

## **CHURCH HEALTH RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 CRISIS**

History demonstrates the sovereignty and glory of God. God has always used people to reach people, and He has worked greatly through the church during some of history's most difficult times. The church is the vehicle God has chosen to serve and reach the world. Simply put, when times are at their worst, God, through the church, is at His best. This is neither the first nor the last time the church will face the challenge of ministry in a season of crisis. The difficulty for the church in this season comes in the novelty of this particular crisis. We have never experienced anything like this.

As church and ministry leaders consider how best to love and lead their congregation, they are also seeking the best ways to reach the unreached, engage the unengaged, and serve the underserved in their community. The exceptional reaction of Arkansas Baptists to this crisis has been both careful and calculated. However, moving forward, we will need to identify the next steps of transitioning from the initial reaction into a more comprehensive response. Course corrections can be made to areas of ministry now, that may result in greater health and greater Kingdom impact in the future. Let's lead through this crisis, but let's lead in ways that will last beyond the crisis. Our initial reaction was necessary and appropriate, but now let's respond in ways that will result in church health and Kingdom growth beyond this season of crisis.

I. Worship & Preaching Ministries – While there may be aspects of church life less impacted by this season of virtual assembling, being unable to worship together in Christian community has been a tough adjustment. Although this situation is neither ideal nor easy, we can worship with sincerity and confidence knowing worship is not confined to any one place. Below are a few considerations for worship and preaching ministries:

A. Consider the legalities of your online worship and preaching.

1. Proper licensure is required to publicly broadcast certain songs and display certain videos.
  - a) Churches may need to secure a CCLI License, CVLI License and CCLI Streaming License in order to broadcast music or videos with copyrights.
    - (1) You can view Christian Copyright Licensure information by clicking [here](#).

- b) A streaming license does not give permission to use any solo trax or any backing/stem trax. Most companies are temporarily allowing use of backing/stem tracks during these days, but solo trax usage has not changed. Permission must be obtained.
- c) If church members are gathering in groups to view the service together, church leaders need to emphasize the importance of Christians demonstrating respect and obedience to our civil leaders by complying with all recommendations and mandates for groups.

B. Consider the best platform for your online worship and preaching.

- 1. Will your worship service be live or prerecorded?
  - a) Live Streaming Options: Church Website, FB Live, Instagram Live, YouTube Live, Living as One, The Church Online, Box Cast, Television Broadcast, Radio Broadcast, Local FM Transmitter
  - b) Prerecorded Options: Church Website, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube Channel, Television Broadcast, Radio Broadcast

C. Consider the content of your online worship and preaching.

- 1. Create the highest quality experience you can in your context. Your service might not be the same as another church in town, but don't settle for less than your personal best. Your best might not be the same as their best, but you know your best and online viewers will notice it as well.
- 2. Stay true to who you are. Don't try to take on a different personality now that serves are online. People can spot a fake. If there are legitimate changes that can be made and done well, go for it. However, don't entirely flip the script just for the sake of change. Don't try and keep pace with another church in the community you think might be outpacing you. They will always outpace you if you are both trying to be them.
- 3. Test your streaming plan or prerecording ahead of time. In many cases, prerecording might help produce a better-quality service. This allows for edits and redoes.
- 4. If you are prerecording your service, consider using multiple cameras or taping the service more than once from different angles. Changing camera angles keeps the mind engaged. Recording the service twice would also

allow for editing and redoes of something possibly not done well the first recording.

D. Consider the audience of your online worship and preaching.

1. Provide a way for people to respond to whatever is going on in the worship service. You should consider a way for people to respond both publicly and privately. Someone who knows how to communicate both technically and personally should be responsible for this area of worship ministry.
2. Shorten the worship set, sermon length, and announcements in order to keep your participants engaged until the end. The average YouTube video lasts 4 minutes and 20 seconds and the average watch time of those videos is 2 minutes. The entire service should ideally be 45 minutes or less, with the sermon being 25 minutes or less.
3. Increase personal connection with those who are watching through proper setup, maintaining eye contact with the camera, using conversational language, and appropriate body language. If at all possible, avoid dialogue with those who are in the room, yet off camera, as this will result in those not in the room quickly becoming unengaged.
4. Continuously engage people during service by thinking through every aspect. For example, how will the music be done? What music will be led? Consider cutting away to a video story during the sermon, or perhaps putting the sermon at the beginning or middle of the service.
5. Pay special attention to planning the beginning and ending of the service.

