's impossible to enforce that. It seems disingenuous to make it our policy, but not enforce it. He's ok with not putting it in there, but it's not happening.*

*Bob said if we want to eliminate masks outside, we need a motion.*

- *Singing protocols - Paul said singing outside without a mask is fine, but how far apart they are is important. So, outdoors - no mask and singing is fine.*

*Sign-in station – if we do this, do we have to require people to leave emails.*

*Betsy says we're registering people for outdoor, but not checking people in. Could it be that we have a sign in for people that want to be notified?*

*Kristi says the big advantage of advanced registration was reminding people that if they have symptoms, they should stay home.*

*Sarah S. said her sister wanted to come, didn't register, but registered at the door.*

*Pr. Chris says he wants to get as many barriers to worship down if possible. He doesn't want people to turn away because they forgot to register.*

*Paul F. – I have no problem throwing out registration but giving people the option to be contact traced.*

***Paul made a motion to eliminate registration for worship at Madison and Verona, Pr. Chris seconds. Motion carries.***

***Masks outside – Tracy moves that masks are no longer required to worship outdoors for both congregants and worship leaders. Sarah S. seconds. Motion carries.***

*Singing inside –*

*Rick B.- What about requiring masks to sing, but not to attend?*

*Sarah I. – I'm not sure it's the end of the world to require people to wear masks for a few more weeks inside, since there are other options available. I think leaving it in place for 3 weeks could work.*

*Paul F. said it's worth mentioning that a lot of experts think getting rid of masks is premature. He's leery of getting rid of masks altogether.*

*Paul H. said it would be interested in knowing the percentage of our members who are vaccinated.*

*Bob thinks it might be worth sending out a survey. Would you be comfortable coming in to worship indoors without masks? I was talking to my group of people age 65-90 today, and they were ready to get rid of masks.*

*Rick B. isn't sure about the response rate. Pr. Chris is also not sure how useful the data will be.*

*Matt W. said he thinks there are too many variables right now. We'll know more when the county issues their guidance.*

*Paul H. and Paul F. talked about whether we're going to have to talk about masks again when flu season start. Paul F. said the difference between flu and COVID was the mortality rate.*

*Rick B. asked whether we needed a motion to bring back singing in Madison, but not drop the mask mandate. Bob said let's wait and see what happens with the county in the next couple of days.*

- *Mask requirement in the office – Matt reminds us that MPD is reminding others that they are not the mask police. People were comfortable letting the staff handle that issue.*
- *Ingress/Egress protocols – do we need to remind people to stay apart? Pr. Chris said our intention is to do a verbal announcement, but I don't want an usher cop.*

*Sarah - What about X's all over the floor?*

- Outdoor Coffee and Food Items – Rick B. wondered if bringing Coffee back, but doing it outside would get people outside and more distanced? Matt W. thought that was a brilliant idea. Rick B. said they would try this next weekend.

**Paul H. Motion to adjourn, Pr. Chris seconds. Motion carries.**

*Pr. Chris says if the ruling is confusing, let's leave the option open to have a Zoom meeting this week.*

*The meeting ended with the Lord's Prayer at 1:15.*