

From the Rector's Desk, March 10, 2020

More COVID-19 Precautions

Dear Friends,

I know all of us are reading the news and thinking carefully about what we can do to halt the spread of the coronavirus. We have an obligation to one another as God's family to take care of the most vulnerable among us.

Here are some additional steps we are taking at St. Lukes:

- Thursday 5 p.m. Bible Exploration Class is canceled until further notice. Many regular attendees to this class are retirees, and we know that this illness affects older people more severely than younger people
- Other worship and activities will continue (unless directed otherwise by the Diocese or the health department), including Wednesday Morning Eucharist, Thursday Night Choir Practice, and Sunday worship. However, please stay home if you are sick, or if you are part of a vulnerable population. You will be with us in spirit
- We will take precautions to make all worship and events as safe as possible:

-Wednesday Mornings will not include the laying on of hands for healing. We'll set up chairs further apart than usual

-All worship services will include communion by bread only. We heard from Bishop Marc last week that the common cup should not be served until the crisis passes

-Please refrain from shaking hands or other contact when greeting one another. This is important for everyone to observe, even though it may feel unfriendly. We will practice offering peace to one another in other ways (bowing, touching one's heart, sharing a peace sign)

-When coming to receive communion, you may want to stand at the altar rail to limit your contact with potentially contaminated surfaces. Alternatively, communion may be brought to you in your pew--just inform an usher

These precautions may seem onerous, but I believe they are one way we can show love for one another during this crisis. Thankfully, viruses aren't the only contagious thing in the world: we know that love is as well.

Peace,

The Reverend Jason Cox

From the Rector's Desk, March 5, 2020

Update on Coronavirus

Dear Friends,

As the coronavirus moves into the U.S., I know we're all watching the news with concern. The most important thing is to stay calm, and keep ourselves as healthy as possible so that we can protect and support the most vulnerable among us.

The diocese recently published the following guidelines for keeping healthy in our worshiping communities:

- If you are sick, please stay home — both to heal and to protect the most vulnerable from infection
- Please refrain from intinction — the practice of dipping the bread/wafer in the chalice. Intinction is not a safer practice than sipping from the chalice (there is a risk that the bacteria on our hands may come in contact with the wine)
- During worship services, if you are feeling even slightly unwell, you are encouraged to refrain from contact with the chalice
- If you are at all concerned about your health, you are also welcome to refrain from contact with the chalice
- Please remember that consuming only bread is full communion with the Body of Christ
- At the peace, please consider alternatives to handshaking or hugging. A nod, a wave, or touching our hands to our hearts are among the many ways we can acknowledge Christ in one another
- All communion ministers should use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before presiding at the altar, or administering communion
- Please make sure that all those who administer communion wash their hands thoroughly after the liturgy

Take time now to consider who in your congregation and surrounding community may be most vulnerable in the event of a coronavirus outbreak and/or quarantine. How can you help them prepare and stay connected to you and others who can offer comfort and support?

At St. Luke's, be assured that all Eucharistic ministers will be taking extra care to wash our hands thoroughly and use hand-sanitizer. Please be in touch with me if you have any questions, and especially if you know someone who is sick and needs our prayers and pastoral support.

Peace,
The Reverend Jason Cox