

Dear Church family,

The Covid-19 (coronavirus) has created both a sense of panic and fear and at the same time a sense that the media has made this the 21st century “Black Plague”. I think the truth lies somewhere in between; there is no need to panic or be afraid, but we must be vigilant and take the necessary precautions.

So, what can we do? The Center For Disease Control has made some simple suggestions:

- Avoid close contact with those who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze with a tissue and then dispose of the tissue.
- Clean and disinfect frequently.
- Wash your hands often with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds.

We are a warm and friendly congregation. However, until this crisis is over, please replace your hugs and handshakes with smiles, waves and kind and encouraging words. If you are fearful of coming to Bible Study and worship or just want to practice “social distancing” as some have advised that is understandable. Some have wondered if this crisis will affect offerings and the simple answer is “it might”. Under the circumstances, this might be a good time to consider giving online. If you have questions about how to accomplish this, please call the church office.

As I write this, the Commonwealth of Virginia’s government has not made a statement asking that public gatherings be cancelled but it may be coming. Yesterday (Thursday), the state government of Kentucky asked that all public gatherings be cancelled. At least 2 VA Baptist churches have asked that worship be done online and not in person. In the event that Virginia makes the same request some form of worship (including the message) will be available on the church website www.sandstonbaptist.org .

This situation is fluid and may change as soon as I hit “send” and so we may need to be flexible. It is important to remember that your church staff are not medical professionals and will not give advice that we are qualified to give. The BGAV has provided a “Special Edition” of ADVANCE NOTICE a Response to COVID-19. A link will be provided for you. Let’s remember to pray for those that have been affected and may be affected by this virus and those who are seeking vaccines and treatments.

Prayerfully,

Karl

<https://bgav.org/covid-19-response/>