



Jon Denney, D.Min
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Josh Andrews, MTS
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March 13, 2020

Dear Church Family,

As you know, many announcements have been made concerning cancellations and changes to public gatherings, including worship services. I am writing to you to address our response to the COVID-19 coronavirus.

I have been in consultation throughout the week with our church leadership, as we monitor this rapidly developing situation. We are all seeking to do what is best for the health and safety of everyone who walks through the doors of Mt. Zion.

We are blessed to have several members on our Church Safety Team who are actively involved in emergency services, including two men who serve as Fire Chiefs of local fire protection districts.

We have reviewed our protocols and what steps should be taken going forward. Based on the information received from the Centers for Disease Control, Platte County Emergency Management and the Platte County Health Department, we plan to do the following:

First, at present, Mt. Zion is planning to continue all of our usual services, including Blessings of Life Daycare, and all of our scheduled events.

Second, Mt. Zion will promote practices which will help mitigate exposure to the COVID-19 coronavirus. This includes:

- (a) Staying home when you are sick. This is not only if you have a fever, but if you are just feeling poorly or have a cough, runny nose or have been sneezing.
- (b) Being diligent about hand-washing. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use a generous amount of hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol. Hand sanitizer dispensers will be available at various locations around the church.

(c) Covering coughs and sneezes with the crook of your elbow rather than your hand.

Some new practices that we will implement for the time being will include:

- (a) “Social distancing,” which is a new way of saying “avoiding person-to-person contact.” We ask that everyone refrain from greetings such as hand-shaking or hugging and practice no-contact greetings.
- (b) We will have greeters stationed at the exterior doors to open the doors as people enter, thereby eliminating a common point of contact as people touch the door handle. Exiting the building does not require grabbing a door handle, as all exterior doors can be pushed open without the use of your hands.
- (c) The offering will not be received by passing the offering plate. Instead, at the end of the service, an usher will hold an offering plate near each of the four sanctuary doors so that anyone choosing to give can place their offering in the plate as they exit.
- (d) Our custodian, Sunday School teachers, greeters and ushers will be exercising diligence in wiping down commonly-touched surfaces with disinfectant cleaners.

Third, as this situation is extremely fluid, we are continuing to monitor new developments, reevaluating our steps and actions, and will be following recommendations that come from official channels, which can help prevent the spread of infection.

Lastly, we know that our confidence is not merely in preventative measures, but in God’s kind providence. Taking steps to prevent disease is not a lack of trust in God but is part of our trust in God. He has given us a mind capable of understanding key aspects of how the world works and He expects us to use that mind while continuing to trust in His care. If we will do both, then, Lord willing, it will enable us to continue to do effective ministry with minimal disruption.

Please pray for our leaders, that they will look to the Lord for wisdom as they make decisions. Pray for one another, that we will respond in a way that honors the Lord. And pray that these circumstances will bring people to realize that they need the Lord.

Your pastor,

Jon Denney