

# SAFETY COMMITTEE: COVID-19 WEEKLY UPDATE

Conditions and Recommendations  
Starting Sunday, January 16, 2021

## **CURRENT CONDITIONS:**

The number of cases is at a **SEVERE/EXTREME** risk level, even as hospital ICU space remains at a LOW level in our area. We are paying close attention to our local officials and following their recommendations. Current UUA recommendations advise that we suspend in-person worship services while local conditions are at EXTREME levels.

If you are vaccinated, wear a high-quality, tight-fitting mask, and limit your close contact with others, we can help to limit the spread, protecting ourselves and each other.

Lane County free testing sites: [LANE COUNTY TESTING SITES](#)

## **ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL FOR EXTREME/SEVERE LEVELS**

- No indoor, in-person worship services.
- The church offices will be open by appointment only.
- Staff who are able to work from home are asked to limit their time in the building.
- The choir may not rehearse together in the sanctuary
- Small groups are encouraged to switch to Zoom
- We recommend masking at outdoor events.

## **SAFE GATHERING GUIDELINES FOR ALL INDOOR COMMUNITY EVENTS** **REVISED 12/23/2021**

*\*\*\*If you are immunocompromised, please weigh the risks and benefits of in-person worship service. We hope these guidelines will help you to assess those risks.*

*\*\*\*If you aren't feeling well or cannot comply with these guidelines, we respectfully request that you join us via Zoom.*

1. We will continue to adhere to local, state, and federal guidelines. And we will follow the advice of the UUA and abide by our stated values of Consent, Access, and Inclusion to the best of our ability.
2. These guidelines will change over time.
3. NO SIGN-UPS: We are not asking people to pre-register or sign up before coming. That system tends to privilege people who have greater access or capacity to use technology.

