



# *The Midweek*

*Wednesday, March 18, 2020*

I don't even know where to begin. In some ways, life seems so normal. The sun is shining. The drive to church is still long and the traffic still crazy. Laundry needs to get done. My cats continue to be snuggle monsters. And most importantly, God is still God and He is in control.

And yet, life is completely turned upside down. It's too dangerous to gather as a congregation. Except for my husband, I need to stay at least three feet away from everyone. There were three people in Redner's near the whipped cream display of the dairy section on Monday, which was the closest I had been to strangers in weeks and it felt really weird. It was a social distance snafu.

Four weeks ago I would not have thought twice about standing near two other women while we decided if we wanted regular Redi Whip or the extra creamy option. Now it's just scary. But even when life is upside down, God is still God and He is still in control.

While there are still just a small number of coronavirus cases in our area. it's just a matter of time before it gets worse. I don't say that to cause undo fear or panic but it's important to be realistic about the situation. There is no indication on whom will be affected. It's anyone's best guess.

With more questions than answers at this time, there are things we can do as a loving people of Christ to support each other, care for those who are left feeling alone and isolated, and extend the love of our Savior to others who need Him to get through the fear and unknown.

Almost at the very beginning of the Bible in Genesis 2:18 we hear that God never wants us to be alone. "Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." While we know that God was specifically talking about Adam and Eve in this verse, the idea is the same for all of us. Everyone in this time of unknown disease and fear needs a helper fit for him or her to get through the situation.

So we at Avenue are going to work to reach out and support each other. While home visits are not appropriate in this time of social distancing, a phone call, email or text is very doable. But we need your help to determine who needs that type of connection, and who would be willing to help make those outreach efforts.

So here is what we are asking for. First, come up with a list of people you know will need and/or want a phone call or note over the next few weeks. I have full faith in the Avenue grapevine to determine who that will be.

These are uncertain times so things are changing in interesting ways and not all are bad. For example, one couple that I reached out to is leaving to stay with their children and grandchildren in order to be babysitters while the kids are out of school and the parents are trying to telecommute. Another gentleman said it would be fine to try and call but his plan is to spend all daylight hours in the fresh and virus-free air as he takes this time to double the size of his garden and would not be answering his phone. All great options!

But, we also know that there are people who can't and won't be able to go anywhere and will be homebound for way too long. We need to know who is in that category. So get your lists going. And if you personally are in that situation, we want to hear from you too! Don't wait for someone to add you to their list. Actually hearing from someone directly is much better for us as we don't want to pry into someone's personal situation or assume circumstances we know nothing about.

On the other side of the equation, if you are willing to spend some time each day to reach out to others for a chat or to write some notes, we want to know who you are also. Once we get an idea of who will do what and who needs what, we will get it organized and executed.

So who is this mysterious "we" running point on this project? That would be Judy Struck, Cindy Horsman and myself. For the initial purpose of pulling the lists together, we are asking that you send everything to me via email at [wendybutterworth@avenueumc.com](mailto:wendybutterworth@avenueumc.com). If you don't have access to email, you can call me on my cell at 302-743-4047.

This is just the start of various plans we have going forward, especially since the CDC is suggesting that all group gatherings over 50 people be curtailed until early May. That means we will not be able to gather for Easter in person or continue the small group studies in the Grier Room. We are looking at ways to do things online or through a phone telecon or whatever we can think of to keep us connected via electronic methods. In the next few weeks, Cindy will be sending out some things to do from a mental health perspective to keep us moving forward. (I know my cabinets and pantry has never been so organized.)

One of the things we had thought of doing, and had discussed with various people, was to help provide lunches for school kids who, without public assistance, would not have food. It turns out that the WestSide and My Sister's Fault beat us to it. Therefore, we will be supporting both of those restaurants with financial support as they need it. In addition, West Side is offering "drive by dining" for seniors at the cost of \$6 per meal. But keep your eye on the Midweek as we continue to look for other ways to support our neighbors. If you have any ideas that you are willing to lead, please let me know.

And as always, we will be sharing our prayer list with those on our prayer team. If you would like to be added to the prayer team, please let me know and I will make sure to do that also.

Deep breath. God is still God and always will be. And He is always in control. So let go and give this entire situation to God and have faith that the Lord will make good come of it, in His time and according to His will. I pray the peace that surpasses all understanding surround you and your family and that this time of reset and change becomes a time of renewal and growth for us all. And ALWAYS to God give the glory.

With love always,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pastor Wendy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Pastor" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Wendy".



*"A dynamic faith Community growing in hope, love and service"*

Dear Avenue Family,

March 16, 2020

Earlier this week, Avenue was notified that a parent of an Avenue Preschool student recently tested positive for the Coronavirus (COVID-19). There has been great communication between the Preschool, the Milford School District, Delaware Public Health and Avenue Church in monitoring the situation. At this time, only the parent has tested positive for the virus.

