西雅圖證道堂
Evangelical
Chinese Church
of Seattle

ECC COVID Update:
Gatherings with Food

Dear ECC Family,

We know that many have hoped that by this time, the coronavirus pandemic would have substantially improved, but the COVID-19 virus variants, Delta in particular, have proved challenging. Our church has adapted to these challenges, and we are continually seeking ways for people to engage in worship, fellowship, community, and discipleship with one another. People are seeking guidance on gatherings, in particular sharing food in gatherings, which is so important in fellowship, especially in an Asian church!

What we know:

- We are still seeing a high level of COVID-19 transmission, but it is improving.
- We are still seeing breakthrough cases among the vaccinated, although we expect this will improve with the addition of vaccine boosters. Vaccines are still very effective in preventing hospitalizations and death from COVID-19.
- Masks are a very effective tool for reducing transmission risk. In order to eat, you would need to remove masks for a prolonged period of time, losing that protection for both you and for others, increasing the risk of transmitting COVID-19.

Our guidelines for gatherings with food in the church:

- **Smaller groups of 10-12** people or fewer who are fully vaccinated may discuss with one another and choose to eat together inside depending on each person's individual risk factors and their tolerance for risk.
  - People 65 yrs and older should consider waiting until they receive their COVID-19 vaccine booster.
  - People at higher risk (immunocompromised, the elderly, those with lung and heart disease, etc.) or who have household members at higher risk or have unvaccinated family members need to consider their personal risk and consider refraining from activities involving food gatherings.
  - Eating outside is preferred and safer. If you do choose to eat indoors, try to improve ventilation in the room.
  - Avoid gathering if you have any symptoms of COVID-19 or have recently been exposed to someone with COVID-19.
  - If you should develop symptoms and test positive for COVID-19, please notify the members of your group immediately.
  - Wash or sanitize your hands.
  - Disinfect the room before and after the gathering.
- **Larger groups** should avoid eating together indoors until we get more information of booster efficacy for preventing breakthrough infections in the future. They can choose to eat outside.
- **Unvaccinated** folks should remain masked in groups at all times and therefore should avoid eating in groups as that would necessitate the removal of masks.

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For additional recommendations, see:
https://coronavirus.wa.gov/information-for/you-and-your-family/safer-gatherings

This is a very fluid and challenging time we live in. We are tasked with balancing safety and the physical as well as the spiritual well-being of our church family. The decisions we make are not easy, and we humbly ask for your prayers for wisdom and for God's protection.

May God bless you and keep you safe,

The Covid Task Force and the Executive Committee

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