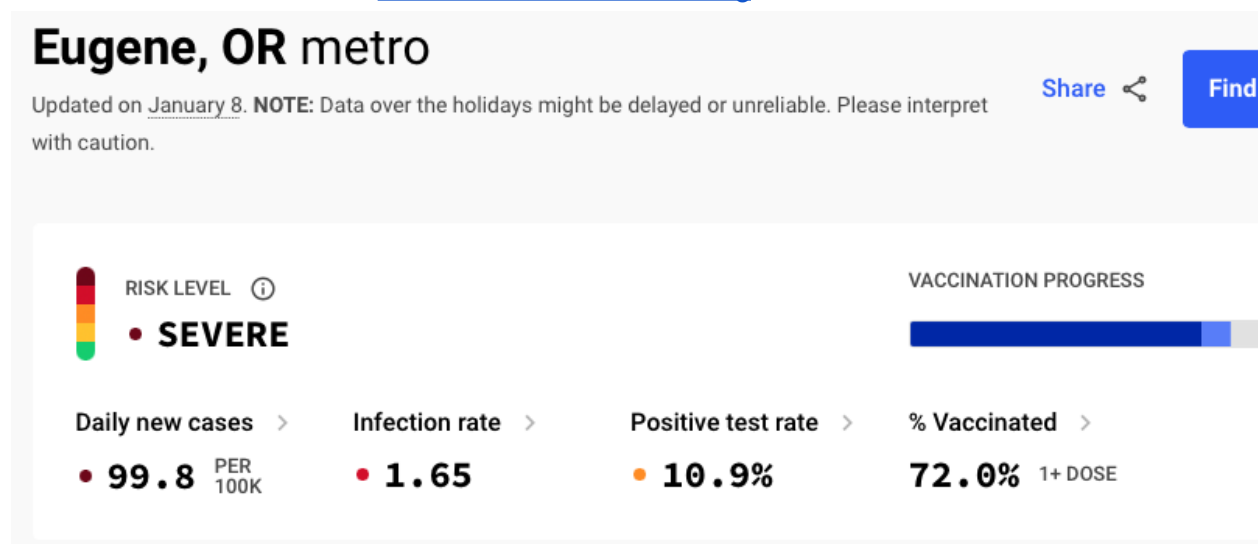
4. The staff are fully supportive of this plan, and the reason it has taken time to reach this point is that Rev. Jen has been intentional about how this will impact the staff and other volunteers. She has been checking in with staff every week, and we are moving at a pace that places their safety and wellbeing as a top priority.
5. **VACCINATION IS REQUIRED:** We will not check proof of vaccination status, but we do expect everyone who attends an in-person event to be vaccinated. We will honor your word. At this time, given the level of risk in Lane County, if you are not vaccinated, you are asked to join via Zoom.
6. **MASKS ARE REQUIRED:** Disposable surgical masks are provided and required for attendance. Research has shown that K/N95 masks and surgical masks are superior to cloth masks, so please consider using those instead. Your mouth and nose must remain covered while inside the building. Everyone over the age of 2 is expected to wear masks (per Oregon rules).
7. **MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING:** Rows of chairs are spaced at least six feet apart. Family members are welcome to sit next to each other, but we will ask that you leave 2 spaces between family units.
8. **TIME LIMIT:** We are limiting time spent together to about 60 minutes.
9. **CONTACT TRACING:** For the purpose of contacting people in case of COVID exposure, we will ask all attendees to sign in, giving us their contact information.
10. **HAND SANITIZING STATIONS:** These are available at the entrance and throughout the building; we ask that people make use of these.
11. **TRAFFIC FLOW TO REDUCE CROWDING:** All attendees will be asked to enter through the North entrance and exit through the doors on the East side. Exceptions to that rule will be made for people using wheelchairs and motorized scooters who may enter through the East doors.
12. **BATHROOMS:** Signs are in all of the bathrooms requesting people close the lid before flushing to contain water droplets.
13. **WATER FOUNTAINS:** They are functional. We ask that you bring your own water bottle at this time or use the paper cups instead of drinking from the fountain.
14. **EATING & DRINKING:** Only beverages are allowed to be consumed indoors--no meals at this time.
15. **HVAC SYSTEM:** Our upgraded air handling system will be turned on 1 hour prior to events and will run continuously until 1 hour after the event.
16. **CLEARING THE AIR:** No events will be scheduled with less than 3 hours in between to allow for proper air exchange.
17. **SMALL GROUPS:** Small groups and committees can ask participants for their vaccination status. The purpose of asking is to let group members make an informed decision about how, where, and how long to meet. The purpose of asking should never exclude anyone from church sponsored activities, and groups must offer online, multi-platform options.
18. **CHOIR:** The choir is practicing indoors following their own specific safety protocols.
19. **LIBRARY:** Use is allowed now by reservation, limited to 2 people for 15 minutes. This is because this is a window-less, closed space.

20. OUTDOOR EVENTS: As of 11/23/21, there is no mask mandate for outdoor events, but please do wear a mask anytime you want to feel safer.