E. Consider the results of your online worship and preaching.

1. As mentioned in the previous section, special attention should be given to how the service starts and ends. This planning will include providing designated ways for participants to respond. Early in the service, there may be announcements inviting people to sign up or to take part in something coming up. At the end of the service, there may be a designated time for responding to the sermon. A few considerations should be given to these invitations.
2. Making announcements and inviting participation.

- a) In line with the idea to keep worship services to 45 minutes or less, lengthy announcements can potentially cause participants to lose interest or log off entirely.
  - b) Announcements should be concise, and they should only include exactly what people need to know that week. More thought should be given to directing people to a centralized location where detailed information regarding the announcements is given rather than an exhaustive list of announcements that would take up valuable time in the worship service.
  - c) Consider what you are inviting them to take part in, and then streamline the process of response.
3. Giving an invitation to respond to the sermon.
- a) Careful consideration should be given to clarity during the time of decision. How do you best communicate exactly what you are inviting them to do, and how do you communicate an easy and appropriate way for them to respond?
    - (1) Should those wanting to make a decision for salvation, for baptism, for church membership, for surrender to ministry leadership, etc....
      - (a) Call the church office?
      - (b) Correspond to the church email?
      - (c) Text in a response to a designated staff member, burner phone, or text response service (i.e. Text in Church)?
      - (d) Visit a website with a clear explanation of the gospel and how to be saved?
  - b) Follow up ministry.
    - (1) The option(s) selected from the list above will dictate the preparedness actions required to be ready for follow up with those making decisions, engaging in livestream chat, or registering for an upcoming event.
    - (2) If the response is participation during a live stream through an available chat feature or social media post, a capable and designated staff person or lay leader should perhaps filter, share or respond to those comments, questions, etc.
    - (3) If the response is to a sign up or registration, a designated plan of correspondence should be preselected. If it is via email response, manual or automatic reply should be in place, letting the individual know they are registered. Personal phone call or text from the staff

member or lay leader directly responsible for this ministry, activity or event should also be in place.

- (4) If the response is submitting a prayer request, personal contact (email, phone call, text, Facebook message, etc.) from a staff member or lay leader informing the person their request has been received and prayed for.
- (5) If the response is to a sermon invitation, staff members or lay leaders should be equipped and available to make immediate personal contact with the individual to offer spiritual guidance and lead the individual in making the appropriate decision.

II. Stewardship & Administration Ministries – Most ABSC churches receive the majority, if not all, of their tithes and offerings in the Sunday morning worship service. In addition, a large number of churches are governed through congregational business meetings. How do leaders equip the church to support and participate in the ministries during this strange and difficult season? Below are a few considerations for stewardship and administration ministries:

A. Receiving of Tithes & Offerings – In 2 Corinthians 8 – 9, Paul is equipping the Corinthian church to be good financial stewards by giving to help the saints in Jerusalem during a time of great need. Paul reminds the church what and why to give, but he also provides a way for them to give. As leaders, we must consider how to educate, empower and engage our church members to be good financial stewards, even when the offering plate can't be passed in the sanctuary.

1. Mail in, pick up or drop off options

- a) Churches are sending self-addressed stamped envelopes (SASE) to members who are uncomfortable with online giving platforms.
- b) Churches are opening a designated P.O. Box for members to send tithes and offerings.
- c) Churches are offering secure drop boxes on the church property that are in well-lit areas.
- d) Churches are posting designated office hours to receive tithes and offerings.
- e) Church staff members can drop by a church member's home upon request to pick up a person's tithe or offering.

