

REFRESH YOUR SOUL CONFERENCE ON MARCH 16TH IS CANCELLED

Dear 2020 Refresh Your Soul Conference Registrant,

IMPORTANT NOTE: If your email was used to register other individuals, please send this information to all in your party.

Parish Health Ministry (PHM) and Episcopal Retirement Services (ERS) would like to address the recent news regarding the Coronavirus outbreak and the gathering of individuals for public meetings such as Refresh Your Soul.

As an aging services and healthcare organization that serves older adults, we have a responsibility to protect our most vulnerable population, which according to the CDC, includes older adults. With the recent news of community-to-community spread of the COVID-19 virus throughout our country, we've made the difficult decision to **cancel Refresh Your Soul this year.**

We took a number of factors into consideration, including the fact that a large number of attendees are older adults. Additionally, we also have a large number of individuals who are healthcare workers that serve vulnerable populations.

Additionally, with the number of people coming from regional and even national locations, we realized that we have an increased risk of people coming from areas where confirmed cases of coronavirus have occurred. Over the past week, we have seen many examples throughout the country of other events or gatherings of large groups canceled as well.

Finally, many ERS staff are conference volunteers. We have an obligation to mitigate the risks of our staff so we can make sure we are taking care of our residents and clients. If, at some point, we observed a confirmed case of coronavirus at our event, it would require a large portion of our staff to go into quarantine. We cannot risk losing staff, particularly at a time when they are needed to help mitigate the risk for our residents and clients.

At this time, we recognize that we are using an abundance of caution, but the risks to our elders are far too high not to take action.

We will process a refund for your ticket(s). Please allow up to 4 weeks for receipt of your refund. Instead of a refund, would you consider making a donation to Parish Health Ministry? As you know, the Refresh Your Soul conference is the primary fundraiser for ERS's Parish Health Ministry program, and 100% of the conference proceeds benefit PHM. Supported solely by donations, Parish Health Ministry helps 79 churches and community organizations. Please email Tricia at tettinger@erslife.org **by March 17th** if you choose to donate your ticket fee to PHM.

Thank you so much for your understanding. We do apologize for any inconvenience this has caused. While this has been a difficult decision, we are certain we are doing what is best for the vulnerable population we serve. We will communicate more in the near future and please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions at jpalcic@erslife.org.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Palcic, MGS, RN
Director & Conference Chairperson
ERS Parish Health Ministry

P.S. For information on the Coronavirus from the World Health Information, CDC and Ohio Department of Health, please visit the links below:

World Health Organization – <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/>

Ohio Department of Health - <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/Novel-Coronavirus/2019-nCoV>