



**EASTERN SYNOD** of the  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada**

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Dear friends

On Wednesday, the World Health Organization raised its global pandemic alert level to five — its second highest level — meaning a pandemic is imminent and countries must finalize preparations to deal with the outbreak of swine flu.

As such, I think it is important that we take deliberate steps toward preparing for the *possibility* of an influenza pandemic.

I know that many of our congregations have a pandemic plan in place. I suspect, however, that many do not.

The synod has plans in place to govern operations of the synod office should adjustments need to be made. We are reviewing these plans at present and will advise you of any procedural matters which may impact you directly.

In the meantime, I would advise our congregations and related agencies to do a similar review and if no plans are presently in place, to review the documents in the Resource section of the synod website under the title Pandemic Planning. You will also want to review municipal and provincial resources available to you in the places in which you live.

Although it may not be possible for you to put together a comprehensive plan at this point, you can, with the aid of these resources, put some plans in place that will help you address primary concerns surrounding worship practices and put together a back-up leadership team should primary leaders become incapacitated due to illness.

I need to stress that this is not a time for panic. It is, however, an important and opportune time to prepare for the possibility of significant disruption in the lives of our churches and communities.

Many blessings to you and yours as we continue to celebrate the 50 days of this blessed Easter season!

With all best wishes!

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Bishop Michael J. Pryse,  
MJP:cd