## 2. Online Options

- a) Online giving can often be managed through church management software programs, church website companies, or mobile device apps.
- b) It is also possible in some cases for church members to set up automatic bill pay for their tithes to go directly from their account to the church bank account.
- c) The most commonly used online giving platform is PushPay. However, Lifeway also has an online giving platform called Lifeway Generosity.
  - (1) To view information about PushPay click [here](#).
  - (2) To view the information about Lifeway Generosity click [here](#).
- d) Online giving is new to many church members. If you choose online options include tutorial videos on the church website and social media pages of where and how to give online.

B. Conducting and Communicating Business – How can the church conduct business, when nothing is business as usual? Churches with constitutional guidelines requiring monthly or quarterly business meetings find themselves in a difficult spot. This is a good time to evaluate the decision-making model in your church to determine its efficiency and effectiveness.

### 1. Communicating organizational business and operational decisions

- a) Take appropriate measures to be transparent about financial, facility and personnel decisions.
  - (1) Communicate how money is being spent and why it matters. Be as open as possible about ongoing needs.
    - (a) This could be mailing or emailing financial reports with a designated way of asking questions or voicing concerns.
  - (2) Communicate the adjusted office hours as well as to how and when staff members can be reached.
  - (3) Communicate how and when the church facilities may be accessed, or if the facilities are completely closed until further notice.

### 2. Conducting organizational business and making operational decisions

- a) Churches may be able to gather a quorum of the membership in a Zoom meeting. Free Zoom memberships allow for up to 100 participants per meeting. Paid Zoom memberships allow for even more participants.

- b) Churches unable to gather a quorum of members through Zoom may need to poll the membership through email or text. A way of response could be given in the initial communication asking for a return email/text voting to temporarily empower a leadership team, deacons, and staff with the FULL authority to act during this time.
- c) Use this “down” time as an opportunity to organize and update policies and bylaws. What can be learned from this situation that will better prepare your church for the potential of not being able to gather for a prolonged time in the future? How can the policies and bylaws be updated to enhance the decision-making process in case a quorum of members cannot meet for a month or more?

### 3. Paycheck Protection Program

- a) The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) is a loan program that originated from the CARES Act. This is a nearly \$350-billion program intended to provide American small businesses, churches, and non-profits with eight weeks of cash-flow assistance through 100 percent federally guaranteed loans. If guidelines are met, loans are potentially eligible for forgiveness. Many churches have opted to participate, and more info can be found at [www.abf.org/resources](http://www.abf.org/resources)

III. Discipleship & Group Ministries – The history of the church reveals times and seasons when large group gatherings and large buildings in which to gather were neither an option nor a consideration. The New Testament has numerous references to discipleship happening in homes. The way we group might be shifting during this season of church ministry, but the command to make disciples remains the same. Church leaders are making disciple making work in this difficult season. Below are some considerations for discipleship and group ministries:

#### A. Discipleship & Group Meetings

- 1. An article has been posted on the ABSC website by David Bond called “What Can You Do When Your Groups Can’t Group?”
  - a. To view this article [click here](#).
- 2. Online groups are new to many church members. Include detailed instructions or tutorial videos of exactly when and where to find online groups, as well as how to log in to online group sessions.
- 3. Online groups are also new for most small group leaders. Spend the necessary time teaching them how to properly use Zoom, or other group conference programs, to ensure their group time is a quality gathering for

group members. Give them the freedom and provide a format to ask questions, voice concerns, and give feedback along the way (i.e. Zoom has chat capabilities).

4. Try to keep business as usual – maybe even better than before.
  - a. Make sure your group leaders keep attendance. This is not for numbers, but to make sure everyone is cared for and connected during this time.
  - b. Contact and train your leaders regularly. You don't have the occasion of catching them in the hall, so be intentional in regularly staying in touch with small group leaders.
  - c. Gather information and follow up with prospects through your group ministry. This is a great time to engage people who regularly attend worship but are not connected to a small group.
  - d. Use your groups as your primary care ministry with phone calls, contacts, etc.

