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Bishop Palmer Urges Common Sense Precautions Around H1N1 Flu

Washington, DC: Bishop Gregory V. Palmer, President of the Council of Bishops, expressed pastoral concern for all of those anywhere in the world who are affected by the H1N1 Flu (Swine flu) and for the families of those who have died from the flu.

“We pray to God to bring healing to our brothers and sisters who battle the effects of the H1N1 virus, and pray that God will extend His mighty hand to protect persons in its path,” said Palmer.

According to the World Health Organization, 11 countries have officially reported 331 cases of H1N1 infection as of May 1, with ten deaths.

Palmer urged United Methodists to follow recommended health guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and state and local health departments, including common sense precautions: good hand washing practices, avoiding contact with those who are ill, staying home when sick, and covering your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.

Palmer noted that The United Methodist General Board of Discipleship has a resource for congregations on their Web site regarding [Holy Communion and good hygiene](#) to reduce the possibility of spreading illness. Most United Methodist churches will celebrate Holy Communion this weekend as the first Sunday of the month.

The United Methodist Committee on Relief also has on their Web site [suggestions for preventing the spread of illness](#).