

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am sure you are all aware of the spread of the coronavirus (Covid-19) around the world. You have probably also heard of the thirteen confirmed cases in the Houston Metro area. I want to let you know that we as a staff are following news of this and taking precautions. If we all work together, we can ensure a safe worship environment for us all. I would like to address all of this by sharing the important things we know about the virus, the precautions we will take in worship, and the precautions we are asking you to take.

Important Things About Coronavirus

Coronavirus is very contagious. Officials believe the virus can spread before symptoms manifest. That said, the majority of cases in the U.S. are travel-related. Many of those in our metro area who have the virus apparently were infected in Egypt. Many in the U.S. were infected while traveling. It is believed presently that the risk of infection in Texas right now is relatively low. It is also believed that the effects of the virus are greater for our older people, especially those with health problems such as heart disease, immune system problems, and diabetes. The symptoms in younger, healthy people, especially children, do not appear to be very worrisome. We will continue watching for updates regarding coronavirus and adapt as necessary.

Precautions We Are Taking

Due to the heavy use of our church by the school, we will disinfect our pews, communion rail, bathrooms, and other surfaces that receive a lot of contact before church every Sunday. Before and after Communion, the clergy and lay chalice bearers will disinfect their hands. Here are some more precautions we will take:

- **INTINCTION (the dipping of the bread in the cup) WILL NOT BE ALLOWED FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.** The Bishop has mandated that this practice be discontinued for now because, perhaps counterintuitively, it is not as sanitary as drinking the wine directly from the cup. (Read the whole release from the Diocese [here](#).)
- You may continue sipping from the cup.
- You may take only the bread, if you like. You do receive the full benefits of Communion by receiving in only one kind (meaning only the bread or only the wine). Christ cannot be divided! Taking the bread can count for both.
- You may opt to come to the Communion rail and simply receive a blessing.
- You may also remain in your seat and forego Communion.
- We are also taking the precautions listed below ourselves.

Precautions We Ask You to Take

- We ask you to make as little physical contact with one another as possible. This will be difficult because we like to demonstrate our love for one another. But this is very important, especially for our older parishioners.
 - Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
 - Stay home when you are sick or when you think you might be getting 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 hands are visibly dirty.
 - The use of hand sanitizer is a good practice.



If we do all of these things, they (along with the relatively low risk to us in Texas) should put us in a pretty good place with relation to this virus. If necessary, we have further steps we can employ. For the time being, though, our cooperation in this manner should make for a very low-risk time of worship for all of us. Thank you and please continue to pray for all of those affected by this virus.

May God bless you and keep you,
In Christ,

David

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Updated 3/10/2020