#### B. Discipleship & Group Materials

1. Many publishers have online resources and studies that are applicable to this current group dynamic. Check out Lifeway's Smallgroup.com, RightNow Media, Sampson Resources, and many others for online studies.
2. Lifeway has also provided a full page of ministry resources – most of which are free through May 31<sup>st</sup> – specific to this time of the coronavirus and designed to help equip church small group leaders.
  - a. To view these resources, click [here](#).
  - b. Included on this page are the digital versions of the quarterly Bible curriculum, other online studies, prayer guides, and links to other resources.
3. Lead your church into a unified study time by creating a church-wide reading plan on the Bible app or just a list of passages to be read together.
  - a. Consider this to be a comprehensive devotion time.
  - b. Give members Bible passages and prayer topics for each day of the week, or possibly just 5 days of the week. Keep these daily devotional times brief, preferably 10-15 minutes.
  - c. Try to review or allude to this plan – if only briefly – during the weekly worship to keep the members engaged.

IV. Next Generation & Family Ministries – God has always intended and instructed parents to be the primary spiritual leader in the lives of their children. In recent years, the church has often served as the primary disciple maker in the lives of many children. This time of no large group gatherings and social distancing may



provide a healthy reset of disciple making starting in the home while being supplemented by the church. Managing the current challenges in next generation and family ministry is doable. Below are some considerations for next generation and family ministries:

#### A. Kids Ministry

##### 1. Areas of Focus for Kids Ministry

- a) Help your families stay on track by providing the materials/lessons for at home Kids Ministry. (Like AMI packets for church, only more fun)
- b) Help your families enjoy this time by not overcomplicating the lessons or overwhelming them with too much material.
- c) Provide brain breaks and family fun activities by giving simple suggestions and ideas for 'down' time or 'recess' during the day. Tie in simple messages to help parents weave God moments into these everyday moments.

##### 2. Resources for Kids Ministry

- a) An article was posted to the ABSC website with tips from the ABSC's Emily Smith about children's ministry in the current environment.
  - (1) To view this article, click [here](#).
- b) The Lifeway page containing discipleship and church resources to help with the current challenges also contains material for children's ministry that can be led and facilitated by parents in the home.
  - (1) To view these resources, click [here](#).
- c) Children's Ministry Leaders from around the state are sharing ideas and helpful hints to the Arkansas Kids Ministry Network Facebook page.
- d) 4 VBS Strategies for this Summer:
  - (1) To view these 4 strategies click [here](#).
- e) 4 Ways to Utilize Tech Tools for Kids Ministry:
  - (1) To view these 4 ways click [here](#).
- f) 4 Truths for the Discouraged Parent:
  - (1) To view these 4 truths click [here](#).
- g) Helping Kids and Parents Cope with Stress (podcast):
  - (1) To listen to this podcast click [here](#).
- h) Tips for Working and Schooling (and all the things) at Home:
  - (1) To view these tips click [here](#).

#### B. Student Ministry

## 1. Areas of Focus for Student Ministry

- a) Personal Walk: encourage students to engage in personal spiritual disciplines.
  - (1) Consider teaching on disciplines and how they can use their extra time right now to create some healthy, spiritual habits.
  - (2) Offer a daily devotion/reading plan for teens (possibly through the Bible App).
  - (3) Group message students something that they can pray for that day.
  - (4) Outline a way to do prayer journaling.
- b) Family Discipleship: encourage parents to equip their teens spiritually.
  - (1) See the section on family ministry.
- c) Church Connection: encourage students to build a strong connection to their church.
  - (1) Offer 2-3 digital opportunities per week for students.
  - (2) Teaching times can be large group or small group style.
    - (a) Large group services can be streamed on various platforms like Facebook Live, Youtube, or Instagram TV (IGTV).
    - (b) Small groups can be offered on other platforms like Google Hangout or Zoom.
  - (3) Also consider chances for students to simply connect.
    - (a) Maybe a fun digital game like “kahoot” or an onscreen game through zoom or google hangout
    - (b) Students can set up a Zoom group or group chat for Bible study with friends from the church student ministry.
  - (4) Get creative in allowing students to be a part of ministry.
    - (a) Have connected students write encouraging notes to students that haven’t participated in during the CoVid19 crisis.
    - (b) Get their input on how you can create digital opportunities.
    - (c) Ask their opinion on what your student ministry can do once the social distancing limitations are passed.

