

Managing COVID-19

Caring for ourselves and each other

To slow the spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus), all of us can take steps to care for ourselves and each other. For the latest information, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website ([cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)).

How COVID-19 spreads

COVID-19 spreads primarily through person-to-person contact, specifically:

1. Between those in close contact with each other.
2. Through respiratory droplets (from coughing or sneezing) that can land in the mouths, noses or eyes of nearby healthy individuals, or be inhaled into the lungs.
3. Via contact with contaminated surfaces or objects (including hands) and then touching your own mouth, nose or eyes.

Individuals likely are most contagious when most symptomatic. However, individuals may also spread the virus before showing symptoms or after symptoms resolve. Additionally, the majority of infected individuals will experience a mild illness and possibly show no symptoms at all.

Caring for yourself

Your health and well-being are of the utmost importance. To care for yourself and your loved ones, follow these tips:

1. Stay home if you or someone in your household is sick with mild respiratory symptoms or fever.
2. Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, then immediately throw it away and wash your hands. If no tissue is available, cough into the crook of your elbow.
3. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use a 60 to 95% alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
4. Routinely clean surfaces and objects (tabletops, doorknobs, faucet and toilet handles, computer keyboards, etc.) using a regular household cleaner.
5. Promptly seek medical advice if you develop a fever, cough or other respiratory distress.
6. If you are sick, stay in a specific room and away from other people and pets in your home (as much as possible). Use a separate bathroom, if possible. Do not share cups or eating utensils.

Caring for the church

If COVID-19 comes to your area, your church leadership may implement any or all of the following:

1. Modify Sunday activities to minimize risk, such as:
 - Greeting each other verbally rather than shaking hands.
 - Bringing your own coffee and snacks to church.
 - Collecting the offering via hands-free receptacles.
 - Asking children to stay in their seats for the children's story.
 - Adjusting how anointing, footwashing and communion are handled.
 - Placing hand sanitizer in common areas.
 - Spreading out worship and Christian education seating.
2. Canceling Sunday morning or midweek activities.
3. Recording sermons on video and posting them online.
4. Conduct committee meetings and/or pastoral visits by phone or video conference.

Adapted and used with permission from Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship (Goshen, Indiana). Developed using guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization, in consultation with Daniel Nafziger, M.D., M.P.H., Medical Director at Goshen Hospital and infectious disease specialist, and Paul Fast, M.P.H., Global Health Coordinator for Mennonite Central Committee.



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