

September 3, 2021



Dear Bethel,

On September 3, the city of Edmonton reactivated its bylaw requiring us to wear masks "...in all indoor public spaces and on public vehicles, such as the LRT, buses, and vehicles for hire. This applies to the publicly accessible areas of businesses, retail shops and includes City recreation facilities and attractions, transit centres and LRT platforms."

Our Governing Elders met Monday night to pray and discuss this news. As Bethel is a public and open place for all to come in, they agreed that we as a church should follow the same guidelines other similar public spaces have in place.

We see this as our way of honouring what's been asked of us by the city but also our way to show grace to each other. We share this update while also wanting to acknowledge that wearing masks is challenging for many of us.

Since this decision impacts a few aspects of fellowship and worship in the building, I've noted them here as the bylaw goes in effect today:

- We ask everyone coming to the building to please wear masks. This includes Sunday worship services and other public gatherings.
- While you will likely see some of our leaders and worship team members wearing masks on stage, we are not requiring those assisting with the service upfront to wear masks. This includes speakers, vocalists, musicians. However, we expect members from this group to put on a mask after they step down from the platform.
- We will discontinue connect time for the time being.
- We will set out masks by the front door for others to use if needed.
- The bylaw also applies to children (3 and up). This means that for Bethel Kids this upcoming Sunday (September 5) children will be asked to wear masks. This also follows how most schools in Edmonton are applying mask protocols.

While we have these expectations in place, we also want to be loving, kind and welcoming to all who want to join with us in fellowship and worship. This also means that we want to hear your concerns and adapt to your needs as best we can. If you have any questions about this update, please let us know by emailing info@discoverbethel.com.

Please pray with us about these changes. This is discouraging and frustrating for many in our community. We need God's wisdom and grace to guide us – especially for how we navigate this together.

As Paul shares in 2 Corinthians 4:16-18,

"Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal." (2 Corinthians 4:16-18)

May God's light and wisdom shine brightly upon you today, and lead you to see his eternal promises.

In Christ,
Pastor Cris

On Behalf of the Governing Elders