

## COVID-19 Precautionary Measures for Branson Bible Church

Church Family,

Our desire as leadership at Branson Bible is first of all to reassure you that the Lord is sovereignly in control of situations like these, and that we of all people can be calm and trust in Him:

Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good!

Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!

Oh, fear the Lord, you his saints,

for those who fear him have no lack!

(Psalm 34:8-9 ESV)

And because we are God's people and aim to care for others above ourselves, we must also be wise and considerate in our response to the rapid spread of this Novel Coronavirus and take some precautionary steps. The following are at this time our two levels of response:

*Level One* – Effective Immediately – Cancel plans to take children and visit assisted living homes or hospitals (no Easter presentation in nursing homes). When sick, take extra precaution and stay home from gatherings with others (based on the guidelines below from the CDC). For yourself and for others, follow carefully the wise guidelines for prevention and hygiene (also below). And of course, even if the church meets, don't feel at all pressured that you must attend. In fact, if you are immunocompromised in any way, it would be wise to stay home. We can keep you up to date with access to sermons and other information.

*Level Two* – Cancelling gatherings until further notice. (could be enacted at any time, based upon necessity) Examples are as follows: The state government issues a statement not to meet, or they instruct our local schools to not re-open after spring break and until further notice, or we are made aware of cases in our immediate community. This could come for any number of similar reasons. – If cancellation must continue for more than one week, we'll develop a system for video or audio recording sermons and making them available. – If this Level Two cancellation should be required, we will disseminate information as quickly as possible (via prayer chain, Facebook, and our website).

We are aware that as of right now (Friday morning, 3/13/20) there is a single presumptive case in Greene County (Springfield, MO). We are also aware that local colleges are not returning from spring break until further notice, and this is because colleges have students travelling almost everywhere within the US (even if they try to encourage them not to travel outside the US). They need to be certain for a number of weeks after the break that students are not infected.

Again, all of this means that we desire to take a calm and balanced approach to COVID-19. While we do not want to readily give in to fear, we also genuinely desire to think of the good of others in trying not to be party to spreading a virus that is highly contagious. As of right now we have not yet enacted Level Two above and plan to meet this Sunday (3/15/20) for those who are comfortable with doing so. That could literally change at any time, and if it does, we'll communicate that immediately.

Please know that you can feel free to contact any one of the Elders to talk about this information and your concerns. We are happy explain, give prayer and comfort, and offer guidance. Here are the Pastors' phone numbers:

Jeff: (417) 412-0033

Rich: (417) 334-7784

Here is helpful link for more information from the Greene County Health Department:  
<https://www.springfieldmo.gov/5068/Coronavirus>

Attached are some simple guidelines for Personal Care, When to Stay Home, and At-Risk Groups.

### **Personal Hygiene and Self-Care Tips**

COVID-19 is a specialized strain of coronavirus, a family of viruses that includes the common cold. As during any active cold and flu season, there are some basic hygiene and preventive measures you can take in your daily routine. The CDC recommends the following basic steps:

- Keeping immunizations up to date, including getting an annual flu shot.
- Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Covering coughs and sneezes with tissues, then throwing tissues in the trash.
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces with regular household cleaning sprays or wipes.
- Staying home when you are sick.

### **When to Stay Home (and Consider Seeking Medical Attention)**

- Fever of 100.4
- Shortness of breath
- Lower respiratory symptoms

### **Who is at higher risk of illness?**

- Older adults (60+ years old)
- People who have serious chronic conditions like heart disease, diabetes, or lung disease
- People who have compromised immune systems, like cancer patients

### **Preparation for at-risk groups:**

- **Stay home.** Take extra measures to keep distance between yourself and other people.
  - Avoid unnecessary travel
  - Stay in touch with friends and family by phone or email
  - Consider alternative ways of getting food and supplies to your house, such as pick-up services, delivery services, or having supplies brought to your house by friends or family
- **Have a plan if you get sick.**
  - Talk to your doctor for more information about monitoring your personal health for symptoms suggestive of COVID-19
  - Determine who can provide you with care and bring supplies if needed

- **Have supplies on hand.** If COVID-19 reaches our community, you may need to stay home for a prolonged period of time. Prepare for this possibility by making sure you have things you will need, such as:
  - Extra prescription medications
  - Over-the-counter medications and other medical supplies (such as tissues) to treat fever and other symptoms
  - Other household items and groceries
- **Take everyday precautions.**
  - Wash your hands and clean surfaces in your home often
  - Avoid touching your face, eyes, nose, or mouth
  - Avoid touching surfaces in public places: use a tissue or sleeve to cover your hand or finger if you must touch something, such as an elevator button. Wash hands after coming into contact with such surfaces
- **Watch for symptoms and emergency warning signs.**
  - Contact your doctor if you feel like you are developing symptoms such as fever, cough, and shortness of breath
  - If you develop emergency warning signs for COVID-19, get medical attention immediately. In adults, emergency warning signs include:
    - Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
    - Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
    - New confusion or inability to arouse
    - Bluish lips or face