

University Lutheran Church of Hope COVID 19 Preparedness Plan April 29, 2021

Earlier versions of this document are available in the church office.

“What else is the epidemic but a fire which instead of consuming wood and straw devours life and body? You ought to think this way: ‘...the enemy has sent us poison and toxins. Therefore, I shall ask God mercifully to protect us. Then I shall fumigate, help purify the air, administer medicine, and take it. I shall avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order not to become contaminated, and thus perchance infect and pollute others, and so cause their death as a result of my negligence.’”

-Martin Luther (translation by Rev. Bill Russell), in “Whether One Should Flee from the Plague” (1527), Luther’s Works, vol. 43

“We entered the time of pandemic saying that our desire to love the neighbor would guide us; that we would respect the best thinking of our elected and healthcare officials. This understanding and commitment has not changed.”

-Bp Ann Svennungsen, Minneapolis Area Synod, in a Message About In-Person Worship, May 21, 2020

“As a community of faith we aspire to these goals:

- *Cultivate deep roots in our neighborhood and the University community, by actively making our walls porous....*
- *Embrace all persons throughout their life journey in a community of love, respect, and acceptance....*
- *Fuel authentic worship and deepen spirituality....”*

-University Lutheran Church of Hope, A Vision for the Coming Years, Fall 2018

“This outbreak is exposing the deep structural inequities that make communities pushed to the margins more vulnerable to health crises in good times and in bad...These structural inequities in our health care system do not ignore racial and gender disparities — and neither should our response to this pandemic.”

-Dorianne Mason, Director of Health Equity, National Women’s Law Center, as quoted in the Washington Post, April 7, 2020

“Some congregations are starting to come back together for in-person worship services after a year together online. While Covid persists, the in-person experience needs to be modified pretty dramatically. Folks miss singing together, sharing a meal, and physically embracing one another. But coming back together doesn’t mean we get to do those things anytime soon. How do we prepare the space and the people for a very different experience, one that will continue to be shared with those who gather online? It’s a short-term responsibility and longer-term opportunity. Let’s design and communicate an experience that has a Covid-safe social contract and honors the grief and trauma people carry with them. Let’s practice personal responsibility and mutual accountability so that the most vulnerable, traumatized, hesitant, or unfamiliar person there can say, “When I was ready to show up, this community kept its word and their behavior valued me”.

-Rev. Meta Herrick Carlson, Pastor and Writer,
<https://www.metaherrickcarlson.com/blog/im-going-in>, 2021

“The question here is not whether our faith and faith communities are ‘essential’ to our lives as people of faith; we know they are! The question is whether [opening] our church building doors is ‘essential’ to practicing our faith and advancing the recovery of our communities.”

-Rev. Shari Prestemon, Conference Minister, Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ (an ecumenical partner with the ELCA), May 20, 2020

Policy: University Lutheran Church of Hope (ULCH) abides by state and local guidelines, ordinances, and directives related to the prevention of COVID-19 for all who use our building and grounds.

Purpose: This policy, with the following procedures, provides direction for those making decisions regarding health and safety practices in compliance with the Minnesota Department of Health in the prevention of COVID-19.

Procedural Plans: Procedures reflect best practices based on science, community needs, and ULCH's principle of equity that underpins the ministry of this congregation. Procedures will be evaluated, updated, and communicated on a regular basis to employees, congregants, building users and renters. These procedures and plans have been developed in dialogue with the Vision and Governance Board and the staff, and are based on CDC and MDH guidelines (referenced at the end of this document).

Primary Contact: Pastor Jen Nagel, Lead Pastor, jenn@ulch.org, 612-331-5988

Secondary Contact: Nathan Obrestad, Church Administrator, nathano@ulch.org, 612-331-5988

GENERAL PROCEDURES

This plan has been developed to minimize the risk of infection related to COVID-19 for all in our community. COVID-19 continues to be an evolving pandemic. While some have received vaccinations, others have not yet and variants are still emerging. The principle of prevention and risk minimization guides this plan. This plan provides procedures that reflect how we live in community with COVID-19.

