

Dear Friends of Reservoir Church,

I'm writing to update you on the thinking and planning of our church's staff in light of the of the global concerns regarding coronavirus on top of our regular flu season. I shared this past Sunday that I'd love for us to use this public health concern as an opportunity to do what we can for our own and others' health and safety, but also to make peace with our own weakness and mortality.

Philosophically, I asked us how we can cultivate a careful, but unafraid approach to sickness and even, God forbid, death, that allows us to be people of compassion and generosity when our friends and neighbors are overcome with fear.

On a practical front, we as a staff want to update you on a few changes that'll be in place as soon as this coming Sunday. If anything, we are practicing an abundance of caution, but we have decided that in the short run, it does us very little harm to be a bit too cautious.

First, we'd like to highly emphasize what is also being instructed by public health officials; **If you have symptoms of a cold or flu, please stay home from all church services, community groups, and generally away from others except to receive medical care.** The CDC recommends that you stay at home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or other necessities. Your fever should be gone without need to use a fever-reducing medicine, such as Tylenol. **Please also regularly wash your hands thoroughly and as much as possible refrain from touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.**

Here are a few of the changes that you may notice in and around the Reservoir campus:

Campus-wide:

- 1) Hand sanitizer will be widely available, to the extent that we are able to purchase enough.
- 2) Bathroom signs will be posted with reminders about proper hand-washing practices.
- 3) We'll encourage a friendly, less-touch oriented community approach to greeting each other. Reservoir elbow bump, anyone?

Sanctuary and Chapel

- 1) For the next two weeks, we will serve communion in individually pre-wrapped portions. We have ordered both regular and a smaller number of gluten-free elements for this.
- 2) For the next two weeks, our cafe teams will take a break from bagels and granola and instead put out single-serving, pre-wrapped snacks such as granola bars.

While these changes will feel different and no doubt disappointing to some, they allow us to practice communion and hospitality still while decreasing any concerns about germ spread. We'll reevaluate how this is going and whether to continue every two to four weeks.

Ministry Center Building / Kids Church and Youth Group

- 1) Preschoolers will get a squirt of hand sanitizer when they arrive to their classes as well as before their snack.
- 2) Kids Church is taking a break from using play dough and continues to serve snacks in individual cups.
- 4) Youth Group snacks will be in single serving packages.
- 5) Tables and counters will be wiped down.
- 6) **All community groups and classes and those we share our spaces with should load and run the dishwasher rather than hand wash dishes, as much as possible.**

Future Possibilities

Of course, we don't know how big the spread of the virus will be or what future health warnings will be in the coming months. We're staying on top of CDC updates and guidelines from public health officials. We're doing some creative research and planning in the hopefully-unlikely worst case scenarios.

We'll continue to provide updates as the staff meets and continues to gather information. In a prayerful way, we can bond as we travel this road and trust God together. For today, though, I want to say to you, friends, that no matter what happens, we are accompanied and held by a God who has become one of us, who has suffered and died with us, and who loves us fiercely and tenderly in all of our fears and limits and wounds and weakness.

Peace,

Steve