

December 22, 2021

Update from Lisa Allgood

Well, friends, this isn't the Merry Christmas note I wanted to send – but, as for all my Love Notes, sometimes it just feels necessary.

Omicron is poised to overtake Delta in transmission by the next few weeks in the US; it already has in other countries. Omicron is now in all states and more than 90 countries. Cases of Omicron are doubling every 1.5 to 3 days in the countries where community transmissions are documented, the WHO said Saturday. A CDC expert has said that Omicron at least as transmissible – maybe more – than measles, which is the highest ever documented. She called it “extraordinarily transmissible”.

The US was averaging 126,967 new cases of COVID per day as of Saturday, according to Johns Hopkins University, and fourteen states saw an uptick of at least 10% in cases over the past week compared to the previous week. It's still too early to tell whether Omicron causes a milder form of COVID, but it is already putting significant pressure on the health care system.

At this point almost everyone will be exposed to the virus, but only those who are triple vaccinated are unlikely to contract serious illness. The latest data says boosted individuals are 75% protected.

Sadly, this far into the vaccination process, only 61.4% of the total US population is fully vaccinated and only 29.1% of those have received a booster.

Globally we're at 275 Million confirmed cases of COVID, and 5.4 million souls lost. In the US we're still way higher disproportionately: 52 Million confirmed cases and 827 thousand souls lost. Of those, 93% of deaths are in those 55 years of age or older. But for those who recover, significant long-haul symptoms that significantly affect quality of life persist.

Above all, in the Christmas season, we wait for Him Who holds us all. Be safe and be blessed.