Link here to the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidance for faith-based communities:
<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/communities.html#comm>

- **In the spirit of decreasing our collective risk of infection**, we continue to encourage meeting online, and are making space for outdoor activities/meetings and some smaller indoor gatherings.
 - While we have been worshipping online over the last year, **through the late spring and summer we will lean into varied hybrid worship opportunities.** Some Sundays we will worship outdoors with a Zoom/YouTube option. Other Sundays we will use only Zoom/YouTube. Some Wednesday evenings we will offer smaller in person vespers services in the sanctuary with a Zoom/YouTube option.
 - We recognize that some communities and demographics are affected disproportionately by the effects of COVID-19 and vaccination availability. In creating this procedure we seek to **contribute to racial equity.**

- **The staff and leaders are ready to support you** with creative tools (i.e. Zoom, Facetime, etc) for meeting, fellowship, worship, support and individual conversation and pastoral care.
 - **As groups are discerning where and how to meet**, please contact Pastor Jen Nagel (lead pastor) or Nathan Obrestad (church administrator) for additional consultation.
 - **When the weather is mild, enjoy gathering outdoors** whenever possible, and use outdoor space for socializing.
- **Prevention Strategies**
 - **If you believe you are sick** (COVID-19 related or not), please do not attend events at ULCH or offsite at other venues. Contact a healthcare provider for consultation.
 - **Wearing of masks and 6 foot distancing are part of our procedure.**
[MDH: Protect yourself and others](#)
 - **We strongly encourage vaccination whenever it is possible.** We understand vaccination to be a social responsibility. It is done for the good of the many, and something that we can do to show respect and responsibility for those who cannot be vaccinated or still await vaccination, and those in high-risk categories, given age or underlying conditions. Any risk of exposure that one person takes on is a risk that the whole household is also taking on.
[About COVID-19 Vaccine - Minnesota Dept. of Health \(state.mn.us\)](#)
 - **As you venture out, assess your individual risk** for yourself, your family and the community.
 - **Recommended preventive measures** will continue to be followed by ULCH as described by the Minnesota Department of Health.
- **Wearing Masks**
 - **Masks are to be worn by all** (vaccinated or unvaccinated), except children under two years old and those with health concerns.
 - **Wear masks at all times in indoor spaces.** (MN Executive Order 20-81). Staff working alone in private office spaces do not need to wear masks.
 - **Wear masks in outdoor spaces if 6 foot physical distancing is not possible.** (MN Executive Order 20-81)
 - Bring your own mask if you are able. A supply of disposable masks is available.
 - **Note:** The purpose of the mask is to contain particles that the wearer might disperse to others. The mask does not prevent COVID-19, but may be a means of attempting to contain one's own contaminants (cough, sneeze, etc) from others.
- **Accessing the Building**
 - **At the designated main entrance (north door) of ULCH**, COVID-19 information, signage, the ULCH COVID-19 Preparedness Plan, masks, hand sanitizer, and supplies for wiping surfaces will be available.
 - **A COVID-19 Symptom checklist** will be posted at the entrance to the building as a reminder to staff, congregants, guests, renters, service providers and others

that signing in and entry to the building acknowledges the lack of any of the symptoms on the checklist.

- **Sign in and sign out** at the designated main entrance if you need to enter the building. If requested by the Minnesota Department of Health, this would be provided for contact tracing. Engaging in this practice is how we cooperate with public health in efforts to mitigate COVID-19.
 - **For indoor worship** or other gatherings where people sign up in advance, a sign up sheet is not necessary.
 - **Honor the 6 foot physical distancing** at all times.
 - **Wash hands** regularly with soap and water for 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer (60% alcohol). Reminder signs are posted throughout the building.
 - **Signage will indicate movement in the building.**
 - Designating direction of traffic in hallways – one direction per hallway, where needed.
 - Reminder signage will be posted in usage areas regarding maintaining 6 foot distance.
 - At entrance/exit doorways where space is limited, please follow directional signs.
- **Scheduling**
 - At this time **it's especially important that the church is aware of all associated events, both those gathering offsite and those meeting at church.** (An example of some groups that have been meeting offsite are small groups, book group, small backyard services, and recreational events.)
 - Schedule all events through the church administrator. If your group has not been meeting onsite, also check in with Pastor Jen in advance of scheduling so procedures can be discussed.
 - We strive to be stewards of the space, clean thoroughly, be hospitable and follow prevention practices. Scheduling makes this possible.
- **When gathering offsite, this COVID-19 Preparedness Plan must still be followed.**
 - **This means a little additional organization is needed on the front end**--in this time of COVID-19, think of it as part of deep and mutual hospitality.
 - **Prior to the event, remind participants to review the COVID-19 symptom checklist,** and refrain from attending if they are experiencing any of these symptoms: fever, chills, a new cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, new muscle aches, new headaches, new loss of smell or taste.
 - **Provide to the group the link to this policy.** It can be found here: <http://www.ulch.org/ulch-response-to-covid-19>
 - **All groups that meet offsite should keep a record of participants** (online or on paper) that could be made available if needed.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS FOR GATHERINGS, STAFF, AND ALL USERS