The Health and well-being of our church, young people, and staff is our highest priority. Avenue Preschool and Avenue Trustees have been working on a plan to deep clean and disinfect the Education Wing of the building. We continue to monitor the situation and will be listening to State and Federal Health officials on best practices to limit the spread of the virus.

We will not meet for worship on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, but will offer an abridged online worship experience through our Facebook page. If you have not "liked" our page, this would be a good time to do so in order to stay up-to-date with the latest information. We have also instructed our **small group gatherings not to meet** over the next two weeks. This includes Bible Studies, UMW Circles, and Fusion.

The Pastoral Team will provide pastoral care only for those in an emergency for the foreseeable future. We will limit our hospital visits and home visits to prevent taking something in or carrying something out from those places. As always you can always reach us through phone calls and emails. We will need your help to stay in touch with those who are sick and in need. Please call or email if you or someone you know needs an email or phone call from the pastoral team.

Some people have asked about giving during this time. Your giving is an act of worship and faith enables the ministry of Avenue Church to continue uninterrupted. You can give by either sending your gift to the church office or by giving online. You can give online by clicking the red "Give" button on the home page of our website or by texting "avenueumc" to 77977 and following the prompts.

We have a great opportunity, as the church, to show the love of God in a broken world. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, the explosive growth of the church was connected to the ways Christians cared for their pagan neighbors who were dying from Ebola. John Wesley, and the early Methodist, were known to care for the sick in London in sacrificial ways. As Christians, while we should take every precaution, we have the opportunity to love and serve our neighbors by sharing masks, soap, food, and toilet paper rather than to live in fear.

*As we live in these uncertain times, let us live in the faith that God is on our side; let us live with the hope that there are better days ahead; let us live out love by sharing the love of Jesus, especially during difficult times. Even though we have canceled worship and small group gatherings, faith, hope, and love cannot be canceled!*

As the progression of the disease continues, we will continue monitoring the situation. Should we need to readjust plans again after March 22<sup>nd</sup>, we will be in communication with the congregation.

Grace and Peace,

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## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**WORSHIP ON SUNDAY:** Join us on **Sunday at 10:00 a.m.** on Facebook Live as we gather to worship and pray together. If you cannot watch at 10:00 a.m., the video will remain up on our Facebook page. Join us at [www.facebook.com/avenueumc](http://www.facebook.com/avenueumc)

You can also share the live stream on your page, inviting others to worship with us.

**GIVING AT AVENUE:** While we are unable to gather for worship the ministries of the church continue, we can still practice our disciplines of giving as acts of faith and worship. You can

1. Send your offerings through the mail (20 N. Church St. Milford, DE 19963)
2. Click on the "Give" button on our website ([www.avenueumc.com](http://www.avenueumc.com))
3. Text "avenueumc" to 77977 and click on the link you'll receive in your text messages.

**PASTORAL CARE:** If you know someone who is in need of prayer or a phone call, please call the church office at 422-8111 or contact one of the pastors directly. We are doing limited face-to-face pastoral care visits during this time, but want to make contact any way we can.

**FOOD FOR THOSE IN NEED:** This time of change creates a lot of food anxiety for those families and individuals who do not have enough. School closings highlight the reality that school is more than reading, writing, and arithmetic- it is a place where our children can be fed. There are several resources available for those who are hungry:

**FOOD FOR CHILDREN @ BANNEKER, MISPILLION, AND MORRIS SCHOOLS** 11:00 am-12:30 pm Monday-Friday. Drive through and every child in the car will be given lunch and a breakfast item for the next day.

**MY SISTER'S FAULT:** Is offering no-cost meals to kids Wednesday-Friday from 9:00 am until 4:00 pm. One meal per kid in the car that pulls up in front of the bakery. They have a limit of 200 meals a day.

**WESTSIDE RESTAURANT:** No cost meals from their porch from 11:00 am until 1:00 pm for school-aged children. There is a 200 meal limit. Seniors or adults are \$6.00/meal and it is cash only.

**SOCIAL SERVICES:** Receive a Food Voucher for the Food Pantry.

**SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES DURING CORONA OUTBREAK:** There are several opportunities to share the light of Christ during the next several weeks of our new reality.

- Volunteer to help prepare meals at Banneker Elementary School. Contact the church office at 422-8111.
- Donate Money to the schools or two one of the restaurants who are providing meals. They providing out of their bottom line and this is an opportunity to rally around them.
- Check-in on your neighbors who may be lonely, shut-in, or at-risk. Be safe about it, but don't give up on the community.
- Do a grocery run for someone who may have trouble getting out.



# Share Facts About COVID-19

Know the facts about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and help stop the spread of rumors.

