

Dear Members in Christ,

On May 27, 2022 Howard County was designated as a community with a high level of COVID by the CDC. COVID19 Community Levels are categorized as low, medium, and high based on the number of COVID-19 cases in a given community and the impact of severe disease on community-based healthcare systems. The rise in cases is due to the subvariant BA.2.12.1.

This subvariant is more transmissible than previous variants but fortunately not more severe to most of us in good health and who have been fully vaccinated and boosted. However, at the same time, we know that some people, such as our older citizens, people who are immunocompromised, and people with disabilities, are at higher risk for serious illness and face challenging decisions navigating a world with COVID-19. The CDC strongly recommends wearing a mask in indoor environments, irrespective of vaccination status, during this period of high transmissibility.

Although we are not mandating masking during services, we are asking for your consideration to those parishioners among us who fall into the "at risk" category.

Recent data indicates new cases have plateaued and appear to be declining. Hopefully, this trend continues, and these mitigation strategies can be relaxed as our community level of disease improves. (per: Maura J. Rossman, M.D., Howard County Health Officer/June 01, 2022)

In Christ's Pastoral Love,

FrC