



FIRST  
UNITARIAN OF PORTLAND  
EST. 1866  
*Living Our Liberal Faith*

March 11, 2020

## **OUR EVOLVING RESPONSE TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS**

The danger from COVID-19 continues to increase. As our primary concern is for the well-being of our community, First Unitarian is increasing the level of our response. At the forefront of our awareness is making sure that the health of those most vulnerable to infection -- those with compromised lungs, compromised immunities, those who are pregnant, and those who are over 60 -- are considered in our decision-making going forward. I want to share the steps we are taking now to maximize safety. We will continue to monitor the virus carefully and will, almost certainly, adjust our responses as developments occur.

1. For the balance of this month (March 15, 22, 29) we are cancelling Learning Community classes. This period includes PPS spring break and will therefore minimize disruption to our classes while also minimizing opportunities for transmission among children and between children and their teachers.
2. We will continue to worship in the sanctuary at the normal 9:15 and 11:15 times. Fuller Hall will continue to be available after the services. There will not, however, be coffee or snack service, nor will there be “tabling” by our Social Justice or other groups.
3. Remember that we have very good live streaming of worship during both the 9:15 and 11:15 hours on Sunday, and many sermons are available to view on line.
4. During this period, we will not take collection during the worship service. Passing the collection baskets down the row is another opportunity to share germs. Safe containers for your offerings will be available in the Narthex both before and after the service.

5. During this period we will also discontinue paper orders of service. These also get touched by many hands. The elements of the service will continue to be projected on the screens. We urge you to refrain from using the hymnals.

6. At least through the end of March, our Social Justice sponsored events, as well as most of our adult program offerings, will be cancelled or postponed. Please check the website or e-news to learn the status of events and rescheduling as we go forward.

7. We will continue to use alternatives to the handshake or hug for greeting.

8. If you test positive for COVID-19, and have been to church while you may have been contagious, contact us immediately. That would trigger other measures for the First Unitarian community.

**We also want to underline our message of last week. If you are at high risk (with compromised immunity, an elder or both) we recommend staying away from services until we have moved through this time of high contagion. Most especially, if you are not feeling well or are symptomatic, please stay home and consult your health care provider.**

We are in the process of imagining ways for First Church to be more supportive of us all during this crisis. Daily spiritual messages are a possibility. Gathering by “zoom” for reflection and prayer may also be possible. We hope to have more opportunities for virtual contact in place by next week.

While the virus is spreading it is wise for us to take these measures to maximize safety for members of our community. Please take care of yourself and of one another.