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## An Update from New Song Church

*On Behalf of the Post-Covid Return Group (PRG)*

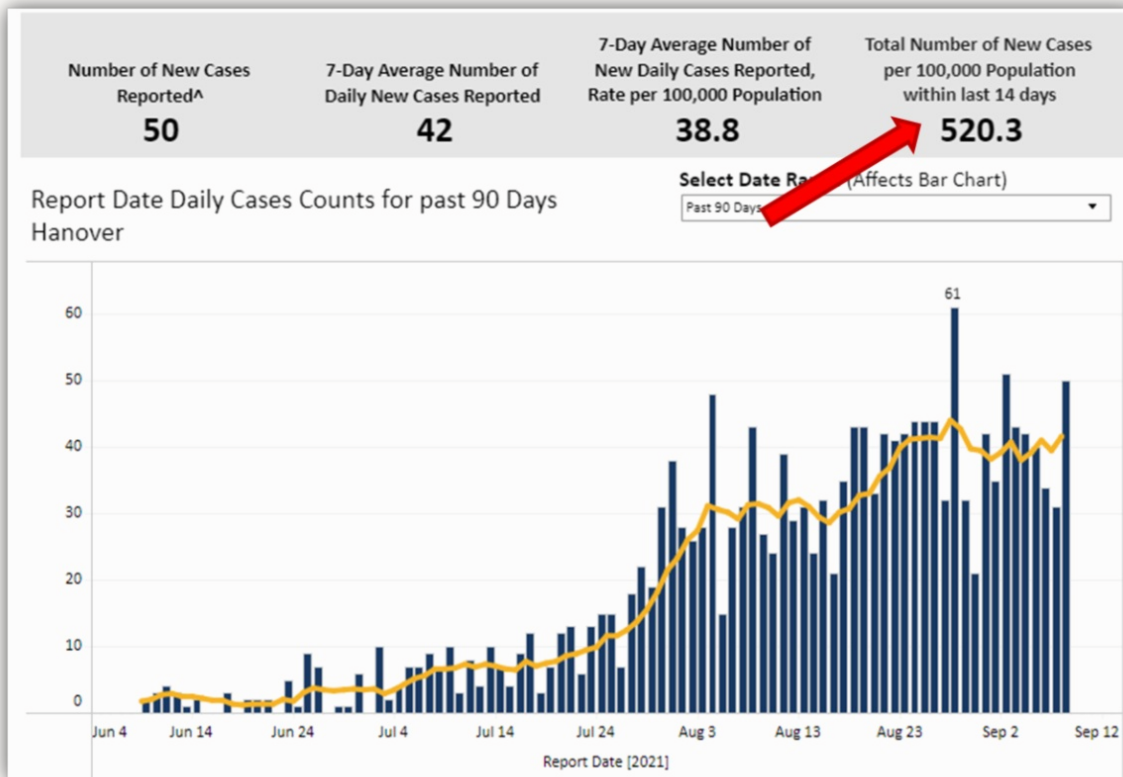
Dear New Song Family,

As you have likely heard, daily coronavirus case counts have been increasing since early August. We have implemented a variety of steps to keep each guest safe: Virginia Department of Health's (VDH) best practices, Chickahominy Health District consultations, and tracking data through a variety of reliable sources.

After careful review, all guests over 36-months of age are to wear masks while at New Song for indoor events beginning Sunday, **September 12**. This is regardless of vaccination status as variants have presented new challenges in mitigation efforts. Each week, masks will be evaluated in light of the impact from reopened schools, virus strains, and other concerns. This *temporary step* is but one way we can ensure we are doing our part to keep the community safe.

Guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and VDH recently changed for indoor settings: schools, concert venues, churches, etc. Their guidance shares to "consider having a universal masking policy when a large percentage of unvaccinated individuals (e.g., children) are regularly in a facility, or when local transmission levels of COVID-19 are substantial or high." As Hanover County's *likelihood of community transmission* status is high, we are watching specific data from the VDH. The "total number of new cases" in the 4<sup>th</sup> column needs to consistently fall below 200 cases. Today, we are 2.5 times over the highest end of recommendations, indicating the virus is very active in our community.

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(source: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-in-virginia/covid-19-in-virginia-locality>)

We commit to *caring for our neighbor, doing no harm, and being a church open for all*. Just as schools, medical facilities, and many local businesses have prioritized this safety measure, masks help us protect all of God’s children.

As we appeal to your sense of understanding and consideration, a few points to highlight include:

- If you are at increased risk to infection (as outlined by the CDC or VDH), please take appropriate precautions.
- If you are symptomatic or have had a known exposure, please quarantine and follow CDC guidelines.
- Asymptomatic patients may exhibit no external symptoms, but can remain contagious to others.
  - By way of worship, we offer in-person services in the Worship Center, a broadcast to the outdoor pavilion, and a livestream via YouTube and Facebook.
  - Our Worship Team will be allowed to unmask with increased distancing while on stage.
  - You will also notice increased ventilation efforts within our facility during services and events.

We aim to protect everyone’s health while maintaining in-person, on-site, and safe gatherings. We appreciate your support for all God is doing through New Song and beyond. We pray for you and look forward to seeing you soon!

Faithfully,  
Pastor Chad

New Song’s Post-Covid Return Group (PRG):  
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*Steve Berlinghoff, Kat Conley, Kathy Emond, Dianne Moore, Susan Parker,  
Katie Payne, Bill Redden, Pastor Chad*

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Reference Links:

CDC County Tracker (Hanover County, VA, 23111):  
[covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view)

VDH General Recommendations:  
[www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/182/2021/05/VDH-General-Recommendations-for-Businesses.pdf](https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/182/2021/05/VDH-General-Recommendations-for-Businesses.pdf)

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