



March 13, 2020

BETHLEHEM COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) PLAN OF ACTION

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We are writing to let you know that we are holding you in prayer as we work to do what is best for you and your family.

The following outline shares our plans at Bethlehem as the Coronavirus outbreak expands and impacts our larger community and ministries. We believe this plan of action offers useful, relevant information to plan our course of action and work to promote the health and well-being of our staff, members, and guests moving forward amid quickly changing circumstances:

PHASE #1 (Ongoing) Encourage good hygiene, change cleaning policies, enhance food handling procedures. Encourage all people who are sick to remain at home.

PHASE #2 (Ongoing) Encourage social distancing, limit fellowship and gatherings with food.

.....We will no longer be holding Wednesday Night Potluck Suppers for the foreseeable future, Sunday Morning Fellowship will be serving items that are store bought on disposable dishes. Funeral Luncheons will be dealt with in a manner that avoids cross contamination.

.....All food items, including beverages, will be served directly to people by healthy servers who are following food safety requirements.

.....We will continue to offer midweek and Sunday worship services but will encourage social distancing.

.....We are suspending serving Holy Communion for this weekend. We are working on putting plans in place to have Holy Communion in a safer way after this weekend.

.....We will discontinue the practice of physical touch during greeting times.

.....We have ended the passing of offering plates and encourage people to leave their offering as they enter or leave the sanctuary or to place it in the plate by the font during offering time.

.....We will be diligent about cleaning policies – the Bethlehem staff will disinfect high touch areas daily.

PHASE #3 (Ongoing) Encourage all teams and nonessential gatherings to meet via phone, online, or postpone gatherings. Encourage all members who are over 60, have underlying health issues or are pregnant to remain home. Offer a worship service with no human contact and offer on-line options for the community. Suspend or cancel Sunday School, youth activities, adult forums, etc (at least live options).

Phase #4 (We are currently in this phase) In the event that the Cedar Falls Community School District closes and/or faith communities are asked not to gather in any way, we will move all worship services on-line or via video. The building will remain open to the public; however, hours are subject to change. Staff will work remotely or in the building. In the event that this happens, we will be instituting a program where we can all check in with one another via our church directory. Each household would be encouraged to touch base with the others on their directory page, so that we ensure that each person is cared for during this time. If you are unsure that your name and information is in the directory, please call the church office.

PHASE #5 (We have begun to make plans for this possibility) If there is a known case of COVID-19 within the Bethlehem family, the building will be closed immediately and thoroughly cleaned. Working with public health officials, Bethlehem's leadership will follow guidelines for communicating with the broader community and mobilize a proper quarantine. Bethlehem's building will be closed, and worship will be on-line.

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A quick reminder...If you are ill, please remain at home and take good care of yourself. Contact your health care provider if you are running a fever or have trouble breathing. If you are over the age of 60, have underlying health concerns, or have been exposed to the Coronavirus. Please practice social distancing. The prevailing wisdom is that limiting human contact or "nonessential gatherings" is one of the best ways for communities to decrease the spread of the virus and to protect family, friends, and neighbors.

We are here to help... If you are in need of groceries, medication, or other errands, and are not able to leave your home, please let the church office know. If you would like prayer or a meaningful conversation, please call! You can call the church office at 319-266-3541.

In case of emergencies, please call Pastor Amy's cell at 218-290-3982

If you are diagnosed with the Coronavirus, please call the church office and let us know. We would like to provide pastoral care, and – if necessary – to communicate with the broader community and activate our health plan for the church.

We need your help...Discussions are also taking place to offer food or resources to our most vulnerable neighbors in the community, especially as they face the uncertainties that this situation brings. If you would like to help with creative solutions as to how we can best support all of our neighbors, please contact the church office.

Finally, as we deeply desire to continue to do the ministry God has called us to here at Bethlehem, your continued generous support – of prayers, service, and financial gifts - is so important. Even if you are unable to attend worship in person, giving is still possible online using the "Online Giving" tab at <http://www.bethlehemcf.org/>. Or, you can mail your donation to the church office. We truly cannot do this without you and are deeply grateful for your continued partnership!

Grace and peace,

Pastor Amy Eisenmann