



March 12, 2020

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

As you are aware, there is much concern surrounding the Coronavirus (COVID-19). These are serious times which require prayer and vigilance. Within the last few days, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a global pandemic. As of last night, Pennsylvania state government, Montgomery county, and city of Philadelphia officials have closed schools and postponed other public activities. Pennsylvania government officials are also recommending the suspension of gatherings 250 or more.

We are seeking to cooperate with our local government and state government, but we are also seeking wisdom from God as well. We are clear, that as a community of faith, our gatherings provide for fellowship and togetherness that are very beneficial both spiritually and socially. During this time, we are asking our entire church community to exercise compassion and courage, as well as practical wisdom as we seek to create safe and healthy spaces for all who seek to worship God.

On this past weekend, we affirmed the precautions being asked of the public and we were also given some counsel on how to interact while navigating our facilities. Here is a brief recap:

- Instead of hugs or handshakes, practice fist bumps, elbow, head nods, or foot taps
- Frequently wash your hands with soap and water for a duration of 20 seconds or more
- Until further notice, there will not be greeting at the door at the conclusion of worship
- If you are feeling sick, stay home
- When using a tissue, flush it down the toilet rather than in the trash can and wash your hands afterwards with soap and hot water or hand sanitizer
- Cover your mouth and nose with your inner elbow if you cough or sneeze and wash your hands afterwards
- When possible, maintain at least 6 feet of distance from other people
- Continuously clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces
Avoid close contact with people who are sick, coughing, or sneezing
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and/or mouth with unwashed hands
- Wear a face mask - only if you are sick

Effective immediately, all activities at the Germantown Seventh – day Adventist Church will be suspended until April 4, 2020. There will be live streaming on Sabbaths, March 14, 21, and 28 at 12pm and Wednesdays, March 18, 25, and April 1 at 6:30pm. We will also continue our prayer call at 6am on Wednesdays. We will provide regular updates as needed.

During the time that activities are suspended, we will be taking extra measures to sanitize, clean, and disinfect our entire facility.

As a faith tradition, we fully embrace and affirm the worth and practice of personal and family prayer and devotion. I strongly encourage all families to use this time to pay attention to such spiritual disciplines and have candid conversations with your families about this critical time. Spend time talking to your children and helping them to further trust in God.

In closing, this is not to create panic, but to exercise precaution. Let us hold fast to our faith and embrace the word of God. Embrace and put into practice, Philippians 4:6, Psalm 91, 2 Timothy 1:7, and other scriptures that embrace hope and encourage faith in a never-failing God. This is a time of uncertainty that promises no end, but we continue to place our faith and hope in a God that has all power. We are not defeated by this. As we have been learning, this is our difficult place and we will respond by trusting God who always knows what is best. Please know that I am praying for each and every one of you that God may cover us with his protection and provision.

Sincerely,

Orville S. Brissett

Orville S. Brissett
Pastor – Germantown Seventh-day Adventist Church