

# Certificate of Face Covering Exemption

## Religious Exemption

Whereas U.S. Federal Law Title II of the Civil Rights Act, §§ 201 (a) guarantees “*All persons shall be entitled to the **full and equal enjoyment** of the goods, services, facilities, and privileges, advantages, and accommodations of any place of public ... without discrimination or segregation on the ground of race, color, **religion**, or national origin.*”

Whereas this right was affirmed in the August 12th health order issued by State Health Commissioner Norman Oliver. Which explicitly requires schools make an exemption for “*Any person who declines to wear a mask because... [of] a sincerely held religious objection to wearing masks in school.*”

Whereas parents should ultimately have the authority to make the best, most informed decision they can for their children, even with such matters as wearing a mask, as they exercise their religious liberty and obey their God. Parents and their children should not be coerced into a decision which goes against their moral conscience.

**Whereas the undersigned legal guardian and their student (“this family”) do so attest to such a religious objection to masks.**

Whereas this family fully embrace the spiritual conviction that we are created in the image of God and that our breath is sacred and shall not be restricted for God created us through “dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being” (Genesis 2:7). Mask-wearing restricts the life-giving breath of God and our full expression of humanness and existence with our Creator.

Whereas this family fully reject the dehumanization of the mask. We speak with our face, with our expressions. Our face communicates deep emotional needs and connections with others. Through thousands of years of history, face-covering has been a sign of shame, guilt, uncleanness, and slavery.

Whereas this family fully rejects any mandate that harms the body. Abundant research shows clear, deleterious mental and physical health effects on children who wear masks. Mask wearing increases Co2 to unsafe levels and depletes oxygen. In addition, there are apparent psychological factors of deterring normal communication functions, the inability to see facial expressions, and the mental consequences of these factors. The Bible emphasizes the stewardship of our bodies, thus the manner in which families decide to care for their bodies should be a personal choice, for the proper determination of said stewardship.

Whereas this family fully rejects the fear and anxiety that a mask symbolizes. The most common phrase in the Bible relates to the command to trust God and not be afraid. It is referenced over 100 times. This is deeply meaningful, especially now in this time of hysteria. There is no rational reason for children to wear a mask other than to bind them in fear. And this directly rejects God's constant reassurance. "Fear not, for I am with you, do not be dismayed for I am your God." Isaiah 41:10



Therefore this family, on the basis of the above, as well as fundamental constitutional freedoms hereby submits this certificate of face-covering exemption for sincerely held religious objections to the current VA Health Order issued August 12th. As well as for any future health orders of similar purpose.



**Name of Student:** \_\_\_\_\_ | **Student DOB:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print First & Last Name) (MM/DD/YYYY)


**Parent / Legal Guardian:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print First & Last Name)

**Parent / Legal Guardian:** \_\_\_\_\_ | **Date of Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (MM/DD/YY)

**Affirmation of above attestations**

Pastor Name: Bennie Castle | Pastor Name: Jason Binder  
Church Name: Grace Orthodox Presbyterian Church | Church Name: Patriot Church Lynchburg  
Pastor Signature:  | Pastor Signature:   
Bennie Castle (Aug 16, 2021 11:37 EDT) Jason Binder (Aug 16, 2021 19:22 EDT)

Pastor Name: Virgil Hurt | Pastor Name: Danny Shelton  
Church Name: Providence Church-CREC | Church Name: Branch Baptist Church  
Pastor Signature:  | Pastor Signature:   
Virgil Hurt (Aug 16, 2021 19:24 EDT) Danny Shelton (Aug 16, 2021 17:18 EDT)

Pastor Name: Michael Hevener  
Church Name: Adial Baptist Church  
Pastor Signature:   
Michael Hevener (Aug 16, 2021 18:07 EDT)