



With the input of our pastoral staff, the SMC Church Board Executive Committee has decided the following with regards to SMC's community life in light of the COVID-19/coronavirus.

**Facts:** Information from the World Health Organization says that the most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, tiredness, and dry cough. Some patients may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. Some people become infected but don't develop any symptoms and continue to feel well. Most people (about 80%) recover from the disease without needing special treatment. Around 1 out of every 6 people who get COVID-19 become seriously ill and develop difficulty breathing. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems (like high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes) are more likely to develop serious illness. Children do not seem to be at high risk but they can easily pass on the virus to others. The virus is spread by droplets. This means that when a person with the virus coughs or sneezes, the virus in the secretions spreads to other people or surfaces. When people touch those surfaces and then touch their face, it can enter their body and make them sick. This is why handwashing is so important.

As of March 12, 2020, Manitoba Health and Healthy Living issued the following information to the public as strategies for keeping the most people healthy:

1. Minimize prolonged (more than 10 minutes), close (less than two meters/six feet) contact between other individuals in public.
2. Avoid greetings that involve touching such as handshakes.
3. Disinfect frequently used surfaces.
4. Follow public health advice related to self-monitoring and self-isolation if you have travelled or have been exposed to someone ill with the virus.
5. Consider avoiding travel, crowded places and events, especially if you are at higher risk (e.g. seniors and those with underlying medical conditions).

**How will we proceed?** At this time we are choosing to continue our regular Sunday morning worship services as usual. All other SMC meetings and gatherings will proceed unless prior notice is given that they will be cancelled or postponed. We believe it is uniquely important for churches to keep their doors open especially in times of crisis.

We want to affirm and encourage those who have concerns and choose to stay home. Likewise, if you are showing symptoms of illness, we are, in fact, asking you to stay home out of love for the greater community. For those who cannot attend, our services will continue to be available via the SMC website.

The following precautionary measures will be taken at SMC as we continue to gather:

1. We will sing using the overhead screens and familiar songs will be encouraged.
2. We discourage shaking hands and sanitizer will be available.
3. We will sanitize frequently touched surfaces.

SMC Executive Committee and Pastoral Staff