

# HIGHLIGHTS for January 10, 2022



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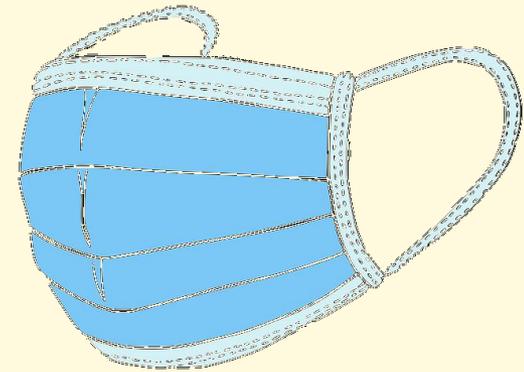
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Items in this color are new or include new information this week.

# UPDATED MASKING POLICY AS OF 12/13/21



In light of the State's unequivocal recent statement, we have two choices: we can institute a policy that turns away at the door anyone who cannot prove they are fully vaccinated, or we can require everyone, vaccinated or not, to wear masks while inside the building. After discussion and prayer, we do not believe that turning away people is appropriate for our church.

Accordingly, we are revising RCC's policy as follows:

- Everyone over the age of two must wear a mask while inside the building if there are other people present in the building.
- Per the New York State mandate, those who, for medical reasons, cannot wear a mask do not have to wear a mask in the RCC building but they must maintain social distancing.
- As we did last winter, we ask that people refrain from hugging and shaking hands.
- The governor's mandate does allow eating/drinking indoors when precautions like these are taken.
- Worship leaders, musicians, and those doing announcements, Scripture reading, and preaching are not required to wear masks while they are on the Chancel, but they should maintain social distance while there.

Friends, let us continue to trust and worship our Lord and show love, patience and grace to one another throughout the frustrations caused by this pandemic--by doing so, we preach the gospel in ways that nonbelievers can hear.

Blessings  
AI, Nathan, and Fritz

NOTE: This is an abbreviated version of the new policy sent out by email. If you did not get a copy of the full announcement and would like one, please contact the office at [office@ridgelandchurch.org](mailto:office@ridgelandchurch.org)



Jordan Burrell - 1/10

Lizz Floro - 1/21



Women's Bible Study  
meets on Monday mornings  
from 9:30 - 11:15.

All women are welcome to attend.

WEDNESDAY



GROUP

will NOT meet this week due to COVID. Watch for  
an announcement about next week.

Finances  
God's  
Way



I, Pastor Fritz, am going to make a claim that sounds like  
a gimmick but is 100% biblical. Here's the claim:

If you handle money according to biblical principles,  
you'll have **MORE** of 4 things:

- ~ more **wealth**
- ~ more **financial security**
- ~ more **wealth to give away**
- ~ more **enjoyment** of your wealth

**NOTE:** This 5-message series  
began on 1/2/22, was set aside  
yesterday for our special  
speaker, and **#2 of the series**  
will be this coming Sunday.

Intrigued? You should be! God is a God of abundance who delights in blessing His people.  
Come on Sundays excited to grow...and invite someone who needs to hear this.



Pastor Fritz recently received an email from Caring.com, a senior care organization that supports family caregivers and their loved ones. Their message follows:

“We recently published a comprehensive guide dedicated to improving the lives of older adults through assistive technologies.

Approximately one in three people in the United States between the ages of 65 and 74 has hearing loss, and nearly half of those older than 75 have difficulty hearing. Unfortunately, many seniors who do not treat their hearing loss fail to do so simply because they believe they cannot afford a pair of hearing aids. The costs involved can be daunting, from audiologist appointments to fittings, to hearing aid and accessory purchases.

So we have made it our mission to research and vet national and state resources that offer free/subsidized hearing aids designed to support seniors in communities across the U.S to ensure safety and quality of everyday life.

You can learn more about our research for families and seniors at the link below.”

[The Best Hearing Aids of 2022 \(caring.com\)](https://www.caring.com/best-hearing-aids-2022)



NOTE from Marilee: For some of us older adults, while the money involved could be a problem, the enormous quandary of which ones to get, what exactly were all the different options for hearing aids, where to go to get the best deal, etc. was the bigger problem and why I waited so long to get them. Glancing through the Caring.com website, it seems that they have laid out a lot of good information as a place to start with your search for the aids that might be right for you. Personally, I ended up getting my Resound aids from Costco and have been pretty well satisfied with them. (I don't believe any aids will allow you to hear as you did as a teenager...so I don't think there is a “perfect” pair.) The important thing is to find out if you need them and then go and do something about it sooner than later as the longer you wait, allowing your hearing to get worse and worse, the harder it can be for hearing aids to bring you to a satisfactory level of hearing.

