

## COVID-19 VACCINE: DAWN of NEW HOPE

### From the Health and Wellness Committee Covenant Presbyterian Church

Please consider obtaining one of the approved COVID-19 vaccines as soon as you may. These vaccines are safe and effective, well-studied, and *unable* to give you a case of COVID disease. Reading that it is 90+ percent effective *underestimates* its power. While we are still learning how long it might protect us, we do know that vaccines can prevent SEVERE COVID infections and death closer to 100% of the time.

--- **How does it work?** First, consider what do vaccines do. Vaccines create a *memory* of an illness we haven't had, so when the virus crosses our path, our immune system recognizes it. We defeat COVID-19 by antibodies protecting us from becoming sick. So when the doorbell rings, your system can say "No, thanks, I gave at the office!"— then you do not become ill.

--- **Safety:** Current COVID-19 vaccines do not contain live virus and so *cannot transmit virus to the person being vaccinated*. They work by inducing your immune system to create a protein that protects you if you are exposed.

--- **Women's concerns:** COVID vaccines are very safe and considered appropriate for women who are pregnant, breastfeeding, or trying to become pregnant. And there should be no association between the vaccine and infertility, miscarriage, or birth defects.

--- **Side effects:** Few people are actually allergic to this vaccine, and there are no eggs, preservatives, or latex in their manufacture. When your immune system is stimulated by a vaccine, it is natural to expect a sore arm, ache-y feeling, possibly some headache, or a day or two of tiredness. Be patient and any symptoms should ease in a few days.

--- **Protective measures:** Even after vaccination, it will still be important to follow directions to maintain social distancing, exercise frequent hand washing and sanitization, and continue to wear masks properly. Until a great percentage of citizens are vaccinated, we cannot rely on others' vaccinations to lower our risk. Plus, steady masking and other measures encourages others that we are all working to protect each other.

We hope you will feel confident, informed, and enthusiastic as all around the world, we pursue what will be the only path to leaving behind this horrific and tragic illness. Any reluctance for the vaccine *pales* in comparison to the REAL chance of falling ill or dying.