

March 11, 2020

Friends, a few thoughts on this virus.

There is so much information out there that it's hard to know how to sort it out. The basic facts seem to be:

1. Covid 19 is, of course, viral and spreading, and doing so as common viruses do.
2. It seems to be a bit more dangerous than others to people who are elderly, or are over 60 and / or have medical - particularly immune system or respiratory challenges.
3. It will be more prevalent before it recedes.
4. Much is unknown about it, chiefly if it is seasonal or will continue beyond typical viral seasons.

Generally, for things like this, I find it helpful to get information from actual medical institutions and not so much from politicians and the news...especially in an election year. ☺ So here is a helpful link to Johns Hopkins Medical Center on this topic: <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/coronavirus-disease-2019-vs-the-flu>

This is also helpful, from the Cleveland Clinic: <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/landing/preparing-for-coronavirus>

Like any virus, basic hygiene is important to practice - hand-washing, coughing and sneezing responsibly, etc., and if you're truly sick or have a compromised immune system, stay at home and away from other people as best you can.

I am aware of the Governor's suggestion to cancel worship gatherings, but at present, we are not planning to change our programming or worship gatherings, other than to not have a greeting time for the next few weeks. We recognize that many in our church family may be susceptible to this and want to do all we can to protect them while still being able to gather and worship. In other words, let's not be offended if someone chooses not to offer or return a handshake, and of course no one will be offended if some choose to stay at home.

Like businesses and schools, we are taking extra disinfectant measures. We are also monitoring the CDC reports and recommendations, and specifically the Jessamine County Health Department's local assessment.

We will not be able to continue our different ministries and services at area nursing homes, as per Governor Beshear's request. Hospitals are also restricting visitors, so our Hospital Visitation Team will be suspended temporarily. Some hospitals are even restricting pastoral visits.

We are moving forward with our spring break mission trip, but again, we are monitoring the travel restrictions that seem to be changing by the day.

Above all, remember that Christ-followers are ministers and servants to others. In history's dangerous events, it has typically been the Christians who risk themselves to serve the fearful, and in doing so, we shine the light of Jesus and offer real hope.

To quote Thane Ury, "It is poetic, in a way, when you consider that our world sees a swashbuckling GDP and military power as the twin mirages that supposedly rule the day and provide security - and yet here we find a pathogen, measured in ten-thousandths of a millimeter, that has panicked investors, rattled markets, ignited humanitarian crises, pummeled economies, body-slammed tourism and carries the potential to bring a superpower (or several) to its proverbial knees."

Let's pray for those who are leading the efforts against this, and also that God might use this to gain our world's attention. May we be among those who live, serve, worship and love with peace and confidence in Him alone.

Pastor Daryl