# Pastor Fritz

## Health Benefits of Worship Attendance

According to the Nurses' Health Study\* of 70,000 medical workers, those who attend religious services weekly are

- 29% less likely to become depressed
- 50% less likely to divorce
- 400% less likely to commit suicide
- 33% **less likely to die** during the 16-year period of study

than those who never attend worship. Reasons include greater social support, higher levels of hope and purpose, and reduced levels of substance abuse. (The great majority of attenders were Christians).

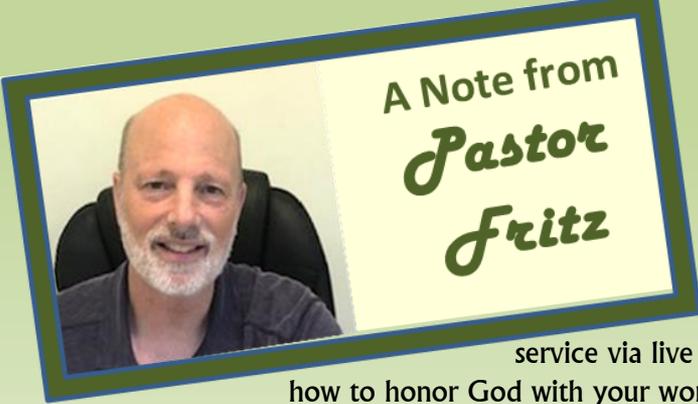
I've seen similar studies for decades. The morality, spirituality, and fellowship of the Church so clearly offers physical and mental health benefits that one must wonder if the Church Haters in pop culture are simply jealous.

I'm thinking about this because I'm assessing how the pandemic is affecting our congregation and the non-believers in our orbit. I'm concerned about how isolation preys on people and how I can counter its deleterious effects on our inner lives. One thing is clear to me: we must fight the current trend to skip worship.

For the rest of the blog, go to  
<https://www.ridgelandchurch.org/blog>



*See Page 6 for a related note from Pastor Fritz.*



## Tips for Worshipping via Live Stream

I mentioned in my blog that worshipping together in person holds remarkable health benefits. But according to Tyler Vanderweele and Brendan Case, both professors/researchers at Harvard University, these benefits do not transfer to those who watch service via live stream. Still, there are good reasons to live-stream a service, so let's talk a minute about how to honor God with your worship at home.

**Get out of your pajamas.** You wouldn't come to in-person worship looking like you just rolled out of bed. Don't do that to God either. Put on day clothes and get ready to enter the presence of the King.

**Tell any non-worshippers in your house that it's going to get loud.** You must consecrate your space. Put boundaries on invasive spirits like children, phone calls, oven timers, and frumpy family members.

**Pray before you turn on the TV.** Try this: "Dear Lord, grant me your Spirit that I may worship you as you deserve. I put away all distractions so that I may be ready for your glorious presence. Please lift me to your sacred presence." My family did this in the car before we headed to worship in a church I wasn't pastoring. It's amazing how this shifts the spiritual atmosphere. We also often read Psalm 92. Remember, *the TV is not the catalyst for your worship*; the Holy Spirit is, and He will join you in the room – if you ask.

**Stop Feeling Weird about Singing.** And don't be less expressive, be MORE expressive. Pour out your praise! Pour out your love! Don't you dare just sit on the couch and spectate. Raise your hands, shout your amen, kneel on your carpet in prayer.

**Text me your epiphanies during the sermon.** This is so Gen Z, but it's a way you can dialogue with the message. (I won't reply until later, just be aware.)

**Discuss the message afterward.** Reflect with other worshippers in the house. Ask "Where is that message hitting you?" End the reflection with prayer.

**Make your offering during the offering.** But do it online via the church website.

THE MAIN OPPORTUNITY YOU HAVE in live-stream worship is to *declare God's worth without the cues of a group norm*. Instead of worshipping just because everyone else is, you're worshipping because you choose God. Anticipate feeling awkward at first, then break through it.

If you do these things, when you return to in-person worship you'll be so much more able to worship God the way He ought to be worshipped.



Look at the faces of **JOY!**

**YOU** put those **SMILES** there!

Anna has shared this picture of Christmas morning of some of the kids who received presents given by people from RCC.

# Faith

TELLS ME THAT NO MATTER  
WHAT LIES AHEAD OF ME  
GOD IS ALREADY THERE

DAYSTAR

