

Hinckley Evangelical Free Church

July 25, 2020

Dear Church Body,

As you are probably aware Minnesota Governor Walz has recently issued a “Mandatory Mask” order that covers all gatherings in public buildings, including places of worship. The Elder Board met earlier this morning to discuss this order and determine how we as a body of believers should respond.

First, we will continue to meet as a Church body. While we will still provide livestreaming of our time of worship, we believe that **Hebrews 10:25**, calls us to gather as a physical presence to encourage and strengthen one another.

Secondly, we will voluntarily submit to the Governor’s mandate to require those attending to wear a mask. We believe that **Romans 13:1** and **1 Peter 2:13 – 15** direct us in this case to submit to those in authority.

As to the requirement to wear masks;

- Masks: can be a disposable mask, a cloth mask, a neck gaiter, a scarf, a bandanna, or a religious face covering. They must cover the nose and mouth. But they should not be made of mesh or have openings, holes, or visible gaps. Also, masks with vents or valves do not qualify as they can allow your unfiltered breath to escape.
- Exemptions to Wearing a Mask
 - Children under the age of five (**5**) are not required to wear a mask.
 - Those with medical or health conditions, disabilities or mental health, developmental or behavioral needs that make it difficult to tolerate wearing a face covering, are not required to wear a mask.
 - Those who are speaking or performing are not required to wear a face covering during the time they are speaking or performing.

This situation can cause division within the body of Christ. As the Elders of Hinckley Evangelical Free Church, we encourage you to be kind and tenderhearted with one another as the Apostle Paul encouraged the Church in Ephesus in **Ephesians 4:32**.

The Bible tells us that it is a spiritual battle, a battle against “the cosmic powers over this present darkness” **Ephesians 6: 12**. The war has been won, but the battle continues until our Lord and Savior returns. Satan still seeks to divide and destroy the body of Christ. We ask therefore that you join in prayer.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact one of us or all of us.

In Christ,

The Elder Board

Roger Nelson, John Daggett, Doug Ammerman, Jason Monson, Vic Elfstrum, Russ Whitaker