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JOINT PRESS RELEASE

Collaboration Between Bethany & The Public Health Department

Sacramento County and Bethany Slavic Missionary Church (Bethany) spoke on Wednesday April 8, 2020 to collaborate on how to best move forward and mitigate the spread COVID-19 through Sacramento County community, while also condemning the public hate that has been shown toward the church. Representatives from Bethany specifically reached out to the County to request a meeting.

To be clear, while there is a large outbreak of COVID-19 in the Slavic community across the county, not all positive cases are members of Bethany church. Our goal is to shed light on the danger that even small gatherings, whether religious or not, pose to the spread of this virus.

This collaboration - made up of church leadership and representatives from the Sacramento County - will further enhance the tremendous efforts that the County Public Health has already put forth in fighting COVID-19 through its outreach to the Slavic population and the greater Sacramento community. Our common hope is that this collaboration will foster a new level of trust between the Slavic community and the County Public Health and will heighten the adherence to the public health orders.

Due to the concerning and sobering statistics about how COVID-19 has impacted the Slavic community, church leadership and county representatives have vowed to maintain open lines of communication, share materials and outreach tactics and spearhead outreach to other influential community leaders. This joint effort is critical to the health and safety of not only the Slavic community, but our entire Sacramento County community.

Church leaders also shared that because of the social shaming, they have shut down their food closet, a critical and essential resource for the community amidst this public health crisis. Sacramento County's hope is that they can re-open this service for the community. Sacramento County does not condone ridicule, hatred or violence toward this church, our Slavic residents and Slavic health care workers on the front lines of this public health crisis.

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