

FPC Covid Task Force consideration for 12/10 recommendations to Session

1. CDC- as of 12/4/20:

Gatherings with more people pose more risk than gatherings with fewer people. CDC does not have a limit or recommend a specific number of attendees for gatherings. The size of a holiday gathering should be determined based on the ability of attendees from different households to stay 6 feet (2 arm lengths) apart, wear masks, wash hands, and follow state, local, territorial, or tribal health and safety laws, rules, and regulations.

2. Strasburg Ministerium – Per recent discussion with Pastor Bob the ministerium has chosen to take a more conservative approach based on the recent local Covid surge and the Ministeriums experience with Covid exposure within their church community.

3. First Presbyterian – We have had no documented cases among Staff members. We have had 1 low risk exposure within the preschool. Additionally we are awaiting test results for a possible exposure, again deemed low risk, in the 2nd service. We had one potential exposure from a contracted employee that raised some concern due to delay in notification. We have spoken to the Contractor and our staff and reinforced the protocol to be followed for acknowledgements of exposure/potential exposures.

4. PA State government– as of 12/8/20:

Given that this is a critical time for mitigation efforts and orders to be followed, the Wolf Administration is stepping up enforcement on the following orders:

- Out of State Travel
- Mask-wearing
- Business Safety, including telework, occupancy, cleaning, social distancing
- Restaurant Mitigation, including occupancy, masking, social distancing, self-certification
- Gathering Limits
- School Attestation and Mitigation

Maximum Occupancy	Allowable Indoor Rate
0-2,000 people	10% of Maximum Occupancy

5. Schools in general (LS specifically) – early we saw initial closings. The current mandate is to have an established Health and safety plan for resuming and maintaining in-person instruction or a hybrid thereof. It is anticipated the schools will remain open as much as possible and therefore are not a good single indicator for decision making for FPC.

6. Hospitals, specifically LGH as it currently admits the most Covid patients within the FPC geographic area.

LGH COVID-19 Updates 12/7/20

Overall, we have tested 92,049 patients, and 11,855 (**1,737 more just in the last week**) have been positive with COVID-19. [The PA Department of Health's dashboard](#) shows the county's percent PCR positivity rate at 13.7% as of Friday (up from 12.7% last week, statewide is 14.4%). On average in the last seven days, we are seeing over 390 patient's positive with COVID-19 per day in the county. Daily symptomatic positivity rates in the county are at 28% over the last week.

We have 91 COVID-19 positive LGH inpatients. Twenty-four are in the ICU, and 20 are on a ventilator, with one on ECMO. **Critical care census is at 92 percent.**

7. **Lancaster County-** percent Covid + was at 13.7 %- the goal is <5%

8. Donegal Presbytery

Recommendation from the Leader Team and COM: It is Critical to Consider Suspending In-Person Indoor Gatherings Immediately through February

In a joint meeting on December 3, 2020 the Leader Team and COM unanimously voted to advise our congregations and pastors to consider suspending indoors in-person worship immediately through February 2021. This matters now due to the grim rise in infections and deaths, and the overtaxed resources of hospitals. In addition, as we come into the winter months, we enter the cold and flu season on top of the projected holiday surge. There is no way to tell if coughing, sneezing, and aching are symptoms of a minor cold or Covid-19. When the usual weather uncertainties are added to the mix, churches continuing in-person worship are accumulating multitudes of risk factors.

- **PA Mitigation and Enforcement Order of November 27** – section 11 explains exclusions for communities of faith for attendance limits during worship services. Attendance limits of 10% of maximum occupancy in section 9 apply to meetings, classes, and other gatherings. In other words, it is suggested but not required that worship attendance be no more than 10% of maximum occupancy. (This was changed on November 27 down from 20%).

Resources

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays.html>

<https://www.pa.gov/guides/responding-to-covid-19/#Enforcement>

<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Guidance/Event-Occupancy.aspx>

<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Monitoring-Dashboard.aspx>

<https://www.donegalpby.org/covid-19-resources/>

<https://www.governor.pa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/20201123-Order-of-the-Secretary-for-Mitigation-and-Enforcement-SIGNED.pdf?eType=EmailBlastContent&eId=5c8a6833-cb22-401e-981f-5b5bfd8e836c>

<https://www.lancastergeneralhealth.org/covid-19-information>