

CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE – Updated March 12, 2020 5:00 pm

At St. James UMC we take the health and well-being of our congregation, staff and community very seriously. We are monitoring coronavirus (COVID-19) updates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), medical professionals, and local health departments. In addition to ongoing efforts to maintain a safe and healthy environment, we have temporarily implemented the following precautionary measures. We have plans in place for additional actions if necessitated by the severity of the outbreak.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

- If you or a family member is sick, may have been directly exposed to the virus or have traveled to a high-alert area (currently South Korea, Iran, Italy, Japan), please follow the [CDC guidelines](#) and refrain from attending church services during the 14-day incubation period and instead [worship with us online](#).
- If at any time you are not comfortable attending worship, please join us online.
- Follow the [guidelines from the CDC](#) to help prevent the spread of the virus. (*General guidelines listed at the end of this document.*)

STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

- Our staff and volunteers are committed to maintaining a healthy environment and will wash their hands frequently.
- Staff who are sick or may have been exposed to the virus will stay home for the recommended quarantine period.

WORSHIP

- In addition to regular cleaning by janitorial staff, we are sanitizing highly touched surfaces before and after worship.
- We have hand sanitation stations throughout our buildings, and we have additional hand sanitizing supplies on order. As we await delivery, you may want to carry your own hand sanitizer so you can use it as often as you wish.
- We have temporarily modified the serving of communion during worship utilizing self-contained wafer/juice cups.
- We will not be passing attendance notebooks or offering plates. You can participate in the walk down offering or place your offering in baskets at the sanctuary exits.
- We are temporarily suspending the greeting/mixer moment. When greeting one another, we encourage you to smile, wave or bump elbows. Our staff and volunteers will still greet you warmly, just not hug or shake your hand.
- We will temporarily suspend the coffee stations. Please feel free to bring your own coffee.

- Children’s Church and the nursery will be open during all worship times. As a regular practice in our Children’s classes and nurseries, we disinfect all surfaces and toys and encourage frequent hand washing. If you suspect your child is sick (i.e., runny nose, cough, fever), please refrain from attending church.
- If you choose to worship online, you may take advantage of electronic giving, mail your offering to the church or bring it to the church during office hours.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE

- Our congregational care team remains committed to offering excellent care to our congregation. To prevent the spread of the virus, we are temporarily suspending in-person visits to hospitals and homes. We will continue to offer care and prayer via telephone.

SMALL GROUPS AND CLASSES

- We are temporarily suspending small groups, Sunday School and weekday classes at this time. We encourage you to use online and conference call options to communicate.
- In addition to suspending the Sunday morning coffee bar, we will temporarily not allow beverages or meals during Sunday and weekday activities.

YOU CAN HELP PREVENT THE SPREAD OF THE VIRUS

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if your hands are visibly dirty.
- If coronavirus continues to spread in our local community, we will follow the guidance of the health department and CDC.