



COVID – 19 (Coronavirus) Guidelines

March 13, 2020

Dear Church,

During this uncertain time, I feel that it is important to share with you some guidelines concerning the coronavirus pandemic. I have been paying very close attention to our local, state, and federal health officials, as well as our denominational leadership on how best to mitigate this situation.

As of right now we are suspending our Sunday morning worship services for the next two Sundays (March 15 & 22.) This may or may not continue after the 2-week time period. We will do our best to communicate any further worship cancelations as decisions are made. We are also suspending all activities or gatherings of 10 or more people using our facilities over the next two weeks. Exceptions to this suspension are the following activities related to public health and well-being, which include: Red Cross Blood Drives; FISH Food Bank; HIV Alliance Needle Exchange and HIV Testing; and 12 Step Groups. These groups may choose to suspend their activities themselves, but we are not requiring it at this time. We are requiring that they adhere to a strict regimen of sanitizing the space they have used when finished.

The Newman UMC staff are working extra hard to keep our building safe and clean not just for us church folk, but also for the many in the community who use our space throughout the week. Now is a time for us to work together to keep ourselves safe and healthy. Please refer to the following guidelines as you interact with the church and the broader community in the weeks to come.

- Wash hands with warm soapy water frequently for a minimum of 20 seconds especially at the start and end of your time on the church premises. (sing the doxology or say the Lord's Prayer)
- Clean hands after coming into contact with potentially unclean surfaces (doorknobs, counters, people, handrails, etc.) When soap and water are not available use hand sanitizer. Keep in mind that the church has a limited supply of hand sanitizer. Please use soap and water whenever possible.
- Stay home if you are ill. Stay home if anyone in your household is ill with a cough or fever.
- Limit your exposure to individuals. Refrain from shaking hands or hugging.
- Avoid large gatherings of people.
- If you have a cough, fever, or shortness of breath seek medical attention. Call your doctor before dropping into a clinic to avoid the potential infection of others.

Know the Symptoms of COVID – 19 (Coronavirus)

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IMMEDIATELY IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

How it spreads

- Person to person between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
- From contaminated surfaces and objects

Other Ways to Stay Healthy

- Keep yourself hydrated. Drink more water than you normally would. A dry throat has the potential to be more hospitable to the virus. Fluid intake also reduces the risk of infection and can help you get over an infection quickly.
- Avoid touching your face (this is harder than it seems)
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- In the event that you need to stay home for a long period of time, ensure that you are prepared to keep yourself fed and that you have all of your needed prescriptions.
- Care for your mental health. Although we are curtailing social gathering that does not mean you must be completely isolated. This is where technology can come in handy. Keep in touch with friends and family by phone, social media, and email.
- Enjoy the spring weather. Even if you need to remain at home you can still spend time in your yard.

Let's not forget to be in prayer for all those who are directly and indirectly effected by this virus. Now is a time to be united in caring for one another. The best way we can do this is by following the guidelines set forth by our leaders. The guidelines above come from the World Health Organization, the Centers for Disease Control, and the office of the Bishop. As things change, we will do our best to keep you all in the loop. Churchwide emails will be our primary method of communication. If you know of folks in the church who do not use email, would you please check-in with them and help us to keep everyone up to date?

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all and in the words of Saint Dolly Parton, "I can see the light of a clear blue morning. I can se the light of a brand-new day. Everything's going to be alright, it's going to be okay."

Peace,

