# COVID-19 & SLBC

South Lewiston & Covid-19

We don’t have to tell anyone that Covid-19, the Coronavirus, has changed things around the world, in the US, in Maine, here in the Lewiston-Auburn area, and of course now at SLBC. The Pastoral staff and Leadership Team of SLBC met this week, spending significant meeting time on this subject, covering many necessary spheres of church life. We have also been talking with other leaders at some of our fellow churches in our surrounding communities.

Here are some of the precautionary decisions we are making at this time in order to best care for and protect our SLBC congregation:

**Cleaning and Disinfecting**: Thankfully our present custodian already cleans our church very well, including restroom and water fountain areas. In conversation this week, further steps are already being taken to extend necessary cleaning to areas where touching by hands, and more is involved. However, it was recognized that our custodian should not bear the burden of greater cleaning and disinfecting. We will be seeking to assemble a “Covid-19 Team” who will, among other duties, seek to solicit a team of people who will assist our custodian with the greater need such as wiping down seating, chairs, kitchen, etc.

**Regular Sunday Practices**:

**Greeting**: Many in our recent services, like in times of dealing with the flu or the like, already were choosing to not shake hands, hug, etc. However, we are encouraging everyone to simply curtail for the time being any kind of physical contact in any church situation, including on Sundays.

**Offering**: We will not take the offering by “Passing the plate” for the time being. There will be containers in the Narthex where people will be able to place their tithes & offering. There will be appointed people to take care of these funds to be counted, just as our ushers do now. Of course tithes/offerings can also be sent in by mail to the church at P.O. Box 2311, Lewiston, Maine 04241; or please consider giving online: [www.slbc.church/giving](http://www.slbc.church/giving) or text ‘SLBC’ to 77977.

**Communion**: We have ordered a means of communion “bread and juice cup” that is to be unwrapped by the individual partaking of communion. Those preparing communion will be doing so with gloves on as an additional precaution. We have also considered not having communion for the next month or two; the present situation is very fluid and may change as the Elder Board sees fit.

**Weekly Ministries & Special Events**: For the remainder of the Month of March, we will not be holding weekly Awana or Teen Ministry. The SLBC Leadership Team is also postponing the Car Derby scheduled for next Saturday, March 21st and the Celebrate the Son spring event & egg hunt scheduled for Saturday, March 28th. Other events & ministries, such as LifeTree, and any Men’s or Women’s events will be considered at a later date. Also, AA will not be holding meetings in our building until further notice.

**Sunday Morning Worship**: Most concerning for all of us is determining whether it is even safe to gather for what we all know is our greater joy and most important reason for existing as a church, and that is worship. We are right now (Friday) leaning on having an actual service this Sunday; we will communicate our final decision on Saturday evening at the latest. Our leadership team realizes that we owe due diligence to the welfare and safety to our church congregation, especially our very faithful nucleus of seniors, including those who attend in spite of serious health challenges and conditions.

We encourage strongly to those who are in the more vulnerable category remain at home and join us virtually by online streaming at 10am from your home as we worship together. It is possible that it may be necessary to suspend holding further Sunday Morning Worship for what we trust will be a minimum number of weeks. We will not hesitate to do this if further developments warrant such action.

**Being the Body of Christ no matter what**: What many of us can do going forward is make sure we are taking care of those who may find themselves with some kind of need that we as God’s people and Christ’s Church can meet. Our leadership team will be making regular contact with those who are currently part of SLBC, whether by phone, email/text, or both. We have a food pantry, which is full. We have some within our church body who are willing to get groceries for our treasured senior saints. We want to use whatever resources we have to address needs and concerns that people may have. We will make sure that cell numbers/email addresses are communicated so that everyone can contact leadership if needed.

Finally, we know we can trust the Lord in all of this. “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” May we trust Him together; May we see many, many people throughout our world, our nation, our state, and in our community come to realize that Jesus Christ holds the promise of eternal life and the God, our Lord, is our strong Healer (Exodus 15:26).

In the Good Hands of God,

Pastoral Staff and Elder & Deacon Leadership Team