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Happy New Year to All! As most of you know, COVID has re-surfed in our region through the recent spread of the Omicron variant. You may very likely know a friend, family member, or coworker who has tested positive for COVID. Even people who have been vaccinated or received a booster are being affected. **At MAG, we are still looking forward to having everyone return safely in the New Year starting back on Sunday, January 2nd at 10:30AM.** (*No New Year's Eve Service!)

However, in order to protect everyone's health, we are encouraging masks for all who attend in person service. Although we are voluntarily encouraging masks, we are not mandating them. Instead, we are simply appealing to your care & concern for the most vulnerable people in our congregation including the elderly, immunocompromised, and other families with special needs.

As we have from the beginning, MAG continues to follow all state guidelines regarding masks, and social distancing. **However, with the increased spread of Omicron, we think encouraging masks makes sense for both our staff & congregation.**

I realize this COVID resurgence is exhausting & frustrating for all of us. It's hard to believe it will be almost two years since the pandemic began and we're still dealing with this. Personally, I had hoped & prayed that we'd be celebrating a new year with COVID concerns far behind us. Sadly, that is not the case and we continue to trust in God's Sovereign plan despite these ongoing challenges.

I want to thank you church family for your patience, resilience, and compassion for the most vulnerable! Please join our leadership team in praying for those impacted by the virus and know that we remain committed to the health and safety of your precious families. I look forward to all God has for us with the start of 2022!

With hope & love in Christ,

Pastor Gregory D. McFarren