

Dear Seattle First Baptist Church family,

acknowledgment/
assurance On Saturday morning, Washington State announced that the first US fatality from the coronavirus occurred in Kirkland. Your pastors and staff want to reassure you that we are following the emerging situation closely and working to protect our community. We are also considering how we can continue to be church together as the coronavirus situation changes.

As with any flu season, each of us has a role in protecting ourselves and one another with careful hygiene practices. These practices include:

- Wash your hands frequently using soap. You should wash for at least 20 seconds (as long as it takes to sing through “Happy Birthday” twice). Especially wash after using the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Stay at home when you are sick. This protects you and others.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces such as cell phones, car keys, door handles and computers.
- Facemasks should be used by people who are demonstrating symptoms, or who are in close proximity with sick people (such as healthcare workers). Facemasks are not proved to protect people who are well from COVID-19.

logistics -
adjustments As we gather for worship tomorrow and in coming weeks, we will be adjusting our common worship practices like the welcome time and greeting the pastors after the service by advising people to limit person-to-person contact. There are ways to greet each other without touching hands or hugging, and we encourage you to practice a courteous bow or share a peace sign with each other instead of handshakes. We know that we can continue to show the love and hospitality of this community while keeping ourselves and others safe.

logistics -
warn about bias Our community is dedicated to working for justice for all people, and as such, we remind you that epidemics can cause community networks to fray. The Wisconsin Council of Churches advises, “At this time, there are reported increases in bias against people of Asian descent, including (but not limited to) Chinese Americans. This racial/ethnically coded stigma is hurtful and inaccurate. Help interrupt racism and fear when you see and hear it. People of Asian descent aren’t any more likely to get the coronavirus than any other American. Similarly, those who have traveled, have been ill and recovered, or have self-isolated to ensure the health of others and are now out and about may be seen as a threat.” Similarly, economic disparities affect how people can care for themselves and their families. We will keep that in mind as we suggest practices to maintain health and wellbeing.

As you keep yourself informed about developments in the Seattle area and beyond, we suggest these sources for updated information:

resources CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

King County: <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/health/communicable-diseases/disease-control/novel-coronavirus.aspx>

You may also find this video from the CBC informative:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kIL5m5XznNY>

Thank you for joining us in maintaining the health of this community.

(source: https://www.wichurches.org/2020/02/28/flu-season-the-coronavirus-and-the-church/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=flu-season-the-coronavirus-and-the-church&fbclid=IwAR27o6HPPO-tfe8JtZ3cocnrR1BEEB9PQ8eVIUUbV7oHGOKt6veuJyyXhc4)