



## Zion Baptist Church, Inc.

*“Here To Serve... Our God, Our Christ, Our Fellowman.”*

2200 W. Muhammad Ali Blvd. • Louisville, Kentucky 40212  
(502) 775-6404 • (502) 772-7457 Fax • [www.zionlouisville.com](http://www.zionlouisville.com)  
Reverend Gerald J. Joiner, M.Th., *Pastor*

March 14, 2020

Dear Church Family,

I'm sure every member of Zion is as concerned as I am about the Coronavirus and its effects on our lives, families, friends, and church, so I wanted to write you and share my thoughts regarding what we'll be doing over these next few weeks. First, we'll be adapting with the news. Things have changed drastically over the last 48 hours. We'll continue to pay attention to new developments and directives from the government and respond accordingly. In other words, what I'm writing you at this very moment could change very soon... and that's ok... because change is a part of the excitement of life: we get to respond to new situations all the time...

With the ever-growing concern, world-wide and at home, regarding the coronavirus (or COVID-19), I wanted to inform you of your leadership team's response to this pandemic. First, let us remember the words of the Apostle Paul; (2 Timothy 1:7) For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. Secondly, let us exercise "wisdom." (Proverbs 2:6) For the Lord gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding. Saints, many churches, sport's venues, political campaigns, etc. are suspending events until further notice. Here at Zion, we care deeply about your spiritual edification and your physical safety. After much thought and prayer, I do not believe, at this time, that the Lord is directing us to suspend our Sunday services. We have however, postponed our previously scheduled Friday Fish Fry's, and some other scheduled events, due to our inability to govern or control the numbers of individuals (who may or may not be sick) entering and exiting our facility. Having said that, we are strongly urging everyone to be very cautious about their interactions with one another here at Zion, and to practice good hygiene; (washing your hands, covering your mouth when you cough, using tissue when you cough or sneeze, and using hand sanitizer frequently!

There are three steps we have taken in order to reduce the chance of anyone contracting the coronavirus here at Zion; (1) We have placed hand sanitizers at every entrance into the sanctuary, Craighead & Friendship Fellowship Halls, White Chapel, and also our basement fellowship hall. (2) We are stepping up our efforts to make sure our children's area is sanitized; and are discouraging parents from bringing their children to church, if they are sick. (3) We are also encouraging people during our "Share the Love greeting time" to not shake hands but rather to simply acknowledge one another with a greeting (God bless you), or by bumping elbows, feet, waving your hands, or simply nodding your heads with a smile... These steps will not safeguard us against this virus 100% but will indeed reduce the risk.



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In addition, If you are sixty-years old and older, especially if you have a condition which makes you more susceptible to contracting a virus, you may want to consider the possibility of not attending services, for a couple of weeks... Reports reveal elderly individuals have a higher chance of contracting the virus. Having said that, I definitely plan on being at every service! If you decide to stay home, please join us online at [www.zionlouisville.com](http://www.zionlouisville.com) for the 11:00 am service. While we currently do not offer online giving, we are aggressively researching that option and hope to have it available to you soon. Your continual financial support during this crisis is very much needed and appreciated.

Saints, the last thing any of us would want is to let a virus damage our spiritual growth or distance us from God. This is an important time for all of us to walk closely with the Lord. Don't let panic keep you from praying. Don't let worry keep you from reading God's Word. Don't let the fear of a virus keep you from loving your neighbor. Throughout history, Christianity has grown the most when the times were darkest. Remember this my brothers and sisters... Jesus will never leave us or forsake us. Some of us may suffer a bit during these next few weeks, but we'll never be without the awareness, love, and care of our Savior. Have faith and choose hope. The Lord wants to redeem this crisis and use it for good! Some trust in chariots, others in horses, but we want to continue to trust in the name of the Lord our God. Let's rise above this situation, in faith!

In closing, here are four things we can all do.

1. -Pray – for God to aid scientists in discovering a vaccine quickly. And for the witness of the church; that we will not allow the coronavirus to quarantine our faith...
2. -Act responsibly. Wash your hands, cover your mouth when coughing, etc...
3. -Respect the space of others...
4. -Rest and Trust in God!

Like Esther, who knows, perhaps we were put where we are, for such a time as this? Behold, I will bring it health and healing; I will heal them and reveal to them the abundance of peace and truth. (Jeremiah 33:6)

For His Glory,

*Gerald J. Joiner*

Pastor Gerald J. Joiner, M.Th.