## 2. Resources for Student Ministry

- a) An article has been posted to the ABSC website with insight from ABSC Student Ministry Leaders concerning student ministry in the current environment.
  - (1) To view this article, click [here](#).
- b) Student Ministry Leaders from around the state are sharing ideas and helpful hints to the Arkansas Student Pastor Network Facebook page.

- c) YM360 (Youth Ministry 360) and Download Youth Ministry are offering several free services and resources for navigating this time.

## C. Family Ministry

### 1. Areas of Focus for Family Ministry

- a) Encourage parents to set up a text group among the family just for sharing scripture, prayers and encouragement.
- b) Families can read scripture together by placing a jar on the table full of brief passages to be read at dinnertime now that families are able to eat together more frequently.
- c) Express both fears and hope in front of your children so that you can model faith in the midst of crises.
  - (1) To view an article on this, click [here](#).
- d) Make faith conversations a priority. Take this opportunity to share how Jesus changed your life and/or how God has worked in your family through the years.
- e) Begin to cultivate a culture of family worship daily, weekly, and monthly.
  - (1) Daily - Pray together as a family, beyond saying grace at meals. At dinner, share “God Sightings” from the day, or ways each family member saw God at work. Informally talk about spiritual things as you go about normal daily activities and routine.
  - (2) Weekly - Gather as a family to have a faith talk, with conversation about a Scripture passage and prayer (15-20 minutes).
  - (3) Monthly - Serve others in the name of Jesus as a family by performing an act of service to meet someone’s needs.
- f) Set aside a time of prayer. Now is the perfect opportunity for dads and moms to model prayer in front of children and teens.
- g) Create a family Bible study on the Bible App or pick a devotion/study to be working through together.
- h) After watching the online sermon from your church, have a couple of discussion questions to ask the family.
- i) As a family, ask God for someone to serve in your neighborhood or from your church. Meeting someone’s need together will model the compassion of Jesus to your kids.
- j) When you read your Bible or pray, do so in a visible place so that your children and teens can see your personal devotion to Jesus.

### 2. Resources for Family Ministry

- a) Use the Fighter Verse App to encourage Scripture memorization with your family.
- b) For other devotions, resources, and encouragement, see the D6 website by clicking [here](#).
- c) Don Whitney's latest book called "Family Worship: In the Bible, In History, and In Your Home."
- d) The Lifeway page containing discipleship and church resources to help with the current challenges also contains material for family devotionals that can be led and facilitated by parents in the home.
  - (1) To view the family devotional material from Lifeway, click [here](#).

V. Women's & Men's Ministries – Gender specific ministries have been a part of church life since the first century. From the first century to the twenty-first century that has not changed. Christian men need other Christian men speaking into their life and holding them accountable, and Christian women need other Christian women to encourage and mentor them in their walk with Christ. There are ways to help both women and men engage in ministry activity during this time of social distance. Below are some considerations for women's and men's ministries:

#### A. Women's Ministry

- 1. Women's ministry groups can stay connected through zoom meetings or conference calls. Encourage the women to touch base with each other and find out how everyone is doing, if there are needs to be met, and prayer requests to be shared.
- 2. There are ways younger women and older women can be a help to one another during this time. The younger women can send cards, drop off small gifts like flowers on the front porch, and go to the grocery store. The older women can make cookies or treats and leave them on the front porch for pick up.
- 3. This is a good time to create a culture of service by picking a ministry project to adopt as a women's ministry group. Find creative ways to get everyone involved. Celebrate the victories as God provides!
- 4. Everyone has a story. Use social media to celebrate the stories of the women in your church. During social distancing, you have an incredible opportunity to get women involved in new and creative ways.

