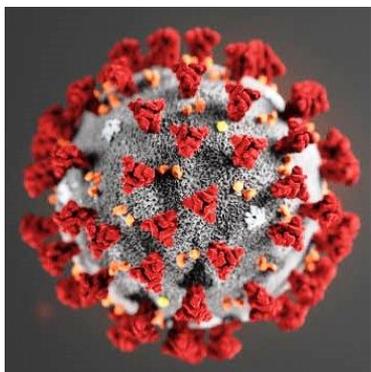


# Coronavirus and the Church



As new cases of the coronavirus (CoVid-19) are reported in the United States and around the world, the church is called to education, caution and common sense. Here are a few basic guidelines for congregations.

Good hygiene helps prevent the spread not only of coronavirus but also of colds and flu!

- Members, ministers, ushers - wash your hands frequently – with soap and water and for at least 20 seconds.
- Sneeze or cough into the crook of your elbow or a tissue, not your hand. Wash immediately after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose.
- Avoid touching your face, especially your mouth, nose and eyes, with unwashed hands.
- Regularly disinfect surfaces frequently touched including keyboards, desktops, elevator buttons and door knobs.
- Use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid close contact with someone who is sick.
- Stay home if you are sick.

Feel free to “bump elbows” or bow to fellow congregants during passing of the peace instead of hugging or shaking hands. Support changes in offertory and communion practices that minimize the chance of spreading germs. For example, ushers can keep hold of the offering plate; for communion, individual (even disposable) communion cups can be used.

Coronavirus (CoVid-19) is a respiratory illness that causes flu-like symptoms including fever, vomiting and difficulty breathing.

- If you have any of these symptoms, seek medical advice.
- Call ahead before you go to a doctor's office or emergency room. Tell them about any recent travel and your symptoms.
- Stay home. Do not travel while sick. Avoid contact with others.
- Ask to join meetings via video or telephone conference call while you are recovering. Join worship via livestream.

Helpful links:

- Short educational video on the "5 Things to Know About COVID-19" <https://youtu.be/2OKr53uXhS4>
- Latest guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) at: <http://cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- More resources from UCC Disaster Ministries: [ucc.org/disaster coronavirus resources from the ucc](http://ucc.org/disaster_coronavirus_resources_from_the_ucc)

As the faith community, we have a special responsibility to care for our fellow congregants and communities. When we are prepared, we are in a better position to help others. Get the facts and restate them accurately. Check in frequently with our fellow congregants. And counter scapegoating such as already has been shown to some Chinese and Chinese-Americans. They are not to blame for the coronavirus!



[ucc.org/disaster](http://ucc.org/disaster)