**FACT  
1**

**Diseases can make anyone sick regardless of their race or ethnicity.**

People of Asian descent, including Chinese Americans, are not more likely to get COVID-19 than any other American. Help stop fear by letting people know that being of Asian descent does not increase the chance of getting or spreading COVID-19.

**FACT  
2**

**The risk of getting COVID-19 in the U.S. is currently low.**

Some people who live in or have recently traveled to places where many people have gotten sick with COVID-19 may be monitored by health officials to protect their health and the health of other people in the community.

**FACT  
3**

**Someone who has completed quarantine or has been released from isolation does not pose a risk of infection to other people.**

For up-to-date information, visit CDC's coronavirus disease 2019 web page.

**FACT  
4**

**You can help stop COVID-19 by knowing the signs and symptoms:**

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Seek medical advice if you

- Develop symptoms

AND

- Have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19.

**FACT  
5**

**There are simple things you can do to help keep yourself and others healthy.**

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.



For more information: [www.cdc.gov/COVID19](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19)





# What you need to know about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

## What is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China.

## Can people in the U.S. get COVID-19?

Yes. COVID-19 is spreading from person to person in parts of the United States. Risk of infection with COVID-19 is higher for people who are close contacts of someone known to have COVID-19, for example healthcare workers, or household members. Other people at higher risk for infection are those who live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19. Learn more about places with ongoing spread at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html#geographic>.

## Have there been cases of COVID-19 in the U.S.?

Yes. The first case of COVID-19 in the United States was reported on January 21, 2020. The current count of cases of COVID-19 in the United States is available on CDC's webpage at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>.

## How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source, but is now spreading from person to person. The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It also may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. Learn what is known about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>.

## What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath

## What are severe complications from this virus?

Some patients have pneumonia in both lungs, multi-organ failure and in some cases death.

## How can I help protect myself?

People can help protect themselves from respiratory illness with everyday preventive actions.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

## If you are sick, to keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

## What should I do if I recently traveled from an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19?

If you have traveled from an affected area, there may be restrictions on your movements for up to 2 weeks. If you develop symptoms during that period (fever, cough, trouble breathing), seek medical advice. Call the office of your health care provider before you go, and tell them about your travel and your symptoms. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness. While sick, avoid contact with people, don't go out and delay any travel to reduce the possibility of spreading illness to others.

## Is there a vaccine?

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to take everyday preventive actions, like avoiding close contact with people who are sick and washing your hands often.

## Is there a treatment?

There is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.



For more information: [www.cdc.gov/COVID19](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19)



# What to do if you are sick with coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

**If you are sick with COVID-19 or suspect you are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, follow the steps below to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home and community.**

## Stay home except to get medical care

You should restrict activities outside your home, except for getting medical care. Do not go to work, school, or public areas. Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.

## Separate yourself from other people and animals in your home

**People:** As much as possible, you should stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. Also, you should use a separate bathroom, if available.

**Animals:** Do not handle pets or other animals while sick. See [COVID-19 and Animals](#) for more information.

## Call ahead before visiting your doctor

If you have a medical appointment, call the healthcare provider and tell them that you have or may have COVID-19. This will help the healthcare provider's office take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed.

## Wear a facemask

You should wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) or pets and before you enter a healthcare provider's office. If you are not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then people who live with you should not stay in the same room with you, or they should wear a facemask if they enter your room.

## Cover your coughs and sneezes

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw used tissues in a lined trash can; immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.

## Avoid sharing personal household items

You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home. After using these items, they should be washed thoroughly with soap and water.

## Clean your hands often

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

## Clean all "high-touch" surfaces every day

High touch surfaces include counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables. Also, clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them. Use a household cleaning spray or wipe, according to the label instructions. Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.

## Monitor your symptoms

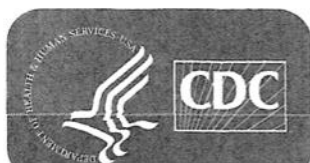
Seek prompt medical attention if your illness is worsening (e.g., difficulty breathing). **Before** seeking care, call your healthcare provider and tell them that you have, or are being evaluated for, COVID-19. Put on a facemask before you enter the facility. These steps will help the healthcare provider's office to keep other people in the office or waiting room from getting infected or exposed.

Ask your healthcare provider to call the local or state health department. Persons who are placed under active monitoring or facilitated self-monitoring should follow instructions provided by their local health department or occupational health professionals, as appropriate.

If you have a medical emergency and need to call 911, notify the dispatch personnel that you have, or are being evaluated for COVID-19. If possible, put on a facemask before emergency medical services arrive.

## Discontinuing home isolation

Patients with confirmed COVID-19 should remain under home isolation precautions until the risk of secondary transmission to others is thought to be low. The decision to discontinue home isolation precautions should be made on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments.



For more information: [www.cdc.gov/COVID19](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19)