

October 21 COVID-19 Response

As you know, Cass County has been moved to the "orange" risk level due to current COVID-19 numbers.

The Calvary leadership council met last night and would like to update the congregation on plans for fall/winter programming. Here are three immediate steps we're recommending:

1. **Worshipping in a reduced capacity.** The orange level ND Smart guideline recommends limiting group gatherings to a 25% room capacity. With this in mind, please consider worshipping from home (via 10:30 AM livestream), using the foyer as an overflow space, and staggering every third pew (our staff will label the pews again starting this Sunday – please do not sit in those marked with a sign). Extra chairs and seating will be available on the back and side walls as well.

Also, remember our 8:00 AM service (mask required) has plenty of room for more attendees. If you don't mind an early start to the day, please consider attending this service instead of the 9 or 10:30 services to allow for more space in the sanctuary throughout the morning.

2. **Suspension of onsite small groups for two weeks (beginning Oct. 21).** As area health resources are increasingly strained, civic leaders have called individuals to limit group gatherings when possible. While Calvary is fundamentally committed to continuing onsite discipleship ministries for all ages, out of an abundance of caution (and with great respect for frontline workers) we are voluntarily **suspending live small groups until November 1**. This includes children's and youth ministry activities, adult Sunday School, and men's and women's Bible studies. Physically-distanced prayer groups will continue (Tuesdays and Saturdays) as they have through the entire pandemic. Groups that have a Zoom (or online) option are encouraged to continue in this capacity. Talk to your leader for details!
3. **Masks and/or physical distancing.** This week, Mayor Mahoney issued a Fargo mask mandate with this wording:

"Every person shall, within the city of Fargo, wear a face covering over the mouth and nose in all indoor environments where they are exposed to non-household members and where social distancing of six feet or more cannot be assured."

Please take seriously these words from the mayoral mask mandate:

"The City of Fargo appreciates the sacrifice that individuals and businesses are making in order to stem the tide of COVID-19 cases; however, the number of cases and deaths continue to rise. Each one of us . . . must do more."

To respect our government leaders and to care well for our community, let's be extremely cautious by following the recommendations of this mandate! While Mahoney's mask mandate DOES include an exemption for worship, you are always welcome to wear a face covering both in and out of the sanctuary. Though we need each other more than ever, we also need to respect this virus by the way we interact. **Please do not congregate and visit in the foyer or sanctuary unless you are using physical distancing and/or masks.** Thank you!

Want more info or support? Here are a few resources that may be helpful:

COVID-19 Fargo update. Here is (Calvary Parish Nurse) Karen Fleming's recommendation on one helpful informational video (with great question/answer dialogue at the end):

"This is a video with Dr. Paul Carson done in the last week with information specific to Cass County. I hope this information will give you a little more clarity. Dr. Carson is an Infectious Disease doctor who has been director of Infectious Disease at Sanford and is on staff at NDSU and associated with UND School of Medicine. I trust him as good source of information. I also work his wife Dr. Janine Carson who is a radiologist who has worked with First Choice Clinic reading their ultrasounds. Please take time to watch it - the content is excellent and also gives reliable resources for information."

Dr. Carson video link:

<https://www.facebook.com/CityofWestFargo/videos/358645545261488>

Dealing with anxiety or depression? This Focus on the Family resource (recorded in April) offers hope and practical help from psychologist Dr. Gregory Jantz (author of 5 Keys to Dealing with Depression).
<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/episodes/broadcast/dealing-with-anxiety-and-depression-during-the-coronavirus/>

Devote Yourself to Prayer. While we take a two-week programming break, let's invest mightily in prayer! With the election less than two weeks away, what better time to intercede on behalf of our nation? Check out the 40 Days for Life page to get involved, or use this National Day of Prayer guide.

<https://www.40daysforlifend.com/>

https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/nationaldayofprayer/pages/287/attachments/original/1453510052/ELECTION_PRAYER_GUIDE.pdf?1453510052

Finally, as our staff met for prayer and planning this week, here was a goofy "2020 recap" penned by the one and only (technical wizard and faithful Christ follower) Brian Walker:

2020: NATURE STRIKES BACK

In an era of human proclaimed disasters, a virus smaller than the eye can see proved that man only dwells on the Earth . . . we do not rule it. Whether your preferred disaster was politics, global warming, natural disaster, unchecked greed, or just people being terrible to each other, COVID reminds us all that we cannot control mother nature.

Can you survive 2020? Can you survive your kids? Can you survive **yourself**?

James 1: 2-4 – Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

There **IS** victory in Jesus! We love you Calvary,

Pastor Dave and the Calvary Staff