

Best Practices

06/03/2021

Churches' role in vaccination

As we are transitioning to entrusting our local churches with making decisions to continue ministry in the Post-COVID world, we are constantly asked how church leaders can be part of the effort to encourage our community to be vaccinated. Dr. [Karen McElfish](#), member of both the In-person workgroup and PRG team says, "Clergy and lay leaders in the United Methodist Church have a unique opportunity and responsibility to speak out, encouraging church members to continue safe practices to mitigate against the spread of the virus and to receive the doses of the vaccine once it is available." Click here to download the article she wrote: "COVID-19 Vaccines- How can clergy and lay leaders lead in the new vaccination efforts?"

There is a mission opportunity for the church and leaders to encourage members to be vaccinated, which contributes to creating herd immunity for our community, making the community safer! As a result, this will help members of the local church's PRG team to create a safer environment for worship and ministries.

Here are some links to help church leaders and PRG teams in joining this effort.

The Mission Opportunity of COVID-19 vaccines - United Methodist Church

Churches encouraging community members to receive the COVID-19 vaccine aligns with the commitment of the United Methodist Church to holistic wellbeing. This article shares how encouraging vaccination is part of living out our values, by briefly introducing [Abundant Health](#), committed to creating abundant health for all – a global connection.

<https://www.umc.org/en/content/mission-opportunity-of-covid-19-vaccines?fbclid=IwAR1IOMj0xT00j3-HQ8OfLFeiMdg3ppoWJNLoQvhe5bbcxmkLaPBix0qLbcE>

Vaccination Tracker

Note that herd immunity is reached when 70% of the population is vaccinated. CDC is recommending that persons who recovered from COVID-19 still get vaccinated ([CDC FAQ Link](#)) so it means that we need to have 70% of our population to get fully vaccinated to reach herd immunity. The Virginia Department of Health provides a Vaccination summary ([Click here](#)). You may also search 'vaccine tracker' in Google and find where we are at in our effort to reach herd immunity ([Google search sample link](#)).

How Can Faith Leaders Help End the COVID-19 Pandemic? Support the COVID-19 vaccination effort - Association of Immunization Managers

A two page document that will help your church to be involved in the local effort of encouraging vaccination for every member. This can be shared with the PRG team and church leaders to find a way to be involved.

<https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.immunizationmanagers.org/resource/collection/C51290B5-3749-4FC1-8F88-330CF4266E05/AIMFaithLeadersHandout.pdf>

COVID Vaccine Graphics: Why Get it, and What Happens Next? - Public Health Communications Collaboratives

A downloadable poster, in English and Spanish, the church can post on their bulletin board or use in newsletters. Being published on Mar. 17th, 2021, some of the information might need extra explanation, but it provides adequate information to encourage vaccination. Korean translation of the poster is available. Please email serving@vaumc.org to receive the Korean translation.

<https://publichealthcollaborative.org/resources/covid-vaccine-graphics-why-get-it-and-what-happens-next/>

However, the best way to encourage people is to have multiple one-on-one conversations. Continue to reach out to your community with love. Continue to pray for walls to be torn down, and misinformation to be dismantled. We are called to share the Good News of Jesus to this world, wouldn't this be a similar process to encourage others to join in this effort?