

January 12, 2021

To The Faith Community of Middletown, Ohio,

We come to you this day with hope in our hearts for a happy and blessed new year for all. Yet the challenges and threats to our community have carried over into 2022. We are all weary of COVID-19 and the mitigation efforts that continue to be necessary, but necessary if not required they remain.

Our City of Middletown Health Commissioner, Jackie Phillips Carter, has reported that the Omicron variant is striking at alarming rates. In Ohio, new infections as of January 2nd have increased by 17,402, a 90% rise, with hospitalizations up 15% and COVID deaths 11%. In Middletown our infection rate has risen 63% in just two weeks with a 62% increase in K-12 cases and a 56% increase in hospitalizations. Through the work of our devoted Health Department staff and area we have vaccinated over 10,000 people, but that leaves thousands of our neighbors who are not vaccinated, unprotected. Making them the most vulnerable segment of our population. Yet, we are all at risk from this viral variant, that in less than three weeks became the dominate strain in the entire United States. Further, the infection rates continue to rise and are not anticipated to fall until we rally together to mitigate the risks and continue to vaccinate. If you are fully vaccinated and eligible for a booster dose, we strongly encourage you to receive this dose for optimal protection.

We are calling on all people of faith in Middletown to come together as followers of the God who comes to us with compassion and sacrificial love. Our mutual calling from the Lord is to love and care for one another as we have been loved. We believe that sacred mandate applies to all aspects of our life together in community. Specifically, we are asking you to begin practicing or continue practicing every mitigation effort which is available (masking, social distancing and hand sanitizing) to help us minimize infections in our city. Further, we ask that you prayerfully consider vaccination and encouraging others to get vaccinated, but always with grace and humility that we might join the Gentle Healer who always comes to us in mercy.

I would also like to ask for continued prayers for those in our community, and beyond, that have lost loved ones during this pandemic season. May God Bless you all.

We are grateful for each of you,



Reverend Ruth Kelly
President of Ministerial Alliance
Pastor, Greater Faith Baptist Church



Jackie Phillips Carter, MPH, BSN, RN
Health Commissioner
City of Middletown Health Department

*"The City of Middletown Health Department strives promote the health and well-being of all Middletown residents."
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