



# WAYNESBORO SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST® CHURCH

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March 18, 20

Dear Waynesboro SDA Church Family,

I pray for your spiritual and physical well-being during this time of testing and trial of the Coronavirus.

After consulting with our Church Board members and the resources put out by the [Potomac Conference](#), our State & Federal Health Departments, the Waynesboro Church is suspending our **in-person** gatherings of 10 or more persons (worship services, prayer meetings, health seminars, etc) for the next two weeks initially. In two weeks we will re-evaluate the need.

During the next two weeks, I ask you to care for yourselves and for others. As one of my colleagues here in Waynesboro recently stated, we must find safe and creative ways to love our neighbors and to do good in this time of crisis.

In this spirit, I invite you to continue our shared ministries in the following ways:

**1. Be wise and stay home and/or out of public spaces except when absolutely necessary or required, especially if you are older and/or have respiratory problems already.** This is a great time to catch up on some prophetic reminders regarding end-time diseases, to spend time with family in your home, or to call loved ones and friends you've been meaning to call. If you develop symptoms of the Coronavirus, call your doctor or the hospital. For those with children in school, follow instructions from your school system. Take precautions recommended by health authorities (refrain from handshakes and embraces and find other creative, non-touching ways to share peace with one another, wash hands with soap and warm water or sanitizer with 60% alcohol solution, use disinfectant wipes on doorknobs and common surfaces in the home, do not share towels with those infected in your home and wash clothes frequently, etc.). For more information: see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

**2. For those who are younger and healthier, our leadership team and I may call on you to serve our members and the community (for example, grocery shopping for our elderly members) in the name of Christ. We need servants of Christ to step up for this great need.** Our leadership team and I will do everything possible to reduce the risk to our own health as well as to the health of others, while still finding creative ways to attend to and serve those in great need. For those who are older or more at risk, you can exercise your care and discipleship by calling folks on the phone, sending them text messages or Facebook messages, encouraging them, **and letting your pastor know about any pressing needs.**

**3. Continue to worship, read your Bible, do your devotions, prayers, and spiritual exercises at home individually and with your family. Here are some ways to view Adventist worship services at home.**

For those homes with internet access, you can participate with live Sabbath morning worship services from various nationally appreciated Adventist church institutions:

Through the Hope channel you can participate in a discussion of the Sabbath School lesson and join the live broadcast of the **Loma Linda University Church** worship service as well as the **Breath Of Life** worship service either online at: <https://www.hopetv.org/watch/hope-channel/> or through the HopeTV App on Roku.

The worship service at Pioneer Memorial Church at Andrews University can be viewed at: <http://www.pmchurch.org/live>

Those of you that don't have internet access, I encourage you, as appropriate, to join with others who are able to livestream worship services (in groups of less than 10 people) for Sabbath morning worship and fellowship.

It is our goal that in time we will also begin to livestream our own worship services. Please make this a matter of prayer. We will keep you posted with our development in this area.

**4. Also, because the church is still called upon to serve in times of crisis, your financial support is still critical.** So please remember to either mail your tithes and offerings to our church or make your financial offering donation on our website, through the [Waynesboro Church Online Giving](#) portal. Every week that we do not gather for worship, our church and our ministries are financially impacted. The mailing address is Waynesboro SDA Church, 1700 Lyndhurst Road, Waynesboro, VA 22980.

**5. Have a healthy respect for the severity of this virus, yet at the same time, do not let a spirit of fear rule your heart.** Trust God in all things, and let the love and peace of Jesus rule your heart. Let these passages serve as sources of encouragement.

*2 Timothy 1:7: "For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline."*

*Colossians 3:15: "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful."*

*1 John 4:18-19: "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. We love because he first loved us."*

I encourage you to be a good neighbor to those living around you that might fall into a time of need. Do all the good you can while still being wise and taking precautions, especially if you are older and/or at high risk.

**6. Pray for our church, community, nation, and world, especially the elderly, the poor, the sick, those most at risk, and those who have lost loved ones.** This is another great opportunity to become a good neighbor.

### **My Brief Message Of Encouragement To You**

Let's take time to focus on our own journeys with God. In 2 Chronicles 7:13 & 14 God remind us...

"If I shut the sky so there is no rain, or if I command the grasshopper to consume the land, or if I send pestilence on my people, and my people, who bear my name, humble themselves, pray and seek my face, and turn from their evil ways, then I will hear from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land."

These current events should serve to remind us to become right with God.

I encourage you to spend some time reflecting, if you haven't done so recently, on the times we are living in. From the inspired words of Ellen White we are reminded...

*"We are living in the time of the end. The fast-fulfilling signs of the times declare that the coming of Christ is near at hand. The days in which we live are solemn and important. The Spirit of God is gradually but surely being withdrawn from the earth. Plagues and judgments are already falling upon the despisers of the grace of God. The calamities by land and sea, the unsettled state of society, the alarms of war, are portentous. They forecast approaching events of the greatest magnitude.*

*The agencies of evil are combining their forces and consolidating. They are strengthening for the last great crisis. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and **the final movements will be rapid ones.**"* –Testimonies To The Church, Vol.9, Page 11

We should take the opportunity, as well, to focus on the care of those in our communities - the elderly and the frail especially.

We might consider that when the Plague returned to Wittenberg Germany in 1527, people were understandably terrified and unsure what a safe and faithful response should be. In answer to this, Martin Luther wrote **"Whether One May Flee From a Deadly Plague."** Luther emphasized the duty to provide care for the neighbor, recommending that pastors, those in public office, doctors and public servants should remain in the city – as did Luther himself. He urged that public hospitals be built to accommodate those with the sickness, but criticized those who took unnecessary risks that put themselves and others in danger of contagion. He encouraged the use of reason and medicine, writing, *"God has created medicines and has provided us with intelligence to guard and take care of the body. ... Use medicine; take potions which can help you; fumigate house, yard, and street; shun persons and places wherever your neighbor does not need your presence."* -Whether One May Flee From a Deadly Plague, 1527

So I would urge each of us to reflect on all of this, in our own season of test and trial." And please let me know your needs and concerns. May the Lord keep you, bless you, inspire you to love, and give you peace.

Be blessed. Stay healthy. Remain faithful and fearless. Live the love of Jesus.



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