



Peace River Presbytery

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

5600 PEACE RIVER ROAD NORTH PORT, FLORIDA 34287

July 28, 2021

Siblings in Christ,

We have seen a dramatic increase in COVID-19 cases in the United States, particularly here in Florida, due to the Delta variant. The majority of cases and hospitalizations are amongst those who are unvaccinated. However, those who are vaccinated still need to take precautions. Yesterday the CDC put out new guidelines for vaccinated people based on the latest evidence that the variant can be carried by vaccinated people and passed on to others. We are not past COVID and must continue to do the right thing to protect others.

Our culture is at odds over the virus and the precautions that are recommended, or in some cases, mandated. The church is called to be in the world, but not of the world. We, like Abraham and Sarah, are called to be lights to the nations, to show God's love and grace through our own actions and choices. Paul showed the church the most excellent way in I Corinthians 13, the way of love: "So, no matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I'm bankrupt without love. Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self. Love doesn't want what it doesn't have." (I Corinthians 13:3-5, [The Message](#))

For those who are already vaccinated, the most recent scientific research indicates it is time to go back to wearing masks in gatherings again - not out of fear, but out of love for others. We enjoyed being able to go back to church and see one another's faces and sing and hear the choir, but our calling is to show God's love, the love of our neighbor and the vulnerable. In the coming days you may hear from the session of your church about changes to decisions that were made as it seemed we were making progress against the virus. Please support your church leadership and your pastor(s) as we continue to be the church in the world.

We are praying for you,

Rev. Rex Childs, Moderator

Rev. Dr. Randy Moody, Stated Clerk

Rev. Melana Scruggs, General Presbyter

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