Meeting inside, outside, or offsite

- **Before planning to meet in person, consider:**
 - As leaders and groups, **thoughtfully discern when it is compelling to meet at church** or offsite in person, and when meeting online will work well. Meeting together at church or offsite, one may unknowingly expose many to increased risk of COVID-19.
 - **Consider the advantages and disadvantages** of meeting both in person or online. There may be times when an in person meeting is helpful for physical interaction/presence and other times when gathering online meets the needs of the group.
 - **If meeting in person**, consider ways for those uncomfortable with physically gathering to still participate. Contact the Church Administrator if computer access is needed.
- **When possible, meet outside (patio, courtyard, parking lot, someone's yard, etc.).**
 - Place chairs 6 feet apart.
 - Individuals may bring their own coffee/water in a personal-use container.
 - **Wearing masks is required if 6 foot physical distancing is not maintained.**
 - The restroom by the lounge (and other restrooms) is available.
- **Consider the need for indoor gatherings. If meeting indoors:**
 - Wear masks.
 - Observe a 6 foot distance between people.
 - Open windows/doors when possible to promote air circulation.
 - Heritage Hall has the capacity for a projector to be used. This could allow a hybrid style meeting where some are onsite and distanced, and some are using Zoom.
- **How many people can use various spaces in our facility?** Group gatherings must not exceed 50% of total room occupancy. We have considered the potential of distancing in each of our spaces. In addition to distancing we also consider the availability of air circulation from open windows and doors for fresh air. Spaces that do not allow for the exchange of fresh air should not be used.
 - Library 4 people, open windows.
 - Chapel 3 people, for pastoral care or small gatherings, not for worship.
 - Lounge 6 people, for pastoral care or small gatherings, not social events.
 - Lounge kitchenette 1 person.
 - Youth Room 10 people, when the divider is open and room is at greatest capacity.
 - Heritage Hall 12 people (this room does not have easily opened windows so lacks air flow).
 - Fellowship Hall 20, people seated at tables, open windows (this room has limited air flow).
 - Sanctuary 50 people/12 pods.

- Main kitchen (limited use, please talk with Pastor Jen).
- Courtyard 30 people for seated events (when 6 feet of distance is not possible, masks should be worn), 6 pods (1 - 4 people).
- Patio, maintaining 6 foot distancing for groups and socializing.
- West parking lot, maintaining 6 foot distancing for outdoor worship.
- **These areas are closed to use:** women's restroom in the upper level of the education wing, nursery.
- **These areas are by special agreement:** Fellowship Hall, Heritage Hall, kitchen and the Sanctuary.
- **All gatherings (inside, outside, offsite) should be scheduled** through the church administrator (ulch@ulch.org).
- **This COVID-19 Preparedness plan includes building users, community users, and other renters.**

