March 5, 2020

Greetings to you, Virginia Conference, in the midst of this time of self-examination and reflection, during this Lenten Season.

As you are aware, anxiety is high worldwide as governments and private individuals seek to understand more about the coronavirus.

As people of faith, we pray for those working on the front lines of this new virus and those who find themselves ill.

As individuals, we may have concerns as to how we respond going forward from church services to our own personal self-care.

It is important that we know where to get proper information. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is updating information daily at https://www.cdc.gov/ by sharing information about symptoms, frequently asked questions and the cases in the United States and around the world.

The Rev. Sarah Calvert, Arlington District superintendent, has shared very helpful information as we consider how this may affect worship services, Communion and facilities management and how to lead from love rather than fear. View this information at https://novaumc.org/flu-season-2020/.

In all things, encourage those around you and your church communities to be a non-anxious presence during this time and to use best practices of washing your hands, staying home if sick, and following directives from our local community leaders.

Peace and Blessings,

Bishop Sharma D. Lewis