

Watch this week's service on YouTube by clicking: [September 27 Worship Service Video](#)

Dear Friends

Welcome to worship for Sunday, September 27.

I have to admit that I really don't understand the most vocal opposition to the wearing of masks in public places. I understand that it's not something any of us *want* to do. I understand that it's not something most of us would *choose* to do. I even understand that for some people it is a more difficult thing that it may be for others due to personal challenges. But none of that explains an attitude of refusal and exceptionalism, the idea that my personal freedom and rights should exempt me from participation in the common good.

Wearing masks in public places where physical distancing is not possible is, after all, a prescription from your doctor. It is not being advocated by a political party or a celebrity or someone selling something. It is the best advice of public health officials who lives have been spent in the study and practice of what is in the best interest of all of us. Furthermore, it is a temporary measure. If everyone adhered to the practice for a relatively short period of time, then we would know its effectiveness. What have we to lose?

These are not ordinary times and extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures. Has that not been true since the dawn of civilization? A common theme among people I have talked to lately is that all things considered, what we are living through doesn't even qualify as catastrophic in global or historical terms. Public health crises that reach us are exceedingly rare and in most regards we have been well cared for and well advised. So what gives with the adamant, insistent, angry calls that wearing masks is the worst thing you could ever do to a person?

In part, it is a spiritual problem. Spirituality is the aspect of our being that addresses what is meaningful in life. A nurtured and mature spirituality is one that has brought us to the place where we know we are not alone. We always live in the company of something (someone) greater than ourselves and in the company of one another. Spirituality celebrates that we are a full and equal part of creation and not, individually, the centre of the universe.

God makes a covenant with Israel, a nation and not just Moses. Jesus calls and empowers a community of disciples, a church and not just Peter. Paul writes letters for the encouragement of congregations and not merely individuals. Christian spirituality encourages our individual liberty and our collective responsibility with equal passion and persuasion. Wearing a mask at the grocery store for a few months hardly constitutes an exception.

*Truly, I tell you, when you did it to the least of these, my brothers and sisters, you did it also to me. Matthew 25: 40.*

Grace and peace,

Michael

Please enjoy our online worship and feel free to share with others. The link for sharing is:

<https://youtu.be/KfGtLWvGIWM>

DID YOU KNOW ...?

- The **Life and Work** of our church is updated by Janet weekly. Please have a look at the Life & Work insert: <https://charleswoodunited.org/media/life-work/>
- **Dry Goods Food Drive** – Thank you for everyone who brought in dry goods for Yazidi refugees from the list provided by Operation Ezra. We had a tremendous response. This effort will come to a close on September 30.
- **Water Bottle Drive for Westgrove School** – Westgrove School is in need of new, reusable water bottles. Due to Covid-19, water fountains in the school have been disabled. As a result, each student now requires a bottle for their own use. We will collect new, reusable water bottles until the end of the month. A drop-off box is located outside the church office. All items must be received at the church by September 30th.

With fundraisers such as the Fall Supper and the musical not taking place this autumn, and all rentals save Community Ventures cancelled, we need to be careful in our stewardship and generous in our support of the church. If you would like to support the ministry of Charleswood United Church please visit: [www.charleswoodunited.org/donate](http://www.charleswoodunited.org/donate).

Thank you to all those who have continued to contribute regularly.