5. Lifeway is offering free on-line video driven studies for women's ministry groups. Check out the list by clicking [here](#).
6. If your church has Bible Study curriculum including DVD sets or workbooks, consider loaning out the curriculum to the women in your church. Encourage women to gather in groups of ten or less in order to study God's Word together. In home Bible studies with family members, neighbors, and friends provide a great opportunity to share God's love and direction during uncertain times.

## B. Men's Ministry

1. Men's ministry groups can stay connected through weekly Zoom meetings or conference calls for group prayer and Bible study.
2. Divide men into groups of 5-10 and start a group text with each group of men. Lead the men to share Scripture verses, prayer requests, or words of encouragement with their group through this ongoing group text.
3. There are ways for the men's ministry to serve during this time.
  - a) Enlist groups of men (10 or less) to cook dinner one night a week and schedule a window of time for people to drive thru and pick up the meal. You can serve in this way and maintain proper social distancing by asking only one individual from each family to pick up the meal and to stay in the vehicle at the time of pick up.
  - b) Enlist a group of men (10 or less) to cook and deliver lunch for first responders and medical professionals in the community.
  - c) Enlist a group of men (10 or less) to cook and deliver meals to the elderly and shut ins. If some of the elderly and shut ins are unable to view the weekly services online, a DVD of the service can be delivered along with the meal allowing these senior adult members to view the weekly worship service.
4. There are ways for men to serve during this time.
  - a) Ask men to check on the elderly and shut-ins of the church to see if they need groceries, household supplies or prescriptions picked up.
  - b) Encourage men in the church who enjoy gardening to share produce with others and possibly even teach others how to raise a garden.
  - c) Men gifted at mechanic work can offer to change oil or do other vehicle repairs and maintenance for the elderly or families whose income has been negatively impacted.

- d) Challenge men who fish to catch, clean, and share enough fish for a meal with someone. Or, perhaps these men could take someone fishing and teach them how and where to catch fish.
  - e) Remind men how their ministry can start at home.
    - (1) Find activities you can do together as a family (i.e. fishing, hiking, camping, playing a game, shooting hoop, etc.). While doing these activities together talk about Jesus, have a Gospel conversation, or choose a Bible verse to memorize together.
    - (2) Next activity together, share the verse and ask what God is teaching them. Share what God is teaching you.
5. Lifeway is offering free on-line video driven studies for men's ministry groups. Check out the list by clicking [here](#).

VI. Communication, Connection & Care Ministries – Everyone in local church ministry has experienced the difficulty of keeping church members in the loop. Leaders should think critically and creatively about what's being communicated and how it is being communicated. There are ways to help your church communicate and connect with one another, while also caring for one another during this time. Below are some considerations for communication, connection and care ministries:

#### A. Communication

1. Who should communicate on behalf of the church?
  - a) Unify your messages, and especially, the messenger. Decide on a single, central and fully understood source of information. This is not so much about the mode of communication (i.e. mail, online, phone calls, etc.), but rather the person(s) responsible for church communication. Who is the person/team that will determine what is communicated and also when, where and how it will be communicated?
2. What needs to be communicated?
  - a) Any communication during this time should be intentional, honest and relevant.
  - b) Be mindful of the volume of communication going out at any one time. Find the balance of giving enough information for people to be informed and giving so much information that people are overwhelmed. You don't want them to feel isolated and out of the loop, but you also don't want to give them information overload.

- c) Create an interim home (landing) page on the church website to clearly lay out the church's strategy during the crisis.
  - d) List the church number and emails for staff members on a screen during service and also in high traffic areas such as the home page of the church website.
3. How should communication happen?
- a) Now that the initial reactionary phase is past, moving forward our communication can't simply be "join us online." A church should not settle for only one form of communication.
  - b) More personal forms of communication can be very effective during this time, such as:
    - (1) Times of pastoral live chat on social media.
    - (2) Designated times for conversations with the pastor via Zoom meeting or conference call.
  - c) Take the time to provide less tech savvy church members ways to learn how to access church staff, information and meetings using technology.
  - d) Take the time to find the most effective way to communicate with those members who are less tech savvy, or who perhaps don't have adequate cell or internet service at home to stay connected online.

