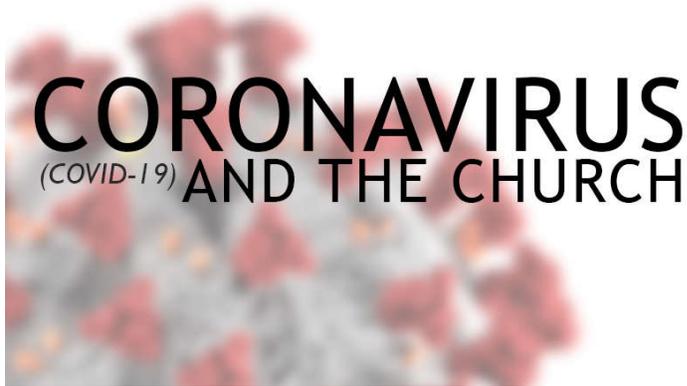


**Life Journey Lutheran Church
Vancouver, WA**

03/17/2020

COVID-19 Response Plan



Coronavirus: Faith, Not Fear

In response to increased anxieties and concerns around the global outbreak of COVID-19, also known as the coronavirus, Life Journey Lutheran Church, Vancouver, WA and its ministries have compiled a plan to take commonsense measures concerning our ministry in response to congregational, local, state and federal concerns.

While it's important to remain vigilant and alert to potential dangers from this virus, we must continue to trust in God through all developments, "remaining calm in a time of distress, extending compassion to those who are suffering, and praying for the healing of the world."

Current Situation

The current situation is fluid and changing on a daily / weekly basis. As of Sunday, March 15th, Washington Governor Jay Inslee has banned gatherings of over 50 people in the Seattle area and has announced the temporary closure of all state schools through April 24th. Restaurants may only offer take out food, non-essentials such as bowling alleys, movie theaters, sporting events, etc. have been required to temporarily shut down. All churches throughout the state of

Washington have been required to cease worship service temporarily. “We expect a large scale outbreak in weeks,” said Jeffrey Duchin, health officer for Seattle and King County. He added it would be “the infectious disease equivalent of a major earthquake.”

Clark County and southwest Washington has experienced a much less significant impact by the virus at this time. However, our location just 15 miles north of Portland, OR places us near a potential secondary pandemic area. We are actively monitoring both the State of Washington and Portland, OR officials as this situation rapidly changes.

Church Ministry Staff and Parishioners

- Are encouraged to stay home if they are sick.
- Are encouraged to observe the highly publicized communications to wash their hands, have alcohol-based hand sanitizers (containing at least 60% alcohol) in easily accessible areas.

Church Ministry Leadership

- Has placed alcohol-based hand sanitizers (containing at least 60% alcohol) in easily accessible areas throughout the church facility.
- Has increased diligence around cleaning and sanitizing.
- Has temporarily cancelled all worship services and ministry events
 - Plans have been made to electronically transmit a weekly worship video production to parishioners via our church website. (the video will be taped during the week and placed on the website early Sunday morning for people to view at their leisure)
 - Home Worship Packets are being created to supply parishioners with a number of worship materials ...
 - Communion wine / grape juice and wafers,
 - offering envelopes (to be mailed into the church office)
 - weekly bulletin with sermon notes section

These kits can be picked up at the church office beginning Monday, March 23rd anytime Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri. 9am-12:00pm.

If a ministry partner can not pick up a packet, one can be delivered to his / her home.

- Continued financial support is very, very important. Ministry partners are encouraged to stop by their bank and inquire about setting up a month “bill pay” for their offerings to Life Journey.

This is a simple process and a great stewardship technique to ensure that an individual’s financial commitment is consistent all year long, even after this COVID-19 situation is over.

Church Address: **Life Journey Lutheran Church**
1313 NE 134th Street, Suite 230
Vancouver, WA 09695

- *If a parishioner typically gives a weekly offering, he / she should multiply the weekly amount by 52 ($\$100 \times 52 = \$5,200$) and then divide by 12 ($\$433$) and ask the bank to send a check to Life Journey for $\$433$ each month (on the day of your choosing). This is usually a free bank service.*
- Ministry partners are also encouraged to mail in the supplied offering envelopes to the church office on a weekly or monthly basis.
- Our fledgling ministry is on a very tight budget – just one missed weekly offering makes a big dent in our budget.
- Care Teams are being developed so that ministry partners have someone to check in on them through this temporary period of social distancing.
 - Existing in home “life groups” will make up the first half of the care team list with additional care teams being created based on relationships, local addresses, common interests, etc. A list of care teams with the name, addresses and phone numbers of the care team leader and team members will be communicated to the congregation.
- An emergency support team is being put together using the younger ministry partners of our church to assist older members who may

- need grocery shopping assistance, assistance within their homes (small jobs like fixing a computer, etc.) or transportation.
 - Emergency pastoral care is available 24 hours a day by simply contacting **Pastor Bob (402.570.7725)**
- Will continue to monitor congregational ministries and events as deemed necessary.

Concluding Thoughts:

The challenge of the worldwide pandemic of COVID-19 has caused many churches to spend time in prayerfully self-examination, reflection, and action. “In light of the fact that panic can cause tunnel vision (which is terrible for decision-making), our leadership wants to remind everyone that God is in control of every situation and there is never a reason to panic. On our knees we seek divine wisdom in an unprecedented situation as we grapple with what is negotiable and non-negotiable in God’s eyes.

We understand that criticism is unfortunate but unavoidable; non-Christians cannot be expected to understand the tenets and teachings of our faith. Crisis shows the true character of a Christian. How could we say we loved our neighbors yet consider shutting our doors in their time of greatest need? If we believed in a Savior who healed the sick, bestowed sight to the blind, and touched lepers, why did we doubt his power to reign over this coronavirus?”

On the one hand, a growing number of people (inside and outside the Christian community) view the local church as a non-essential. Churches are now being quickly pressed from all sides to be one of the first to close our doors in the name of social distancing in order to “flatten” the effects of the virus .

Throughout the centuries, the church was one of the last to close its doors during a national crisis. Pastors and parishioners were often on the front lines assisting those in need and without family and / or community. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we view the church as ESSENTIAL to the community in which many may now view us as non-essential.

On the other hand, we do not take lightly our “social responsibility” to our

neighbors and their physical welfare. Sadly, we understand the rationale and concern for social distancing and exposure to suspected cases of COVID-19.

The church must lead in love rather than be manipulated by stigma. We are called to provide compassion instead of cowering in fear. Churches must trust sound

theology, science, and public health instead of succumbing to rumors and hysteria from social media. Denominations, churches, and believers can play a vital role during outbreaks, epidemics, and other diseases.

To whom can the members of Life journey reach within our community during this time of crisis? Who is being affected the most as people are being asked to stay home during this period? Who is hardest hit in our area? Those directly afflicted with the virus? Those whose jobs have been disrupted by fear of it? Those emotionally weary of responding to it? Many of the doors that would otherwise have been closed to the church might now be opened through acts of love in this time of coronavirus.

We believe in the power of prayer. For such a time as this, we need every believer to arise and seek God together for Clark County and our country. It's crucial that in times of crisis, the church rises up to be a standard. As salt and light, the church needs to stand strong in the Lord so that others can see the hope we profess.

Life Journey Lutheran Church
Leadership Team