

Las Placitas Presbyterian Church

Coronavirus Guidance for our Congregation and Community

March 10, 2020

As LPPC is a caring church community, the health and well-being of our members and friends is a top priority. At the time of this writing no cases of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) have been reported in New Mexico. However, concerns about potential virus spread were considered by the LPPC Session on March 9, 2020. Session approved the reinstatement of the church's Health and Safety Committee, which will function initially as a task force to coordinate the church's responses and efforts to minimize the potential for virus spread within our congregation and community. Many of our initial suggestions are based on a document posted by the Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA) on their website: ***Guidance for Congregations In Response to Severe Infectious Disease Outbreak*** (https://pda.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/pda/pdfs/preparedness_for_pandemics.pdf).

We will continue to monitor the status of the coronavirus outbreak and update our guidance suggestions as appropriate.

Precautions

Take common sense precautions to slow or prevent the spread of the flu among members:

- If you feel ill, please remain at home and take care of yourself. We are exploring possible alternatives for spiritual care for those who cannot attend worship or other functions due to these precautions.
- If you have recently come into close contact with someone infected, or if you have recently returned from areas having significant coronavirus case numbers, please plan to return to church *only* after 14 days without experiencing possible symptoms. At this time, such locations include – at a minimum - the U.S. states of Washington, California, New York and Florida, and the countries China, Italy, South Korea and Iran. However, since other localized areas may also be of concern and case numbers change daily, other locations are likely to be added to this list and we ask that you “err on the side of caution” in this respect.
 - However, we welcome those who may have previously been quarantined but have tested virus-free, or who have recovered from COVID-19.
- Members and other church service attendees should try to select their seats in the sanctuary following the recommended 3-5' inter-person distance during an outbreak.
- During passing of the peace, simply smile and say the words, without hugs or handshakes.
- For the present, please do not use drinking water fountains (these will be labeled “do not use”).
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer (minimum 60% alcohol recommended) is available in the pews and in the restrooms; please use these regularly.

For those using the kitchen and cleaning public spaces

- Please increase awareness and diligence when cleaning kitchens, restrooms, and classrooms. COVID-19 is inactivated by most common household cleansers. Use appropriate disinfectant on all hard surfaces, including door handles, following the manufacturers' recommendation for usage.

- Those handling food for any church functions including food pantry or in-house food service, please follow enhanced precautions for safe food handling, including the use of gloves and hair coverings.

For LPPC's children

- Day care providers and Sunday school teachers will remind children about hand-washing and other good health habits.
- Children's toys in Sunday school classes and day care facilities will be sanitized before and after each class.

Current information resources

Please monitor the following websites for current information:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov
- The World Health Organization: www.who.int
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: www.hhs.gov
- New Mexico Department of Health: <https://cv.nmhealth.org>

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Others to be announced...