



Macedonia Baptist Church

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Rev. Leonard D. Comithier Jr., Pastor

Macedonia and COVID-19

(Update #2 – March 19, 2020)

As we continue to face ongoing changes in our social fabric and recommendations for trying to slow the transmission of COVID-19, Macedonia's Coronavirus Workgroup continues to stay abreast of the most recent developments and recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and our local health departments. You notice we have further focused the title of these updates to reflect the specific virus at the root of this pandemic. The Coronavirus is a group of viruses that have been around quite a while, but COVID-19 is a new strain and that's why it's referred to as "novel coronavirus." Because it is new, the health system is working to understand it and provide us with the most current information and guidance. Hence, the recommendations from the CDC, NYSDOH and local health departments are not only changing daily, but sometimes even hourly.

During the past week, Macedonia has moved from preparing the church and its members for the possibility of being directly impacted by COVID-19 to ensuring we have processes and systems in place to support members. In addition to what the Workgroup has already done, we are expanding our focus to provide more detailed information regarding symptoms and what to do if you or your loved one(s) are affected. Of course, the standard safety procedures that we have encouraged all to use remain in effect:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Sneeze or cough into a tissue if available or the crook of your elbow, not your hands. Toss any used tissue. Wash immediately after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose.
- Avoid touching your face, especially your mouth, nose and eyes, with unwashed hands.
- Frequently disinfect surfaces touched including keyboards, desktops, cell phones, elevator buttons, doorknobs, handrails and remote controls.
- Use hand sanitizer that is, at least, 60% alcohol.
- Avoid close contact with anyone who has flu-like symptoms.
- Stay home if you have flu-like-symptoms.

In addition, we must emphasize the most recent recommendations of the CDC*:

- All U.S. gatherings of 10+ people should be cancelled or held virtually.
- If you must go out, practice "social distancing" which means not being within 6 feet of another person.

In keeping with CDC recommendations, Macedonia will have livestreamed worship only at 11:00 a.m. on Sundays until further notice, beginning this Sunday, March 22, 2020. The church will not be open. The closing of the church also applies to Sunday School, Bible Study, New Member Classes, and all internal and external meetings. Pastor and the Workgroup will update communications accordingly with any changes.

What to Look For (Symptoms) and What To Do

As much as we are taking steps to halt the transmission of COVID-19, it would be unrealistic to think no one will be directly affected. Therefore, it is important that everyone is aware of what symptoms* to look for if you *know* you have been exposed to the virus or if you are notified that you were in an area with an affected person. The symptoms may resemble those of a mild to severe respiratory illness:

- Coughing
- Fever
- Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing

If you think you have been exposed directly (by being within 6 feet of someone with a **laboratory-confirmed** case or someone displaying active symptoms of COVID-19) or indirectly (by being in the same space, but more than 6 feet away from, someone with a **laboratory-confirmed** case or someone displaying active symptoms of COVID-19) and develop any of the symptoms above, contact your doctor or healthcare provider BY PHONE. Your symptoms need to be evaluated. You may be directed to go to the emergency room. Do not go to the doctor's, or healthcare provider's, office without calling as they too are trying to reduce the transmission of the virus.

If you *know* you have been exposed to COVID-19 or you *think* you have been in the same space with someone affected by COVID-19 and you have no symptoms, contact your doctor or healthcare provider BY PHONE about possible testing. Even though you have no symptoms, you can still carry and transmit the virus.

[NOTE: Nebulizers spread COVID-19. Speak to your doctor or healthcare provider about their use.]

What If You Actually Contract COVID-19

The severity of the impact of COVID-19 depends on your health status. For older adults and those with serious chronic medical conditions, COVID-19 may have a more severe effect. For most people, COVID-19 will feel like a respiratory bug or an intense case of the flu. You might want to have a fever reducer such as acetaminophen on hand. Your doctor or healthcare provider may want to add a cough suppressant.

If you have a humidifier, use it or just take a long, hot shower.

If you have asthma, be sure you have enough inhalers available.

Lastly, hydrate with clear fluids, such as water and juice, and get plenty of rest.

Contact your doctor or healthcare provider if you have a fever that does not respond to over-the-counter medication and are having trouble breathing. *Generally speaking*, most healthcare professionals define a fever as, at least, 100.4 degrees.

Macedonia Is Here To Help

Given that COVID-19 could strike anyone at any time, Macedonia is here to provide support to its members and loved ones. Should you or your family find itself in need of spiritual support during this time of confinement for many of us, contact Deacon Juana Catala-Huguley at (518) 229-6930. One of our deacons will respond to you. The deacons are also establishing **Wednesday Prayer**

Sessions that will meet via conference call on Wednesdays at **6:30 a.m., 12:00 Noon and 6:00 p.m. starting Wednesday, March 25th. The dial-in number is (515) 604-9099, and the access code is 608-127-884**

If you have questions regarding COVID-19, contact the CDC at [www/cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus) or the New York State Department of Health Coronavirus Hotline at (888) 364-3065 or go to www.ny.gov/coronavirus.

Keeping Up Church Operations and Programs

Even though we are not holding services or programs at the church during this time, the church faces normal operating expenses, such as heat, electricity, and building maintenance. We are also committed to making sure our members, especially seniors and those most vulnerable, are checked on regularly. In addition, we have a commitment to continue providing food to children through our Backpack Program. In fact, *the need for food is even greater with so many schools being closed.*

To provide options for us to contribute our tithes and offering, we have ensured that our online giving option through the church website is working without issue. To use the online option, follow these steps:

- Go to the website at: www.macedoniaofalbany.org
- Click “Donate.” On the following window, scroll down to select either:
 - “Online Giving” which allows you to give using a debit or credit card or through your bank, or
 - “Donate” which allows you to give using PayPal, debit or credit card.
- If you choose the “Online Giving” option, you will have the opportunity to select whether you want to create an account or give as a guest.
- For either option you choose, after you submit you will see a screen indicating your donation was received and receive an email acknowledging your donation.

For those who prefer to contribute by check, you may send your tithes and offerings through the mail. Be sure to address your envelope to:

**Macedonia Baptist Church 26
Wilson Ave.
Albany, NY 12205**

If you have an offering envelope at home, you will notice that it is pre-addressed. You can simply enclose your check; seal the envelope; add a stamp; and place it in the mail.

We will continue to be alert to our everchanging landscape, but we will also continue to hold God’s unchanging hand for we are a people of faith. And remember “...perfect love casteth out fear...” (1 John 4:18)

*References:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/index.html>
- https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019ncov/prepare/prevention.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronav%2F2019-ncov%2Fabout%2Fprevention.html

- <https://www.cdc.gov/COVID2019-symptoms>

DISCLAIMER

The information contained in the E-news and otherwise disseminated by Macedonia Baptist Church and its authorized agents concerning COVID-19 (Coronavirus) are for informational purposes only. The content is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified healthcare provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition or precautions appropriate for your specific circumstances. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided as of the date of the content issued, however, due to the unprecedented nature of the current public health emergency and rapidly changing guidance, please consult with your physician or qualified healthcare provider and/or the reputable resources listed for the latest changes.

Doing Greater Works to the Glory of God

Inspired by John 14:12