



The COVID-19 pandemic has thrust our nation and the world into a totally new environment filled with breaking-news anxiety, uneasiness from the loss of community and a growing fear of the unknown. None of the public's emergency response actions are new to you. Chaplains minister daily to people in crisis whether it is in a local community, institutional setting or at the national level. As a chaplain, your many years of chaplaincy training, personal experience and exposure to traumatic events has prepared you "for such a time as this."

Each of you are an invaluable asset to your churches, pastors, communities, governmental agencies and institutional settings. As you continue to provide ministry to those under your pastoral care, here are a number of ministry considerations, best practices and resources for your consideration.

PRIMARY CONSIDERATIONS

1. People continue to look for a sense of stability and normalcy in reaction to the rapidly changing nature and magnitude of the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Our communities have experienced a loss of security with the closing of schools, churches and public places.
3. The disease preventive measures of social distancing, self-quarantine and sheltering in place have increased the feeling of isolation from others.
4. Religious services and events are increasingly occurring via social media.
5. Family/home worship is increasing in its frequency.
6. The COVID-19 epidemic has increased our awareness of sickness, death and eternity, making this time ripe to share the hope of the gospel.
7. Being creative in your ministry of presence is key to pastoral care in this restrictive environment.
8. Chaplains, you are seen by those you serve as agents of hope.
9. Remember that God is still in control! (Psalm 46, 91; Isaiah 46:8-10)

PROVEN GUIDANCE

1. **FOCUS** on the ministry God puts in front of you.
2. **FOLLOW** what people say (listen!), and point them to God's provisions.
3. **FORGE AHEAD** on what you can do versus what you can't do.

PASTORAL CARE AND BEST PRACTICES

1. Pray without ceasing.
2. Wash your hands, and keep them away from your face.
3. Call at least one person under your pastoral care every day.
4. If you know someone in quarantine, contact them regularly.

5. Keep a personal journal of your ministry thoughts, actions and feelings.
6. Publish a “Word For the Day” ministry or devotional blog.
7. Record your worship service/sermon/devotional, and post online.
8. Share articles, videos, worship songs you find inspirational or motivational.
9. Utilize Facebook/Zoom/Marco Polo for “face-to-face” conversations rather than relying solely on text/email.
10. Provide ministry to those working at remote or “forgotten” locations. (e.g., mail rooms, dispatch offices, food distribution centers, etc.)
11. Pray and process with an accountability partner regarding your pastoral care activities and ministry concerns.
12. Practice self-care on a regular basis.

Bottom line: People always need to hear encouraging words from a pastor’s heart, but especially right now. (Isaiah 50:4)

RESOURCES

- [Coronavirus and the Church](#)
- [The Church must be a refuge in the midst of fear](#)
- [A PEACE Plan Approach to Coronavirus](#)
- [Chaplain Ministry During Pandemic: From Awareness to Implementation](#)
- [How to livestream your sermon](#)

If you have any questions, contact NAMB’s chaplaincy team, or check out more resources at [CDC.gov](#)

This is for public information purposes only and not to provide medical advice. For definitive medical guidance and disease management, please consult local public health officials or your physician.