March 5, 2020

Dear friends,

In the name of Christ, I send you my greetings and prayers as, together, we navigate this time of intense concern over the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). As of this writing, health authorities today are confirming new cases of coronavirus in the Bay Area, including six in Santa Clara County, and two in San Francisco. Let us add them to our prayers for all those affected by the pandemic, who also include the thousands of passengers on the Grand Princess Cruise ship currently unable to dock in San Francisco because of coronavirus concerns.

In light of these developments, and out of love and concern for all, including our neighbors, I now direct all lay and ordained leaders to cease offering communion wine, either for sipping or by intinction, until we learn more about the nature of COVID-19 transmission and are confident the threat of mass infections has passed.

I also add to our evolving set of guidelines the ask that all those who touch the communion bread/wafers, including altar guild members, wash their hands for thoroughly beforehand and use hand sanitizer during the service if handling communion elements during that time.

As I said in Tuesday's letter to the diocese, I understand the tremendous upset that these and other health precautions taken during the coronavirus outbreak may bring to you. As we walk this path together, I hope you will remember that our all-loving God will give us what we ask for from our hearts. On behalf of the entire diocese, thank you for your willingness to alter, temporarily, some of our behavior in favor of protecting one another and the neighbors we serve.

In Christ,

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