

## **“Shelter in Place” Means “Don’t Do It! Don’t Go Out”**

*by The Rev. Dr. Oveta Fuller*

The “Shelter in Place” or “Stay Home, Stay Safe” policy declared by Executive Order in over 30 USA states is among the most aggressive prevention strategies to reduce disease, death and economic loss from COVID-19. Its goal is to stop CoV-2, a respiratory transmitted virus, from making more copies of itself. Such can be achieved at this time **only** by limiting contact among persons—encounter of those not infected with those who are infected with symptoms, or sub-clinically with no symptoms.

CoV-2 uses cells of a human to make more of itself. Such requires getting to new human hosts who have not yet developed immunity. *Coronavirus is transmitted person to person in moisture from breathing, sneezes and coughs.* Stopping contact among persons, and preventing production of CoV-2 progeny will decrease levels of circulating virus available to reproduce in a new host. COVID-19 epidemics will halt as virus transmission ceases.

“Shelter in Place” is the policy that can effectively stop CoV-2. It is the strategy available for managing COVID-19 and preventing overload of our limited health system. Whether or not an area officially declares “Shelter in Place,” implementing such will lead to least loss of life. Rigorous compliance with “Stay Home” (or *lockdown* as some may refer to it) should be a priority in all locations until COVID-19 epidemic curves decline.

What does “Shelter in Place” or “Stay Home, Stay Safe” mean?

It means stay in. **Self-isolate with members of your household in your dwelling place. Do NOT visit other households, even relatives, or go to places away from home. Only three reasons merit leaving your dwelling place:**

- To perform state- or federally-defined job or volunteer related essential responsibilities
- To obtain groceries/food, necessary medicines or medical care (*minimize trip number*)
- To get fresh air, sunshine or exercise (*only if your household members can remain 4-6 feet from members of other households.*)

If leaving your dwelling place, every person must remain diligent to prevent virus encounter. Be purposeful to observe, at all times, the Simple Rules of Preventing CoV-2 spread:

- Social distance/spacing 6 feet from others; cover all coughs and sneezes so nothing disburses freely into the air.
- Disinfect or avoid touching common objects (e.g. park equipment, hand rails, doorknobs).
- Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 sec or disinfect thoroughly with alcohol sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands. Avoid direct contact with anyone other than uninfected members of your household.

This policy necessitates use of virtual platforms and creative communication to meet spiritual needs for worship, prayer and connection. Use of virtual platforms and no assembly of more

than 2-9 people allow clergy and congregation members to comply with the most aggressive interpretations of “Stay Home, Stay Safe”.

When making a decision about what to do (e.g. do this? go there?), the default answer compatible with Christian, civic and humane responsibilities to stop COVID-19 is “Don’t do it!”

**Don’t go out of your dwelling place unless it is for one of three stated options.** For every essential trip, comply with each of the Simple Rules of COVID-19 prevention.

Faithfully use the power of love and of a sound mind with this aggressive guiding policy to stop CoV-2 spread, reduce loss of life and “Get to Zero” new COVID-19 cases. Working together, we can bring an end to this unprecedented modern day global challenge.

Opinion/Editorial Article

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[fullerao@umich.edu](mailto:fullerao@umich.edu)

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