



ST. JOHN'S
EPISCOPAL
CHURCH

Beloved St. John's Community:

As you know, there has been concern in our local and global communities about the Coronavirus. Your clergy, staff and wardens have been discussing how our faith community will respond. We want to be prepared without creating unnecessary worry and anxiety. As people of faith we know that God is always with us, and that a calm, prayerful, and listening presence in our neighborhoods, workplaces, and the places we volunteer is important. We also want to engage in wise preventative measures. During earlier pandemics in U.S. and world history, Christians' prayers and faithful witness, including caring for the sick and dying, were a powerful testimony to their God's profound love for all people.

While there is much we don't know, what we do know is that we can reduce the spread of COVID-19 as well as other illnesses like the flu if we take these steps that we are asking each of you to follow:

- Stay home if you are not feeling well.
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and warm water, and especially after coughing and sneezing. All clergy and other ministers of worship will wash their hands with soap and water right before the service.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when sneezing or coughing and then promptly dispose of that tissue in the trash. Please do not leave it on a pew.
- Use a namaste-style greeting or waving at the Peace instead of shaking hands.
- When receiving wine, drink from the cup only. Please do not dip bread into the cup (intinction).

In addition, we wanted you to know that all people who serve communion will use hand sanitizer before distributing it, and that staff and church members will regularly disinfect door handles and other common surfaces.

We know that you may be concerned about the common cup used for communion. You have two options. You may want to receive communion in "one kind" (bread only). If you would like to continue taking wine from the common cup, please do not intinct (dip the bread in the wine). Research shows that drinking from a cup which is properly purified has a lower risk than intinction. Our hands carry more germs than our mouths do.

We will be monitoring local health news closely and will inform you if further measures are needed. Meanwhile, we offer prayers for all impacted by this illness.

Faithfully,

Lisa

Rector, St. John's Episcopal Church