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ARKANSAS CONFERENCE

March 30, 2021

Today, Governor Asa Hutchinson let the statewide mask mandate expire, while stressing the importance of people still wearing them voluntarily.

We continue to make significant strides in the battle against the COVID-19 pandemic that has killed more than 5,000 Arkansans, disrupted life and brought great suffering. United Methodist Churches have led the way in “doing no harm” by acting with abundant caution and focusing on safety first. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

But the battle is not yet over. This is why I want to communicate clearly and unequivocally that you still need to wear masks for all in-person events at United Methodist Churches until the scientific data clearly indicates they no longer are needed. This, along with continued social distancing and sanitation, will keep our people safe and help bring an end to the pandemic.

I know you are ready to shed your mask. I know I am. However, we need to hold steady for just a while longer because people’s well-being is far more important than our individual comfort. If we do, COVID will soon just be a bad memory.

Grace and peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary E. Mueller".

Gary E. Mueller
Bishop

[Watch a video message from Bishop on the mask mandate below.](#)

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