

Dear Bethel Community,

We are looking forward to seeing you all very soon as we begin the Spring semester next week. With the start of a new term, and with COVID and the Omicron variant on the rise, this is a good time to update our Bethel community on guidelines related to our life together in the coming weeks.

### **Before Your Return**

As we return to campus from a variety of settings, please consider taking focused precautions over the next week to reduce the risk of COVID-19 such as reduced travel and large group gatherings, wearing a mask, and practicing physical distancing. If you have any reason to believe you may have been exposed to the virus, please test to confirm you are COVID negative before returning to campus. We continue to encourage vaccination (as medically appropriate) for members of our community. The CDC is now strongly recommending boosters for those who qualify and the use of well-fitting masks.

### **Upon Your Return**

We plan to begin the semester at our [Blue COVID-19 Risk Level](#), with the following guidelines:

- Community members should report COVID-19 concerns, exposure, and positive cases to the COVID Response Team ([CovidResponse@BethelUniversity.edu](mailto:CovidResponse@BethelUniversity.edu)).
- Masks are not required outdoors.
- Masks are recommended, but not required, in smaller settings at the discretion of participants. (*Offices, conference rooms, student lounges, etc. – the spacing, vaccination status, and personal health of participants may contribute to decisions*)
- Masks need to be worn by all in large indoor gathering areas. (*Classrooms, chapel, dining locations when not eating or drinking, athletic events, etc.*)
- Campus guests should wear masks in all indoor locations.
- Community members are expected to carry a mask at all times.

**These guidelines are in effect through January 28, by which time we will provide an update based on a review of campus trends, local developments, and guidance from health officials.**

### **Updated Isolation/Quarantine Guidelines**

In accordance with CDC guidance on quarantine and isolation for those who test positive or are exposed to COVID-19, the following processes will be followed:

#### For Those Who Test Positive:

- Isolate for 5 days
- Return to regular activities on day 6 if asymptomatic or symptoms are resolving, and continue to mask for 5 additional days

#### For Those Exposed:

- If vaccinated and asymptomatic, wear a mask and continue regular activities; test on day 5 if possible

- If symptoms develop, follow isolation guidelines
- If not vaccinated, quarantine for 5 days; test on day 5 if possible
  - If symptom-free after day 5, return to regular activities on day 6

Thank you for your continued commitment to honoring one another during these times. God is always faithful, and we anticipate a great semester to come.

Gratefully,  
COVID-19 Response Team