

Coronavirus Resources

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By North/West Lower Michigan
Synod

Like much of the global population, the ELCA is concerned about the Coronavirus, also known as COVID19. Globally, over 80,000 cases of the disease have been reported across 50 countries. With the continued spread of this disease, the ELCA is actively and intentionally assessing the situation, communicating with personnel and companions in Europe and Asia, and taking action that prioritizes the safety of our members, our global companions and our entire human family.

We encourage everyone to stay informed and to prioritize the safety of themselves and their communities. Unfortunately, there is significant misinformation spreading about the disease. The two sources that can and should be trusted are the Center for Disease Control (**CDC**) and the **World Health Organization (WHO)**. Both sources release the most up-to-date information on the disease, and both have developed a variety of resources regarding prevention and response.

We encourage everyone to use good sense and follow flu season guidelines, including washing your hands, coughing and sneezing into your elbow, staying home from church if you are feeling sick, and seeking medical attention if you are concerned about your health.

Churches around our Synod are making slight adjustments including providing hand sanitizer in the pews and having greeters with hand sanitizer. In terms of sharing of the peace, we encourage you to do what you are comfortable with and respect what others are comfortable with. If you would prefer to not shake hands, it is acceptable to cross your arms and do a slight bow to share the peace.

In this time of concern, we ask that you join us in prayer: Merciful God, we know that your heart overflows with compassion for your whole creation. Pour out your Spirit on all people living with this illness, or who are living with anxiety about this illness, for which there is not yet a cure. Be with those who tend to the needs of the sick. Strengthen us all in body and spirit, console us when anxious, comfort us in grief and hearten us in discouragement. Help to remind us that you claim us as your own, and are with us wherever we go. Through Christ, our healer and Lord. Amen.

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