



Presbytery of Genesee Valley

1049 WEGMAN ROAD • ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14624 • (585) 242-0080

WEBSITE: www.pbygenva.org

5/17/21

Dear Pastoral Leaders and Clerks of Session,

Last week the Centers for Disease Control put out new information on health precautions to take regarding Covid-19, especially [updated guidance](#) on mask wearing. We wanted to reach out with our thoughts and continued updated guidance from the leadership team in the Presbytery:

- We **rejoice** in the lifesaving vaccines that are changing people's lives and health. Above all else, we continue to strongly encourage everyone who is able to get vaccinated and take advantage of the wellness that they offer to you and to the community around you.
- We **encourage** prioritization in your decision making around ministry programming those who are not yet able to take advantage of vaccines at this time, or for whom vaccines have limited effect: those who are immunocompromised, children under the age of 12, and those with at risk family members. Hybrid offerings continue to include and reach growing numbers of people. **Our faith calls us to prioritize inclusivity, welcome and safety for all God's people.**
- Each community must make its own decisions about worship, precautions, and organization. **This responsibility lies with the Session.** Please continue to also check and follow all local and state guidelines and rules, i.e. Gov. Cuomo has not yet lifted the mask mandate.
- We **model** this guidance by the continued closure of the Presbytery offices through at least the end of July. All PGV committees are encouraged to meet electronically until the offices have reopened. Once on-site meetings are permitted, all PGV committees and WGs may continue to meet virtually at the committee's discernment and will.
- We **note** that the vaccination rate within the bounds of our Presbytery currently ranges from as low as 32% to a high of 54% of county populations receiving just one dose of the vaccine.
- As people of faith, we are concerned with not just what happens in our country, but around the world. Many of our international ministry partners and communities do not yet have access to the Covid-19 vaccine. We strongly encourage you to [reach out](#) to your member(s) of Congress to ask them to prioritize vaccine accessibility internationally. **Our faith tells us that we are to seek life-abundant for all God's people in every place.**

We hold you and your congregations in prayer as next steps are discerned,

Rev. Sue Thaine, Moderator

Elder Lea Kone, Moderator Elect

Elder Susan Orr, Transitional Leader/Stated Clerk