

## **Covid Precaution Phases**

At its meeting on Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2021, the Session of Erin Presbyterian Church implemented four color-coded phases for Covid-19 precautions. Since it is clear that Covid is going to be present in our community for some time, the Session felt that it was best to create clear guidelines for Covid precautions that are based on objective measurements and can be clearly communicated to the congregation, as well as others who use the building.

The phases are tied to the 7- Day Average Covid-19 Percent Positive Tests data provided by Knox County Health Department at its website each day:

<https://covid.knoxcountyttn.gov/case-count.html>

This metric has been a very good indicator throughout the pandemic as to the danger posed by the transmission of the virus in our community and the Session feels confident in using it as our primary guideline. The Session anticipates that we will move back and forth between these phases as the presence of Covid rises and falls in our community in the future. For worship on Sundays, we will use the data that is provided each Thursday by the County to give us enough time to communicate to the congregation and make any changes necessary.

These phases will provide for the safety, health, and well-being of our membership and our visitors, given the level of Covid transmission in Knox County. If the data necessitates a move to a different phase, an email notification will be sent to the congregation, along with a phone-tree message, and the website, along with our Facebook pages, will be updated to indicate the current phase. Signs on the doors of the church building and a banner on our website will always indicate the current phase.

Your patience and cooperation are greatly appreciated. Please continue to pray for the well-being of our church, as well as the wider community.

May God bless you and all your loved ones.

Pastor John

On behalf of Session.

Erin Presbyterian Session – Covid Color Phase Code & Precautions

Data based on Knox County Website – updated daily.

<https://covid.knoxcountyttn.gov/case-count.html>

**Color Phase: Green – Knox County 7-Day Positivity Rate: Less than 5%**

No precautions.

Everything at pre-pandemic conditions

**Color Phase: Yellow - Knox County 7-Day Positivity Rate: 5-9.99%**

Face coverings optional for those who are fully vaccinated; all others strongly requested to wear a mask. Physical distancing of 6 feet encouraged, especially for encounters of 15 minutes or more. People may come and go in the building as necessary

Groups may meet in person in the building without restrictions, other than the above face covering and physical distancing guidance.

Offering plates in worship can be passed. Self-serve containers will be used for Communion  
Full choir can rehearse and sing in worship with face coverings  
Coffee can be served in Welcome area.

Receptions will be allowed in Welcome area or Fellowship Hall.

**Color Phase: Orange - Knox County 7-Day Positivity Rate: 10-19.99%**

Face coverings required (whether vaccinated or unvaccinated) for all activities in the building

Worship may take place indoors or outdoors (weather permitting). If indoors, pews will be taped off to encourage physical distancing (six feet minimum) between households during worship

All receptions in Fellowship Hall with limitations on numbers and physical distancing required.

Reduced choir – masked. No offering plates (basket on table in narthex)

Communion self-serve cups only

Groups strongly encouraged to meet via Zoom, but in-person meetings allowed provided face coverings required and physical distancing observed.

**Color Phase: Red - Knox County 7-Day Positivity Rate: 20% and above**

Virtual or outdoor worship only

Building closed to all church groups and in-person traffic;

Staff only allowed – work from home optional.

(Exemptions for outside groups - AA and Word Players – only given by Session after plan of precautions has been presented to Elders. This can be done and decided by email)

No receptions; outdoor graveside services only.