COMMUNICATION IS ESSENTIAL

Communication is essential to helping your church prepare and respond to COVID-19. Your church should be intentional in providing regular updates. Below are tips you can choose from to help you communicate faithful preparedness, not fearful panic.

Begin messaging with prayer, Scripture, and hope.

- Specifically reach out to vulnerable and special populations in your church.
- Share what you do or don’t know at the time of the communication.
- Stick to the facts and only share trusted and vetted information.
- Don’t be tempted to share hearsay, rumors, or what you cannot verify.
- Include information about possible resources for assistance.
- Discuss when and where services will or won’t take place because of COVID-19.
- Share what the church leadership and congregation is doing to address COVID-19.
- Note the tough questions and decisions your church leadership are working on.
- Outline the steps your church leaders are taking to keep members safe.
- Discuss how decisions are being made by your church leadership.
- Point to resources and organizations you may be consulting informing your efforts.
- Explicitly highlight the possible benefits and importance of each major decision.
- Acknowledge concerns, doubts, and sadness modifications and adaptations may cause.
- Remember that you will likely have some people in your church who are feeling extremely anxious, some who think the response is an over-reaction, and many people who are in between.
- Offer hopeful and realistic alternatives when ministry approaches change.
- Provide concrete and tangible suggestions for how individuals and families can prepare.
- Address members’ holistic needs (spiritual, physical, emotional, social, safety).
- Also share how members can communicate and stay in touch with church leadership.
- Note how and when church leadership will remain in communication with members.
- Let members know when to expect the next communication if possible.
- End messages by mentioning your leadership team’s diligence amidst COVID-19.

Conclude messaging with prayer, Scripture, and hope.

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