

## E-Series

### Swine Flu



*“ 4 Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. 6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”*

**—Isaiah 53:4-6**

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Inevitably every winter there will be two or three times when the weather forecasters will call for snow here in the south. Although rarely is there ever any accumulation to amount to anything, we act as if the blizzard of a lifetime is coming. Swarming grocery stores, we stock up on bread, milk and eggs as if we won't be able to get to the store for months. Our collective hysteria is always amusing to me.

Deep down I think that our current reaction to the swine flu is a similar overreaction. Hungry for ratings and the next big headline, the news media feeds this paranoid frenzy with their “late breaking news.” When all is said and done, I think we will look back on the swine flu (or H1N1 or whatever we're calling it now) “pandemic” as one more cry of “wolf,” much like the avian flu the last few years.

Yet there is certainly reason to be cautious. There are confirmed cases in the Newberry area. Particularly those whose immune systems are already compromised by other disorders and illnesses need to be careful—not just with swine flu but any kind of flu as flu strains can pave the way for pneumonia. Pneumonia, for those with immune deficiencies and prior pulmonary problems can be extremely serious.

Someone asked me today if I thought we would cancel worship on Sunday. Unless something changes drastically, no. We will still be worshiping at our regular time. In fact, maybe we need to pray together all the more. BUT, please watch out for those who are weakest among us. If you have a sore throat, fever, or other flu-like symptoms, even if you don't think you have the flu, please stay home. Err on the safe side. Worship with us on cable channel 2 at 9:30 am to protect others, and we will rejoice to see you when you feel better.

So, be cautious, but [don't panic](#).

In God's hands,  
*Pastor Michael*