



THE FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH OF ALTOONA

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"Leading the way back to God and His Word"

THE FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH OF ALTOONA POLICY STATEMENT ON MINISTRY FACING COVID-19

After many hours of praying and planning, the deacons, staff and pastors of The Faith Baptist Church of Altoona present the following statement regarding ministry during the COVID-19 episode. Even though we have considered what other churches in our area are doing, we also recognize that each local church will have different situations to face and different congregations to serve, and thus, the Lord will lead them differently in this trial we are all facing. At this point in time, we believe God has led us to apply the following policy, however it could change based upon dynamic conditions.

REGARDING REGULARLY SCHEDULED SERVICES

- There will be no Sunday School, children or youth meetings until COVID-19 passes.
- Worship services will be held at 10:30 AM and 6:00 PM on Sunday and prayer meeting will be held at 7:00 PM on Wednesday but those who are elderly or ill should remain in their own homes. Everyone is encouraged to use their best God-led judgment to determine whether or not to attend services. All services will be live online, YouTube and Facebook as well as normally scheduled radio and television times. The worship services will include music and a Bible message.
- No church transportation will be provided until COVID-19 passes.
- Offerings will not be "lifted" but sanitized plates will be placed at the entrance to the auditorium in order to contribute while entering or exiting the facility. Contributions may be given online at our website or mailed into the church office for those who do not get out to the services.
- The governmental recommended "social distancing" of 6 feet between individuals will be encouraged.
- The church building will be properly sanitized after each service.

REGARDING MINISTRY MATTERS

- The FBC deacons, staff and pastors will continue to minister to the congregation and community as normal. Any one with any need should contact the church office. The deacons will be in touch with their flocks weekly for ministry needs.
- Visits to hospitals, nursing homes and senior citizen facilities will be on hold until after COVID-19 passes. However, those in special need are encouraged to call the church office at 814-944-2894.
- The church building will be open for prayer and counseling from 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM for those who desire such ministry. Please enter through the office door on 4th Avenue.
- A special prayer line will be available for those who desire to call in prayer requests.
- "Ministry Angels" will be provided for those who need help shopping or the running of errands. In case of such a need, please call the church office at 814-944-2894.
- Since we are all ministers of God, we are all encouraged to pray for each other and apply our spiritual gifts to edify each other in the Lord during this trying time in our nation. In addition, every opportunity should be taken to share the Lord with others evangelistically who have not yet been born again.

For a more complete listing of FBC ministry considerations please note the following:

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MINISTRY CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE COVID-19 ISSUE

As the result of a gathering of a number of interested people from the FBC congregation on March 15th and then further discussion among the staff regarding the current COVID-19 issue, the following ministry considerations have been taken into account. Other special ministries may be developed as needed. At this point in time, some of them are in operation and others are yet to be developed as needed and as the Lord directs. An administrative team is being developed to over-see this special ministry. The considerations are divided into two categories: Ministry to the Congregation and Ministry to the Community.

I. Ministry to the FBC Congregation:

- A. All children and youth ministries are cancelled until further notice.
- B. Adult Wednesday evening prayer meetings will be held as normal at this time with the following stipulations:
 - 1. That every effort will be taken to keep the church clean and sanitized.
 - 2. That those who attend will be encouraged to maintain the six feet “social distancing rule.”
 - 3. That the service will be live streamed through social media.
- C. The Church Facility will be open for prayer and counseling from 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM Monday-Friday.
- D. A separate telephone line will be established with a specific number for folks to call 24 hours a day for prayer and counsel.
- E. A team of medical related personnel has been established to keep current on all developments regarding COVID-19 that will be communicated to the congregation at least twice a week through email and video.
- F. Providing meals for the children and youth may be offered as needed.
- G. FBC media ministries will be used to communicate encouragement including:
 - 1. Pastor Gary’s daily 5-minute Spiritual Breadbox devotional.
 - 2. A 5-minute Daily Media Community Prayer Time production for the FBC website and selected radio stations. The program will be pre-recorded and aired three times a day on the radio stations.
 - 3. The FBC livestream ministry will be used to broadcast church services for those who do not attend.
- H. The ability to give tithes and offerings online has been established.
- I. A “Ministry Angel” ministry to visit the elderly and shop for those who cannot go out to the stores.
- J. We are considering dividing up the congregation geographically around the area and asking members to invite others into their homes to watch the church services together online as a small group.
- K. Provide ipads/devices to seniors who do not currently have them with the offer of instruction on use.
- L. Have a Companionship ministry to the shut-in folk and provide care packages with needed items for use.
- M. Develop a Card Ministry where kids make cards of encouragement for shut in folk.
- N. Have special counselors available to encourage those who are fearful over COVID-19.
- O. Offer “Prayer-Pals” for those who desire someone to pray with them regularly.
- P. Conduct ongoing ministry as needed.

II. Ministry to the Community:

- A. Provide food and encouragement to police, fire fighters and first responders.
- B. Provide “Ministry Angel” ministry to those in need of someone doing shopping for them.
- C. Encourage people to get involved in the FBC media ministry.
 - 1. Radio
 - 2. Television
 - 3. Social Ministry
 - 4. Special 5-minute daily Community Prayer Time on various radio stations.
- D. Reach out to those underprivileged who are in special need.
- E. Provide transportation to those who need a ride to physicians, etc.
- F. Provide yard care for those in need.