

December 31, 2021

To our Highway family:

We care about you and your health and wanted to share that there were several COVID-19 exposures at Highway on Sunday, Dec. 26th. If you were in attendance on that date, you may contact your physician for further guidance. We are sharing some other resources for more information on COVID, including testing. Please see the following resources.

Information:

- The phone number for the Philadelphia Department of Public Health is 215-685-5488 (open seven days during business hours; closed January 1st).
- The Center for Disease Control (CDC) website is: www.Cdc.gov
- The City of Philadelphia website for information on COVID is: www.phila.gov
Click on "COVID-19 updates"

Testing:

- 1) To find a permanent or mobile testing site, this is the City of Philadelphia Department of Health link: www.phila.gov/services/mental-physical-health/find-a-covid-19-testing-site/
- 2) For other testing options, you may contact your physician or other health care provider, an Urgent Care Center, or a pharmacy, such as Rite-Aid, CVS, or Walgreens.

Symptoms of COVID-19:

From the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website: CDC.gov

Updated Feb. 22, 2021 (downloaded on Dec. 31, 2021)

Watch for Symptoms

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. Anyone can have mild to severe symptoms. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19. Older adults and people who have severe underlying medical conditions like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19 illness.

When to Seek Emergency Medical Attention

Look for emergency warning signs* for COVID-19. If someone is showing any of these signs, seek emergency medical care immediately:

Trouble breathing

Persistent pain or pressure in the chest

New confusion

Inability to wake or stay awake

Pale, gray, or blue-colored skin, lips, or nail beds, depending on skin tone

*This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.

Call 911 or call ahead to your local emergency facility: Notify the operator that you are seeking care for someone who has or may have COVID-19.

CDC Guidance on Quarantine:

From the website: <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s1227-isolation-quarantine-guidance.html>

Downloaded on Dec. 31, 2021

Given what we currently know about COVID-19 and the Omicron variant, CDC is shortening the recommended time for isolation for the public. People with COVID-19 should isolate for 5 days and if they are asymptomatic or their symptoms are resolving (without fever for 24 hours), follow that by 5 days of wearing a mask when around others to minimize the risk of infecting people they encounter. The change is motivated by science demonstrating that the majority of SARS-CoV-2 transmission occurs early in the course of illness, generally in the 1-2 days prior to onset of symptoms and the 2-3 days after.

Additionally, CDC is updating the recommended quarantine period for anyone in the general public who is exposed to COVID-19. For people who are unvaccinated or are more than six months out from their second mRNA dose (or more than 2 months after the J&J vaccine) and not yet boosted, CDC now recommends quarantine for 5 days followed by strict mask use for an additional 5 days. Alternatively, if a 5-day quarantine is not feasible, it is imperative that an exposed person wear a well-fitting mask at all times when around others for 10 days after exposure. Individuals who have received their booster shot do not need to quarantine following an exposure, but should wear a mask for 10 days after the exposure. For all those exposed, best practice would also include a test for SARS-CoV-2 at day 5 after exposure. If symptoms occur, individuals should immediately quarantine until a negative test confirms symptoms are not attributable to COVID-19.

Isolation relates to behavior after a confirmed infection. Isolation for 5 days followed by wearing a well-fitting mask will minimize the risk of spreading the virus to others. Quarantine refers to the time following exposure to the virus or close contact with someone known to have COVID-19. Both updates come as the Omicron variant continues to spread throughout the U.S. and reflects the current science on when and for

how long a person is maximally infectious. These recommendations do not supersede state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, nor do they apply to healthcare workers for whom CDC has updated guidance.

Data from South Africa and the United Kingdom demonstrate that vaccine effectiveness against infection for two doses of an mRNA vaccine is approximately 35%. A COVID-19 vaccine booster dose restores vaccine effectiveness against infection to 75%. COVID-19 vaccination decreases the risk of severe disease, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19. CDC strongly encourages COVID-19 vaccination for everyone 5 and older and boosters for everyone 16 and older. Vaccination is the best way to protect yourself and reduce the impact of COVID-19 on our communities.

The City of Philadelphia requires masks to be worn indoors at all Philadelphia businesses and institutions. As always, you are welcome to view our Sunday service from home, or other locations, on YouTube. If you have any questions about this information, please contact Pastor Mark at 978-618-3714.

Thank you and may God bless you!

Highway Deacons