

March 13, 2020

Dear people of First Lutheran Church,

Concern over the spread of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) is increasing rapidly. Since the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the virus a pandemic, significant measures have been implemented within the U.S. to slow down its transmission. As these events unfold, we want to assure you that First Lutheran is also taking steps to safeguard the health of our members.

The best and most important preventative action one can take is to frequently wash your hands and use sanitizer if available. Stay at home if you do not feel well and cover coughs and sneezes with your sleeve. Please note that you can watch our services online through our website:

<https://firstlutheran.360unite.com/home>. Just click the blue Livestream via You Tube lettering and that will take you to First Lutheran's You Tube service page.

After reviewing guidance from the Nebraska District Office, First Lutheran will be taking the following additional actions starting this weekend (March 14, 2020):

- We will be eliminating the greeting or encourage greeting without shaking hands.
- We will be suspending the use friendship pads for attendance.
- All those assisting in the celebration of the Lord's Supper will sanitize hands prior to the distribution.
- We will encourage the use of hand sanitizer by all parishioners before coming up to receive communion (we encourage you bring this from home since current supplies are very limited).
- The Offering will be received by the ushers as members go up to take communion (no passing of plates).
- Finally, we will be suspending the use of the common cup until the health crisis is over

If there is a significant outbreak in our community, i.e. local transmission of the virus at a significant level, state and local officials may provide more stringent guidance regarding public gatherings. If that occurs, we will address those issues at that time and act accordingly.

The psalmist writes in Psalm 46, *"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. 2Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, 3 though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling."* Psalm 46:1-3 (ESV)

God is our refuge, and our strength, our sure defense. We have nothing to fear, for we are in the hands of our gracious God who ascended a cross and conquered death for us.

In the Name of our Risen Savior,

The Staff of First Lutheran Church:

Brady Laib DCE

Dave Ricke DCE

Rev. Karl P. Ziegler Sr. Pastor

The Board of Elders of First Lutheran Church

Additional resources regarding Coronavirus:

CDC Coronavirus Summary: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

CDC Frequently Asked Questions & Answers: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

Sarpy/Cass Health Department: <https://www.sarpycasshealthdepartment.org/novel-coronavirus>

LCMS Pacific Southwest District: <https://www.psd-lcms.org/coronavirus>