Worship Life

- **Congregational Worship Services.** Though the governor has allowed for in-person worship at 50% capacity if desired, **at ULCH through the late spring and summer we will lean into varied hybrid worship opportunities.** All of these will be clearly communicated with a calendar and through our media and communications. These options begin on Pentecost, May 23, 2021.
 - Some Sundays we will worship outdoors with a Zoom/YouTube option.
 - Other Sundays we will use only Zoom/YouTube.
 - Twice monthly we will have Wednesday evening vespers services in the sanctuary with Holy Communion. These will also be on Zoom/YouTube.
 - Once monthly we will offer Wednesday evening Prayer Around the Cross services on Zoom/YouTube.
- **ULCH online worship will continue for quite a while.** We know our community includes many who have risk factors. We have a mutual commitment to the health and well being of one another. Recently we have acquired the technology and are gaining the skills to offer engaging and interactive worship opportunities both in-person and online. During the summer we will be practicing these skills with the intention of greater use in the fall.
- **One might wonder why we aren't doing more in the sanctuary this summer.** Our sanctuary has no mechanical air circulation (ie: no air exchange). Additionally, without air conditioning, our sanctuary is often quite warm in the summer months. The use of fans spreads COVID-19. It's for these reasons that we're leaning into outdoor services and offering indoor evening services in the cooler hours.
- **When we worship indoors:**
 - We will often have Zoom and YouTube options.
 - We will wear masks.
 - We will physically distance at 6 feet.
 - We will limit singing in the sanctuary to music leaders.
 - We will maintain 12 foot distance for worship/music leaders with masks worn.
 - We will practice alternate ways for sharing the peace and Holy Communion.

- We will have cues on the pews and elsewhere to assist in maintaining 6 feet of distance.
 - We will sign up in advance to maintain limited numbers.
 - We will train ushers and others in hospitality, offering guidance about seating, entrance, and dismissal.
 - We will honor COVID-19 best practices that suggest that once a person enters the Sanctuary, they are seated and remain in their place until leaving (ie: going across the Sanctuary to greet someone, etc. could potentially spread the COVID-19 virus.
- **When we worship outdoors**
 - We will have Zoom and YouTube options.
 - We will wear masks.
 - We will physically distance at 6 feet.
 - We will sing wearing masks.
 - We will use 12 foot distancing for worship/music leaders who remove their masks.
 - We will practice alternate ways for sharing the peace and Holy Communion.
- **Small Special Services (Funerals/Memorial Services, Weddings, Baptisms)**
 - **The pastors and worship leaders will provide online services, live streaming,** and other ways to make space for celebration, milestones, grief and support
 - **Smaller outdoor options** are safer than indoor. Consider a small ritual in the courtyard, at a park, or at the graveside.
 - **For small indoor services,** those who share a household or are in a pod can be closer than 6 feet distanced. Leaders and others beyond the pod will keep 6 feet of distance.
 - **We limit these smaller indoor services to 50 participants.**
 - **Sadly, hugging and close mingling** will not be possible.
 - **See the guidance** above for indoor and outdoor worship that relates to singing and masks.
 - **Gatherings before and after** the services, including for fellowship, should be held outdoors (consider the courtyard and patio).

Staff

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/safefaitth.pdf> (See pp 1 - 6)

- **Staff will will work with the lead pastor to determine onsite and offsite work plans.**
- **Interactions** (pastoral care, planning, conversations) are encouraged by telephone, Zoom, etc.
- **If meeting in-person,** consider walks, sitting outside (at a distance), window visits, wearing masks, and other less risky options. Once all parties are fully vaccinated, in person meetings can happen with the care described above. The chapel could be used for small group conversations of 1-3 people.

- **The pastoral staff will visit** hospitals when allowed and feasible, and will visit those who are dying whenever possible. Do not hesitate to contact the pastors as needs arise.
- **Vaccinations are strongly encouraged** for all who are able to receive them.

Food and Drink

- **The concern with food preparation** is less about spreading COVID-19 through food (of course, best practices of food preparation must still be followed), but rather the interactions of people while cooking together.
- **Beverage and food preparation in the building will be very limited.** Please consult prior to scheduling food related groups. Consideration is based on MDH guidelines, a desire for limiting time together in the kitchens, and limiting crossover with other building users.
- **Consider outside options:** bread baking or pizza baking, barbeques, bring your own picnics.
- **Fellowship time after services will be held outdoors** in the courtyard, patio, or west parking lot (where outdoor worship will be held). Food and beverages should be prepared in advance, and served maintaining 6 feet of distance.
- **PEASE Academy** (renter) will follow arrangements for pre-packaged lunch meals for staff and students.
- **Lutheran Campus Ministry** (LCM) will follow arrangements for providing pre-packaged snacks and catered meals.

