



Saint Peter Missionary Baptist Church

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March 21, 2020

St. Peter Missionary Baptist Church Family!

There are many concerns about coronavirus (COVID-19) situation as it continues to evolve around the world and in our community. Our governmental officials are asking the we adhere to several guidelines to help mitigate the risk of spreading the coronavirus. Please know, we at St. Peter MBC are taking every precaution to ensure your safety and provide you with peace of mind when you worship with us.

As it has always been, our custodial staff will disinfect our facility to include door handles, tables, commodes, sinks, and any surface that could become contaminated with the coronavirus. We are also implementing an open-door policy – which simply means, we will keep all of our internal doors open. This prevent you from having to touch doorknobs or handles. We will also take extra precautions in cleaning our child care facilities. The safety and security of our St Peter Family and guests remains our highest priority. We take great pride in maintaining the highest standards of cleanliness and hygiene.

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Mitigation Advice:

Recommendation for Churches:

- Implement social distancing. Reduce activities (e.g., religious services, group congregation), especially for organizations with individuals at risk of severe illness. Consider offering video/audio of events.
- Determine methods to continue providing support services to individuals at risk of severe disease (services, meals, checking in) while limiting group settings and exposures.
- Cancel large gatherings (e.g., 250 people) or move to smaller groupings.
- Professional and college sporting events as well as concerts or any large crowd entertainment events should be cancelled or broadcast without audience participation.

- For organizations that serve high-risk communities, cancel gatherings of more than 10 people and stagger access to support services.
- Move faith-based and community gatherings of any size to video-accessible venues or postpone/cancel.

How Spread of Virus:

The virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading from person-to-person. Someone who is actively sick with COVID-19 can spread the illness to others. That is why CDC recommends that these patients be isolated either in the hospital or at home (depending on how sick they are) until they are better and no longer pose a risk of infecting others.

Weather Impact:

It is not yet known whether weather and temperature impact the spread of COVID-19. Some other viruses, like the common cold and flu, spread more during cold weather months but that does not mean it is impossible to become sick with these viruses during other months. At this time, it is not known whether the spread of COVID-19 will decrease when weather becomes warmer. There is much more to learn about the transmissibility, severity, and other features associated with COVID-19 and investigations are ongoing.

St. Peter's Actions:

In response to the coronavirus, we have taken additional measures to align ourselves with the advice of the global and local public health authorities, specifically with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to make our protocols even more rigorous:

- We will suspend our weekly fellowship (e.g. personal greeting and hugging).
- As before, we have hand sanitizer available to you in each window around the sanctuary.
- We will increase the frequency of cleaning our public areas (including lobbies, door handles, restrooms, surfaces, etc.) and have continued the use of hospital-grade disinfectant.
- We will continue to adjust food and beverage service in accordance with food safety recommendations.

With us being people of faith, trusting The Lord, the most important activity we can use is **prayer and trusting God's word**. However, we will not be reckless in our response to the seriousness of this virus.

Psalm 91:1-3

He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High
Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

I will say of the Lord, “*He is my refuge and my fortress;
My God, in Him I will trust.*”

Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler
And from the perilous pestilence.

St. Peter’s Helping Hand:

Now is the time for us to BE the church. We are hearing more about gathering together and very little about our service to others during these difficult times. In other words, we are so concerned about ourselves, that we forget about those that are most vulnerable to this virus. Our elders are having to go out and get their food and make a way for themselves.

Where necessary, St. Peter will put together food baskets, water, and basic necessities to give to our vulnerable church family and community. We will be the hand of God in our service to others; we will be the Church!

Matthew 5:13-16 (NKJV)

¹³ “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. ¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all *who are* in the house. ¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Your Actions:

If you have symptoms of the coronavirus (e.g. cough, fever, etc.), please stay at home, notify the officials and self-quarantine. Also, even if you are feeling fine without any symptoms, do not feel pressured to come to church. Self-quarantine if you feel it best for you and your family.

What can you do to best prepare yourself and family during this crisis?

1. Practice and insist that you not shake-hands or hug; only use fist or elbow bumps instead.
2. Wash your hands often
3. Use safe distancing – 6 feet or more from everyone
4. You should understand the COVID-19 symptoms
5. Know where to get help

6. Endure you have a 14 to 30-day supply of your medication, in the event you become ill
7. Make sure you have ample food supply that you can easily prepare
8. Review CDC's Mitigation Strategies for COVID-19

St Peter Family, at the end of the day, we are people of faith. We trust God's word and believe that these are simply fulfilment of the scriptures and are signs of the times. Let's not find ourselves operating in fear, but standing in **faith**. We can trust God at His word. He is with us and will never leave or forsake us.

Standing on His Promises!

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Baker', with a large, sweeping initial 'J' and a horizontal line extending to the right.

Jerry J. Baker
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