



**OHIO CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)**

**[Dayton, OH, March 12, 2020 – For Immediate Release]**

The Ohio Conference is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for our churches, schools, ministries and fellowship. Meeting daily, conference administrators and ministry directors have monitored and processed the rise and spread of the coronavirus across our nation and into the state of Ohio.

Incorporating the guidance of our Columbia Union leaders, as well as recommendations, orders and directives of federal, state and other denominational authorities, the Ohio Conference has these strong recommendations:

**All churches should suspend potlucks, communion services, and social activities until further notice.**

Following the orders of Ohio Governor Mike DeWine [prohibiting the mass gathering of 100 or more](#) persons, the Ohio Conference has canceled the following events and activities:

- Robotics Challenge (Education)
- Pastors Meeting
- Music and Worship Festival (Education)
- Immersion Young Adult Retreat (Youth)
- Women's One-Day Retreat (Women's Ministries)

We anticipate additional events and meetings being canceled or postponed as this situation continues.

Conference leadership will support the decisions of pastors and church leaders as they develop their own plans of action based on what is occurring within their local communities. Some churches have elected to cancel church services and are encouraging members to worship from home through their live-streamed service.

Everyone is asked to remain home if you are feeling sick. Practice good hygiene, washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Regularly clean and disinfect communal surfaces according to [CDC guidelines for faith-based organizations](#).

While all are encouraged to maintain social distancing, continue to work together and help one another. If you are healthy, reach out to a senior citizen in your community or someone who may have compromised health. Offer to pick up groceries or medicines; help them set up a system to watch one of the many live-streamed church services available. Host a prayer teleconference in place of in-person meetings. Share hope-filled and encouraging scripture either on your social media accounts or through cards in the mail. Work with your church and pastor other ways to be the hands and feet of Jesus.

By following these recommendations and guidelines, the Ohio Conference can do their part to help "flatten the curve" and halt the transmission and exposure of this virus to others.

We invite you to join us in prayer for the countless individuals around the world who are infected, their families, neighbors and colleagues. Pray also for the nurses and doctors assigned to care for the sick and the scientists who are searching for an effective vaccine.

Additional resources, continued updates and recommendations will be released through our e-newsletter (*Faithpoints*), direct emails to pastors and lay leaders, conference social media platforms, and our dedicated web page : <http://www.ohioadventist.org/virus>.

### **About the Ohio Conference and Seventh-day Adventists**

Organized in 1861, the Ohio Conference was among the first Seventh-day Adventist local conferences established. Today it is a network of 100 diverse congregations, 11 schools, one medical college, and 12,000 members.

As one of eight conferences within the Columbia Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, the Ohio Conference is known for its pioneering outreach initiatives and commitment to being a Christ-centered, transforming presence in the community.

Among the historic institutions birthed in Ohio were Worthington Foods (which later merged with the Kellogg Corporation), Harding Hospital (now part of the Ohio State University Medical Center), and Kettering Medical Center (now part of Kettering Health Network, a health care ministry of eight hospitals and 120 outpatient facilities).

The Ohio Conference is part of a larger, worldwide fellowship of more than 20 million believers who strive daily to develop a closer relationship with Jesus Christ, to become more like Him, and to serve others as He did. The vision and mission for Ohio includes prayer, growing healthy churches, and helping others realize the hope found in experiencing a personal relationship with a living God and loving Savior, and to nurture them in preparation for His soon return.

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For more information about this topic or about the Ohio Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, please email Heidi A. Shoemaker, Communication Director, at [hshoemaker@ohioadventist.org](mailto:hshoemaker@ohioadventist.org) or 937.853.8468.