Restrooms

- The number of people in a multi-stall restroom is limited to only one person at a time, with a waiting line (6 feet apart) outside the door.
- The upper level women's restroom is closed during this period.
- The restroom near the lounge is the primary restroom for use during activities on the patio or in the courtyard.
- The restroom in the nursery and the child care space is closed to use during this period.
- Signage will be placed on the restroom doors indicating these guidelines.
- Cleaning occurs according to MDH recommendations.

Community Groups or Individuals

- **At this time we are limiting the use of the building by community groups.**
- **In some situations groups may be able to arrange** use of outside space (patio or courtyard) or limited inside space. We are only able to offer space when staff is onsite or when other arrangements have been made, and when the space isn't already reserved by other groups.
- **Questions about this use** can be directed to the lead pastor or church administrator.
- For groups meeting only outside on days with threat of **inclement weather**, please watch the weather forecast and reschedule or cancel as necessary.

Music on site:

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/musicguide.pdf>

- Outdoors is always preferred over indoors.
- Consider smaller ensembles (2-4 people) to allow distancing.

- Brass, woodwind, and vocal musicians must follow the specific guidance for their area of music (special face coverings worn by musicians, instrument coverings designed for specific instruments).
- For vocal musicians, face masks must be worn indoors.
- Groups should be kept low in number, or consider rehearsing outdoors.
- Consult with our Minister of Worship and Music, Zach Busch for all questions or cleaning procedures.

PEASE Academy

- **PEASE Academy is expected to maintain their COVID-19 preparedness plan** based on the guidance of MDH and PEASE Academy's school district.
- COVID-19 preparedness plans between both entities (ULCH and PEASE Academy) are to be reviewed regularly as needed in relation to local and national conditions.

Lutheran Campus Ministry (LCM)

- **Lutheran Campus Ministry-Twin Cities follows their own procedures for programming.**
- Conversation and coordination will occur regularly between LCM and ULCH regarding building usage.

When someone becomes infected:

- **If someone who has been in the church building becomes ill with COVID-19**, they should notify the lead pastor or church administrator.
- **Church staff would contact the Minnesota Department of Health** to follow their guidance. The sign in sheet from our entrance or other lists of participants would be shared with the Minnesota Department of Health if requested. **Minnesota Department of Health*: 651-201-5414 or 877-676-5414.**
- **Individuals who learn of a possible exposure** should always contact their health care practitioner immediately and follow their guidance in regard to self-isolating, testing, and other steps.
- **If it is determined that someone with a COVID-19 like illness or having tested positive** has been around the church building, the church will contact the local public health authorities and follow their guidance regarding follow-up and notification of individuals. **Minnesota Department of Health*: 651-201-5414 or 877-676-5414.**
- ***Minnesota Department of Health:** Infectious Disease, Epidemiology, Prevention and Control Division

Outdoor Community Space and Unsheltered Neighbors

- **University Lutheran Church of Hope provides space for outdoor public (non-scheduled) use** during daylight hours, particularly on the east side of the building, on and near the patio. Guidelines for responsible gathering are posted near both patio entrances and include (not limited to) the following:
 - **No more than 10 people** may be gathered at one time on the patio
 - When it is not possible to maintain appropriate physical distance, **wear a mask.** University Lutheran Church of Hope has masks for those who do not have one.

- **Church property**, including the building, outdoor art, and the gardens, must be respected and cared for. Failure to do so may result in someone being asked to leave the property.
- Tents and other shelters are not allowed on church property. Open fires are not allowed on church property. Alcohol and/or other mood-altering substances are not allowed on church property.
- **As a public space, University Lutheran Church of Hope is in relationship with unsheltered neighbors in the community who seek rest and shelter on the property.** When engaging with unsheltered neighbors, staff and leadership should follow these guidelines:
 - **Limit engagement to as few key leaders** as possible. Choose 1-2 point people to function as primary contacts for unsheltered neighbors and questions or concerns about public space use by our neighbors.
 - **Always maintain 6 feet of distance** when engaging with unsheltered neighbors.
 - **Always wear a mask** when engaging with unsheltered neighbors.
 - **Provide masks, hand-washing, and hand-sanitizer** to unsheltered neighbors without access to these resources. Additional masks and hand sanitizer can be accessed via Nathan Obrestad in the church office.
 - **Avoid handling our neighbors' belongings.** If a leader must handle an unsheltered neighbor's belongings, they should use disposable gloves and thoroughly wash their hands immediately after.
 - **Distribute the Handbook of the Streets** to those neighbors who need connections to health and housing services.
 - **Provide or post educational resources about COVID-19** and guidelines for limiting exposure.
 - **Ensure access to full vaccination** for all as much as possible.

