



# What **CHURCHES** Need to Know about Flu



## Signs & Symptoms of Flu:

1. Sudden onset of symptoms
2. Fever over 100° F in adults, and as high as 103° to 105° F in children
3. Chills and sweats
4. Headache
5. Dry cough; can become severe
6. Muscle/joint aches and pains
7. Fatigue and weakness
8. Loss of appetite
9. Diarrhea and vomiting

### Seasonal & H1N1 Flu

- Flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses; H1N1 is also called “Swine” flu.
- Flu spreads from person to person (cough, sneeze, runny nose).
- In the US, 5% to 20% of the population gets seasonal flu.
- About 36,000 people die annually from flu-related causes in the US.
- H1N1 has caused greater disease burden in people **younger than 25 years of age** than in older people.
- People with certain chronic conditions may be at high risk for serious flu complications and should consult their physician.
- Those infected and contagious can infect others from 1 day before getting sick to 5 to 7 days after, possibly longer in children and people with weakened immune systems.



### PREVENTION IS KEY!

- **Keep soap in the bathroom and wash hands frequently.**
- **Use hand sanitizer before serving Communion.** Set an example by having staff use it; allow the congregation to see you using it. Perhaps even put the bottle on the altar for other people to use.
- **Unless you are serving by Intinction, don't use a common cup.**
- **Let the pastor serve you.** Have the pastor break off pieces of bread and hand them to the congregants as opposed to multiple people tearing off pieces from the same loaf of bread.
- **Consider using wafers and individual cups.** This varies by church and theology.
- **If your church has a Fellowship Moment or Passes the Peace, stop temporarily.**
- **Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze.** Scatter boxes of tissue among the church pews and put individual packages of tissues outside the narthex. Use your elbow or crook of your arm to cover the nose and mouth, or a tissue; not your hands.
- **Wipe off telephones with alcohol regularly.** This works in the office, too. Various types of supplies are available that help clean and disinfect areas that are handled or touched regularly.
- **If you are sick, stay home!** If you are sick don't go to church. Tune in to your favorite televangelist, listen on the radio or get someone to record your church service for you.
- **Discuss how normal services** would be affected by a flu pandemic.
- **Plan how the church can care for church members and support vulnerable people in the community** if church activities have to be cancelled.
- **Educate your congregation** by distributing materials on pandemic flu. Check with your local public health agency for available resources.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

PIQUA HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
201 WEST WATER STREET, PIQUA, OHIO 45356  
937-778-2060