Masking Policy for Rochester Mennonite Fellowship

1. Purpose and Principles
    1.1. The 2004 Rochester Mennonite Fellowship's Mission Statement says that we offer "healing and hope" to one another, and seek to create a "safe and welcoming community."
    1.2. The 2018 Core Values declare we are a "community of safety and welcome." It further says that "We build and sustain relationships, which requires caring for the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of one another."
    1.3. Accordingly, we should pay attention to the safety and physical needs of immunocompromised members of our congregation who often do not attend church because doing so is dangerous to their health. The risk of transmitting COVID-19, goes down to almost zero when all are masked.
    1.4. Masking therefore shows consideration to our immunocompromised members and guests who might attend.
    1.5. We recognize that not everyone with a hidden disability wishes to disclose or discuss their condition. Therefore, we take the onus on all of us to ensure that there is fair, regular access to the fellowship's in-person service.
2. Implementation
    2.1. We will encourage participants to wear masks on the first Sunday of every month, so that immunocompromised members and guests can feel they are part of a "safe and welcoming community" in person, not just on Zoom.
    2.2. Additionally, if an immunocompromised person requests that participants mask on another Sunday, we will also mask. That person must submit their request to the Church Administrator by Wednesday of that week.
    2.3. The church will provide a selection of N95 and KN95 masks to add to our surgical masks. People can hold onto these for reuse.
    2.4. We ask that at the end of the worship service, we give a few minutes for people to leave before everyone removes their masks.
    2.5. In order to protect against the spread of infection within our community, we ask that congregants who are feeling ill on any Sunday join us by Zoom. If they have been exposed to someone who is sick in the past week, we ask that they wear a mask any time they are coming to worship.

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3. RMF does not intend the policy to be coercive. We are adopting a harm reduction approach to airborne illnesses.
    3.1. We acknowledge that deaf and hard of hearing people in our fellowship often depend on lip reading to understand people who are speaking at the front of the church and often wish these speakers would not wear masks. If a speaker removes their mask while speaking, we encourage them to replace it once they are finished speaking.
    3.2. We know that there are many who cannot mask, for diverse reasons. This policy does not seek to exclude them and they will not be asked to disclose their own health needs in relation to masking.
    3.3. For those who choose not to mask out of preference, we will trust that they have considered the safety and needs of their immune-compromised brothers and sisters in Christ. We will not ask them to provide their reasoning.
4. This policy will be reviewed annually or as needed, should a health crisis present itself.

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