

# NEW YORK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

*...continuing The Biblical Seminary in New York*

Monday, March 9, 2020

The viral outbreak of a new type of Coronavirus known as the “Novel Coronavirus,” or “COVID-19” is affecting our city, our nation, and our world. While cases in New York state continue to rise, New York Theological Seminary is monitoring this fluid situation daily and will continue to follow the recommendations of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the New York State Department of Public Health.

Given the level of uncertainty of the true impact of the coronavirus and with seasonal influenza (flu) virus also being widespread, we are taking proactive steps to maintain a safe educational environment and encourage practices protecting the health of students, faculty, staff, and guests. Columbia University has a community member who has been quarantined because of exposure to the coronavirus. They have responded by canceling classes for two days. There is no confirmed case of exposure to the virus here at NYTS, so we will continue to hold classes at this time.

Our priority is the health and safety of every member of the NYTS family, therefore, we ask that you follow these familiar basic health precautions: wash your hands, avoid shaking hands, do not eat or drink out of the shared containers, cough and sneeze into your elbow, and avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.

In addition, here are some other precautions to consider:

- Get your flu shot
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands)
- Wash hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds
- Use 60% (or higher) alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Stay home if you are experiencing symptoms
- Discard used tissues in the trash
- Avoid people who are sick with respiratory symptoms
- Clean frequently touched surfaces
- Speak to your doctor or healthcare physician if you are unsure

If you are experiencing any respiratory symptoms such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills or fatigue, please stay at home. If you do have a fever, the CDC recommends that you remain at home at least 24 hours after you are free of fever (100 degrees F or 37.8 degrees C) or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.

Governor Cuomo has declared a State of Emergency and we understand that this development may cause anxiety or concern. It is key during this time that you have the correct information and remove the spread of panic or fear with misleading information. To stay up to date, please visit the following:

- U.S. Center of Disease Control & Prevention:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- NYC Health Department:  
<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/coronavirus.page>

New York Theological Seminary will continue to follow the most up-to-date recommendations the World Health Organization, the CDC, and State and City health agencies provide. We will continue to monitor this situation closely and be in touch with any updates based on recommendations from these agencies. Please follow us on social media for the latest updates.

Blessings~

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'LaKeesha Walrond', written in a cursive style.

The Reverend LaKeesha Walrond, Ph.D.  
President