

## **The Office of LeaderCare & Church Health Webinar April 14**

Content: Creative/needed/best practices in response to COVID-19

### **Care and Connecting for/to members and community:**

Staying connected is critical during these uncertain days. Church leaders should put their heads together and consider ways to stay in touch with everyone.

Preach each week through an online platform.

Encourage small groups to meet weekly on Zoom.

One way for members to feel connected is to hear from one another. Enlist someone to share their testimony during the week. Use social media if possible, to communicate the testimony. You could have that person record their own testimony and upload to YouTube. If neither of those platforms are possible for you, then you could mail out a weekly testimony with an encouraging word as well.

Depending on the size of the congregation the pastor could drive to each member's home, honk his horn or call the member ahead of time and wave at them and say hello. If possible, the pastor could pray with them from his car. This could be done from the sidewalk as well. If the congregation is larger, enlist deacons for the task as well. Remember to stay at least ten feet away. The further away you are, the more comfortable the older members will feel.

Enlist healthy younger members to adopt older/vulnerable members to call and see how that person is doing and how they can safely help them with needs.

Enlist Children: Ask a senior adult and/or shut-in if a child with sidewalk chalk can draw a message of love and hope for the resident.

Enlist Senior Adults: Older adults can contact young parents to check on them. Great way for older adults to show they care too.

Church leaders can call every member. If you already have a deacon family ministry, then the deacons can call their families. Several testimonies of wayward members so appreciative of the contact leading to a recommitment to Christ and the church.

Care packages for seniors (in the church and community), putting together gift bags with (somewhat) healthy snacks – fruit, granola bars, cookie & cracker snacks, candy and an adult word search puzzle book. Put a note stating every item has been wiped down and a brief Gospel or Easter message. Seniors love it.

Prepare meals or order meals from a drive-thru and deliver to seniors, singles or families. One church in is delivering more than 100 meals a day. (The church runs about 100 in worship.)

Make up craft bags from your children's department. Lunch bags with various craft items. Set up a family craft tote under the portico of your church and let families know to come by and pick up a craft bag from the tote.

Offer to purchase and deliver groceries. Take all necessary precautions to protect yourself.

Run errands for seniors or families with young children – to the pharmacy, post office, other stores, etc.

Handwrite a personal note of encouragement to neighbors, teachers, front line medical, law personnel or church members. Then mail them the old-fashioned way. (Those recipients will keep those notes and cards as a precious keepsake.)

One church advertised on social media they were mowing people's lawns if they have been laid off & cannot afford lawn service.

### **Technology:**

If you are "technologically challenged" enlist someone in the church that can assist you. Tech stuff is becoming more user friendly.

Use Facebook, YouTube, and Zoom to communicate with large and small groups. You may want the Sunday morning event to be in the same location each time but consider varying the location of devotions or Wednesday night prayer times. Best advice is to shorten the traditional length of a worship service when using an online platform.

If you are using Zoom for the first time do a trial run with at least three others. Practice muting and unmuting those that participate. It is best to keep everyone muted except for the speaker. Muting will keep down background noise.

### **Finances:**

Online giving ideas are on the Alabama State Board of Missions ([alsbom.org](http://alsbom.org)) website. State Board of Missions and The Baptist Foundation of Alabama have partnered to present a new online giving platform. Look on the front page of the [alsbom.org](http://alsbom.org) website.

Investigate regular draft giving through the bank. Many banks provide a way to send a check from the bank to the church (bill pay).

One church had staff/individual at the church facility, at a certain time, to receive offerings. Continue to remember checks and accountability during this time as well.

Mail a financial report to active members and include a self-address stamped envelope(s).

(Send a thank you note to those who are giving, tell a story) Use all other communication methods to update members concerning finances.

Share how the church is continuing to minister. Celebrate every story of ministry and community outreach that you are hearing in the church body. Give people a reason to give. Tell them of the continued mission work that is taking place in Alabama, North America and the World.

Prioritize financial resources personally and corporately (church).