Facilities Cleaning

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/safefait.pdf> (pp 7-8)

- **Our primary cleaning** is contracted through ABM and includes **protocols** for COVID-19 sanitation.
- Sanitation wipes are available through the building for use as needed.

Building and ventilation protocols

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/safefait.pdf> (see pp. 6 - 7)

<https://www.ashrae.org/technical-resources/communities-of-faith>
www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/indoorair.html).

- In order to decrease the risk of virus spread from person to person, meeting or gathering in outdoor spaces is preferred.
- When considering indoor spaces, we recognize there is less air flow than outdoors. Therefore, in considering use of indoor spaces we will utilize spaces that have windows and/or doors that can be opened to allow for natural exchange of air and the cautious use of fans (only as recommended by MDH), including consideration of the size of the room.
- Because the COVID-19 virus is airborne, the particles aren't able to dissipate as quickly in an indoor setting and this heightens the risk of transmission indoors.

- Use of fans must follow MDH guidelines which do not always follow usual practices. Ushers and staff will be able to provide assistance.
- The ULCH Facilities Committee will review these guidelines and follow up as appropriate regarding ventilation and indoor spaces as we move into fall 2021 and cooler weather when outdoor gatherings are less feasible.

Resources

Minnesota Department of Health - Home Page website:

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/index.html>

Minnesota Department of Health website pages related to COVID-19. Click on Community and Faith-based organizations:

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/communities.html> (4/15/21)

Supporting documents from the Minnesota Department of Health for Community and Faith-based organizations:

Minnesota Department of Health: Guidance for Safe Celebrations and Events (3/15/21)

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/safeevents.pdf>

Minnesota Department of Health, Industry Guidance for Safely Reopening, Faith-Based Communities, Places of Worship, Weddings, and Funerals guidance for safely reopening (4/15/21)

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/safefait.pdf>

Minnesota Department of Health, Guidance for Caring for People in their Homes (4/13/21)

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/visitingathome.pdf>

Minnesota Department of Health, Guidance for Gatherings, Faith-based Communities, Places of Worship, and Ceremonies (4/15/21)

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/safefait.pdf>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Considerations for Community-Based Organizations and Faith-based Organizations (1/21/21)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/index.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Gatherings and Community Events

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/index.html>

City of Minneapolis - Coronavirus updates

<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/coronavirus/index.htm>

Spanish language information from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC):

<https://www.cdc.gov/spanish/>

Varied resources collected and communicated by the Minneapolis Area Synod:

<http://mpls-synod.org/covid-19-resources/>

ELCA statement about returning to in-person worship (May 12, 2020):

<http://mpls-synod.org/files/Returning-to-In-person-Worship.pdf>

A presentation by Dr. Michael Osterholm to pastors:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/play/6Z0ucrr-z43TtDG4QSDA_EqW466f6is2yVL-vALmky9U3BQO1DwY7pDYetnC86r_1FTMzLcRO-xQs63?continueMode=true

A visual way of understanding the spread of the virus:

<https://www.cnn.com/videos/health/2020/05/20/science-experiment-tracks-spread-of-covid-19-pkg-ac360-ka-ye-vpx.cnn>

A thoughtful piece by the UCC Conference Minister, Rev. Shari Prestimon, framed with considerations:

<https://files.constantcontact.com/73d71b6a001/a13cba0f-5326-4151-944a-fcdc0869c5ef.pdf>

A Washington Post article about COVID-19 racial disparities:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/04/07/coronavirus-is-infecting-killing-black-americans-an-alar-mingly-high-rate-post-analysis-shows/?arc404=true>

Additional information from Johns Hopkins about racial disparities:

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/covid19-racial-disparities>