

March 5, 2020

Greetings Emanuel's!

The coronavirus, COVID-19, has certainly taken the news by storm. For better or worse, it has heightened awareness about wellness, sharing germs, and personal wellbeing. While we are grateful to be a close church community, there are precautions we must take to ensure we remain proactive, not reactive, to this virus or any other like it. Here are the Congregation Council and Pastors requests and ministry changes:

1. Follow reliable sources such as the CDC ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)), local health officials, and medical professionals as you learn about this virus. Heed their advice. Please do not spread unconfirmed information and speculation, especially on social media.
2. Know the symptoms. Remember that symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure:
  - a. Fever
  - b. Cough
  - c. Shortness of breath
3. If you feel you have any of these symptoms, been around someone with these symptoms, or been in very close proximities to others, such as a bus, plane, or cars, who have these symptoms, here's what the CDC recommends you do next:
  - a. Stay home unless you are seeking medical care. Stay home from work, school, and yes... even church.
  - b. If you plan to visit a doctor's office, call ahead
  - c. Monitor your symptoms closely
4. WASH YOUR HANDS thoroughly and constantly, for at least 20 seconds, as you would with any other illness. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
5. During "Sharing of the Peace" in worship, shaking hands or giving hugs has been a common practice. At this time, we ask that you "share" with a fist bump, a nod of encouragement, or a simple "the peace of Christ be with you" while maintaining eye contact.
6. Altar Guild, Communion Assistants, and Pastors will be following a rigorous practice of washing their hands, using hand sanitizer, and wearing gloves during the preparations and distribution of Holy Communion and Baptism.

The COVID-19 outbreak has touched tens of thousands of lives across the globe. As a faith community, let our prayers for the medical and research teams be shared that the Spirit will continue to lead and guide their hands and minds as they seek better treatments and vaccines. Let our actions be ones of precaution and mutual support of every individual, family, and visitor to our church and its ministries.

Thank you for helping us create a safer, healthier, and happier worshiping community. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to the church office, Pastor Marcus, or Pastor Kelsie. We are here for each other.

In God's service.

The Church Council, Staff, & Pastors

Emanuel's Lutheran Church and Day School