## B. Connection

1. Connection to church members
- a) Create a closed Facebook group for church members to connect and encourage one another.
  - b) Remind church members to text, FB message, or reach out to someone they are missing from the church family.
  - c) Encourage Sunday School teachers/deacons/ministry leaders to send hand-written notes to those needing encouragement.
  - d) Ask church members to host service "watch parties" on Sunday morning. These groups should be limited to 10 people or less. These groups can gather, have a potluck meal and watch the weekly service together.
  - e) Opportunity may arise for live streaming or pre-recording certain special events.
    - (1) In the case a church member passing away during this time of no large group gatherings, with the family's permission, the funeral

service could be live-streamed allowing friends and family to view the service online.

- (2) In the case of a new baby being born, the parents and family of the newborn could meet with the pastor via Zoom for a prayer of dedication and blessing. This video could be pre-recorded and then shown during the weekly service.
- (3) In the case of a new convert being baptized or new family joining the church, a pre-recording of the baptism or the introduction of the new family could be made and then shown during the weekly service.

## 2. Connection to guests and those making decisions

- a) Create a digital version of your connection card (name, email, kids ' names, phone...use Google forms, etc.)
- b) Follow up through text
  - (1) Check out "Text in Church" connection and follow up service by clicking [here](#).
- c) Select a small group of lay leaders dedicated to watching the live or pre-recorded service looking for comments in the chat feature to follow up with those leaving comments or making a response.

## C. Care

1. Ask permission to visit people at their place of residence, but not in the house. Stay at a distance on the front porch or the foot of the front steps. During these "front porch" visits, church announcements can be discussed, tithes & offerings can be collected, prayer can be offered, and specific needs can be discovered and addressed.
2. Engage the deacon ministry in the care ministry by dividing up the church families and asking the deacons to call them weekly to check on them and pray with them.
3. Develop care packages for the shut in, elderly, or families in need, and deliver them by dropping them off on the front porch.
4. Small groups of 10 or less can visit senior adults, and from the foot of the porch or on the front lawn can sing hymns and pray for them. (Non-Christmas "Caroling")



VII. Outreach & Evangelism Ministries – During this season of social distancing, the church still needs ways to reach the unreached and share the gospel with them. As has been said before, the model may change, but the message does not. The approach we use to share the gospel may shift during this time, but we must continue to reach the unreached with the truth of the gospel. Below are some considerations for outreach and evangelism ministries:

A. Outreach to neighbors

1. Much of the outreach done during this season can revolve around neighboring well. Ask church members to call on senior adult neighbors to see about running errands or doing yard work for them. These conversations, along with acts of kindness and compassion could lead to evangelistic opportunities.
2. Encourage church members to take walks in their neighborhood. If neighbors are outside walking or working around the house, ask how they are doing and see if they have prayer needs. These conversations and encounters can lead to evangelistic opportunities.
3. When and where appropriate, ask church members to invite an unchurched individual, couple or small family to join them in watching the weekly service online. After the service, the church member may have the opportunity to share the gospel with these unchurched neighbors.
4. Who's Your One (WYO) could be an effective means of evangelism and outreach in this time of social distance, as people are likely missing community with others. Ask your church members to identify one person they can pray for, check on, meet a need for, and share the gospel with.
  - a) WYO resources can be found by clicking the link [here](#).

A. Outreach to coworkers

1. Remind church members to intentionally check on their coworkers. Whether currently working or laid off for the time being, ask how they and their family are doing and offer to pray for them. You may find them more open and sensitive to gospel conversations during this difficult season.
2. Ask church members to invite coworkers to view the weekly service of the church, and then follow up with them via text or phone call to see if they have any questions about the service, the Bible, the church, or about Jesus.

A. Outreach to those in need

1. Church small groups can find ministry opportunities in the community to identify needs and volunteer where necessary and when appropriate. This could provide evangelistic opportunities with families and individuals the ministry is serving.