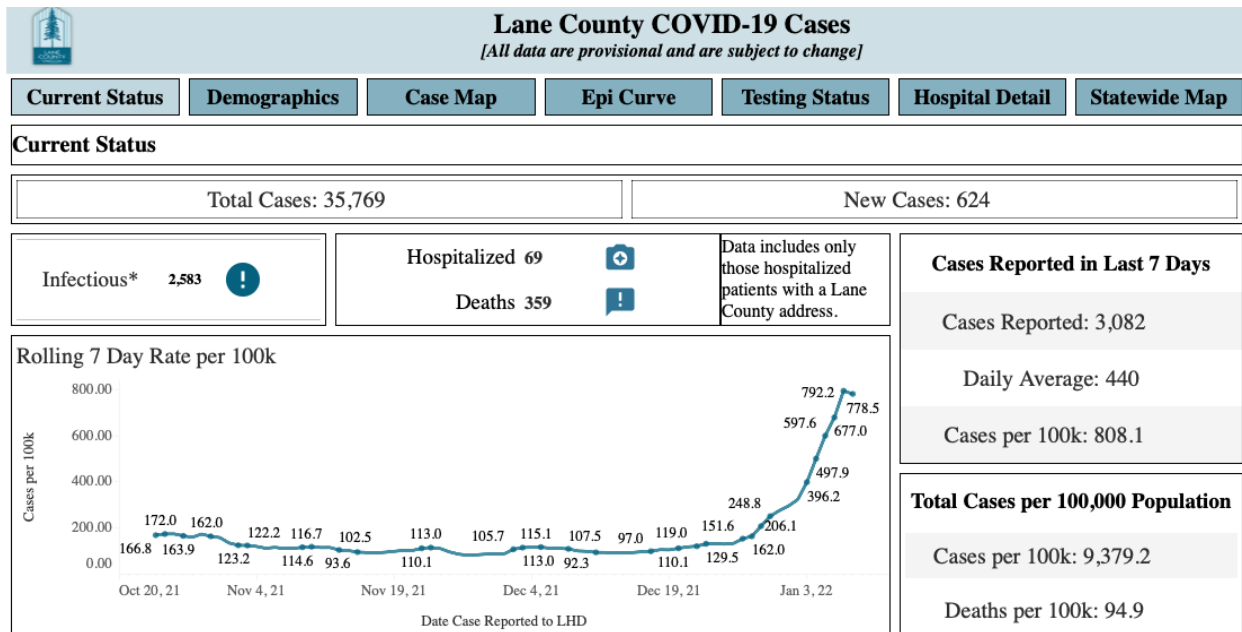
#### SPECIFIC TO WORSHIP SERVICES

21. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING: For now, because of the additional risk involved in aerosol spread through singing, the choir will provide music in video form, and the congregation will be asked to hum, not sing aloud.
22. WORSHIP LEADERS: People who are part of the service will remain masked unless they are speaking.
23. OFFERING: We encourage online giving and will also provide a basket at an exit to deposit offering gifts.
24. SOCIALIZING: Currently, there will be no coffee hour indoors, and all socializing will be done outside. The kitchen will remain closed until further notice.
25. CHILDREN & YOUTH PROGRAMMING: Children's programming will be multi-platform as soon as we have enough teachers and computers. Until then, children's programming is online and children can attend worship with their families. The nursery will remain closed at this time.
26. HYMNALS & PAPER: We won't be using paper orders of service or hymnals at this time.
27. MOVEMENT DURING WORSHIP: We will limit movement during worship to help maintain distance. At the end of the service, people will be excused by row to prevent crowding.

The data below comes from [the website, covidactnow.org](https://www.covidactnow.org)



And this chart comes from [Lane County Health Dept.](#)



## LEARN MORE ABOUT VARIANTS

[Click Here to learn about the COVID Variants from the Oregon Health Authority.](#) The yellow/orange shaded colors represent the Delta variants which have all but replaced other variants in a matter of 8 weeks.

## LEARN MORE ABOUT MASKS

The chart below with the colorful lines summarizes the COVID model and shows which actions we might take would be the most productive in making the community safer from the virus.

Each of the lines represents the expected room occupancy compared to the “baseline” situation.

- For example, looking at MERV (orange-brown), if we spent time and money and got the best air filters in the world (MERV 11 or higher), it does not have much effect at all on increasing room occupancy.

- **One item that makes a huge difference and is practically free to do is getting better masks on people (green line).** The disposable surgical masks would more than double the safe room occupancy and using the KN95 masks would more than triple it.
- Increasing the ventilation coming from outdoors (yellow) is next most important,
- The Lane County vaccination rate (blue) will increase over time by itself - unless a new variant arrives that is not affected by the current vaccines.
- It was interesting that mask compliance (grey) is not that meaningful. If we wore better masks, the compliance number would be more important.

