

**First United Methodist Church  
Whitewater – Wisconsin**

**REENTRY TEAM UPDATE  
July 23, 2021**

## **MASKS IN WORSHIP**

As the Delta variant becomes the predominant strain of COVID in the state of Wisconsin, the number of people testing positive for the coronavirus is also on the rise. This variant is *more transmissible* than what we've seen so far. If we relax precautions now, we could see more COVID cases within our community and congregation. There is still a large reservoir of people in Wisconsin who are not vaccinated, are only partially vaccinated, or for whom vaccines offer less protection. In the current phase of the pandemic, these neighbors are still experiencing significant risk and illness.

Because of this, the FUMC Reentry Team is asking the worshipping community to please wear masks. We mask because WE LOVE OUR NEIGHBORS. Many public health guidelines are written with individuals in mind. Our recommendation to mask in worship addresses the needs of the MIXED-VACCINATION status in our faith community. Even though nearly half of Wisconsinites are fully vaccinated, we will be mindful of those not yet vaccinated or cannot be vaccinated (including our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren under the age of 12). It's always best to mask indoors when we are uncertain of the vaccination status around us.

Because we want to gather for worship, and because we want to sing, masking during worship offers both security and safety. Thank you for understanding. Let us continue to practice DOING NO HARM.

If you have not been vaccinated, please prayerfully consider doing so, as this is the best way to offer protection for you, your neighbor, your community and the world.