



Chippewa County Department of Public Health

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Stay Safe by Practicing Religion and Spirituality from Home

Chippewa Falls, WI – April 9, 2020 8:00 AM – Mental and physical health are important during Safer at Home, and so is spiritual health. As COVID-19 has disrupted our lives, including how people typically worship and celebrate, Chippewa County Department of Public Health wants to reinforce the following:

- **Avoid large gatherings.** Due to Governor Evers' Safer At Home order, faith services should be cancelled, postponed, or modified. As leaders in the community, faith-based organizations need to be following the Safer At Home order, which will help slow the spread of COVID-19.
- **Host gatherings with only your household unit.** Religious and spiritual celebrations tend to be times of gathering together friends and extended family. Gatherings of any number of people that are not part of the single household or living unit are not allowed, except for essential services. Consider postponing your celebration until after the Safer At Home order is lifted; there will be much more to celebrate when it can be done safely.
- **Avoid drive-through or parking lot services.** The Safer at Home order does not allow for gatherings of more than 10 people in a confined space at a time, which includes areas such as parking lots and festival grounds. While an individual is safe in their car with the windows rolled up, social distancing becomes difficult during parking lot services. Individuals may be tempted to exit the vehicle, creating potential for the virus to spread.
- **Choose livestream options.** Suspension of in-person worship does not mean that worship cannot happen at all. You can safely view or listen to almost any form of religious services through television, radio, online video recordings, live streams, or podcasts. Speak to your religious or spiritual leaders to learn about ways you can practice from your home.

Remember, people that appear healthy can still be a carrier of COVID-19. Around the nation, individuals that appear healthy and have no symptoms have tested positive for COVID-19. Physical distancing is our only defense against this virus, and it is why the community is being asked to stay home.

Chippewa County Department of Public Health sympathizes with congregants of faith- and spiritual-based organizations that miss the services and fellowship. The goal is to keep everyone safe and healthy by following the practices put in place by the Safer At Home order.

If you have questions, call 715-726-7900 or email covid@co.chippewa.wi.us.

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