

1-25-2022

Dear HLBC Family,

Please take the time to read this very important letter. This is a letter of caution for all of us. As you well know, Covid-19 is still with us and more contagious than ever before. The good news is that data from the UK and parts of Africa has confirmed this Omicron variant to be much less virulent and much less likely to cause severe illness leading to death. For those who are vaccinated and boosted, the data shows that Covid-Omicron is *even less* likely to cause severe illness or hospitalization.

Another bit of good news; data is also confirming that the number of Omicron cases will peak in mid to late February. At that point they are telling us the number of positive tests will take a nose-dive. In other words, this variant will not stay with us as long as the original strain of Covid or even the Delta variant.

However, we still need to be cautious as we consider the elderly and those with a compromised immune system. Covid—Omicron can still be serious and even deadly in some cases in that group. Also, just as a reminder, vaccinated or not, you can still contract the Covid virus and spread it to others. I'm sure that like me, the virus has crept into your own sphere of close friends, co-workers and for many, even into your own families and homes.

In light of all that, I want to encourage you to practice safety first at all times for you and your family. I ask also that as we come to church, please wear a mask as you enter until you are seated. Then as you are leaving, please put your mask back on. You will be speaking to folks on your way out. Some will be hugging, though I recommend we holdoff on that for a while again.

Also, as a reminder, if you are sick or if a family member in the home is sick, the prudent thing to do is for everyone in your home to be tested as soon as possible. At that point you can proceed accordingly, staying in line with CDC recommendations for quarantining if necessary, or, with a negative test, continue activities, but with precautions.

Hopefully, if we can believe the data and the science this strain will not affect us for very much longer. But until then let's do our best to love others by also considering their well-being.

Now—here is a way you can get a free home testing kit—yes free!! Every home in the US is eligible to order 4 free at home Covid tests. Again, they are completely free and will ship in 7-12 days. Shipping is free also. It makes sense to order now so you'll have them when/if you need them. Here's how you get them.

Go to www.covidtests.gov. Follow the onscreen instructions and they will send the free tests to you. Several of us have already ordered ours.

Once again church family, we will trust our Lord to keep His Word, to care for us and to be always at our side. He is faithful and worthy to be worshipped and trusted.

Philippians 4:6-7

⁶ Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ.

1 Peter 5:6-7

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.

Isaiah 41:10

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Because He Lives,
Pastor Jimmy