

Dear Asbury family,

This is an update to inform you of our plan at Asbury to respond to the COVID-9 pandemic. We will balance staying safe, caring for each other and maintaining our way of life. This is a global crisis that we will face as a united community.

This post will share our plan for the following:

- 1. our plan for communicating with you**
- 2. our plan for worship**
- 3. our plan for ongoing meetings**
- 4. our plan to care for our congregation**
- 5. our developing plan to care for others in our community**

1. our plan for communicating with you

We will use 2 primary ways of keeping people informed:

- 1. our Facebook page.**
- 2. the Asbury church webpage**

Email will be used to communicate with specific groups.

Our Facebook and church webpage are easy to update with a rapidly changing situation.

We will determine a regular time each week to provide updates.

Please check the Facebook and our webpage for the latest most accurate updates from the church.

2. our plan for worship.

We WILL continue to worship God, but it will be done in a different way.

For THIS SUNDAY, March 22 we will offer one LIVE online worship service on Sunday at 11:00am.

You can join in at the Asbury United Methodist Church Facebook page.

The time may change in the future as we experiment, so check for the latest plan.

We will have a practice session on Thursday, March 19 at 11:00am If you would like to help us test it out, go to our Facebook page on Thursday at 11:00am.

3. our plan for ongoing meetings

The building will be closed for all meetings until further notice. We have purchased a subscription for ZOOM software that will allow video conferencing. People can join with a computer or a regular cell phone. The Church Council will meet on Monday, March 23 at 7:00pm. Instructions will be coming to the Council on how to participate in the meeting.

Other groups will be able to host online meetings. Contact the church office if you would like to have an online meeting.

4. our plan to care for our congregation

We will have a Wednesday night time to gather online for fellowship and support. The time will be determined and announced in worship and online.

This will continue our Wednesday time together to share information and stay connected.

As part of the overall plan of the regional Emergency Management System, all congregations are instructed to first take care of their own members.

The goal is to match needs with resources as close to the need as possible. Here is how we will do it at Asbury.

If you have a need you may choose one of these options:

- 1. Call the church office. (563-355-5218).**
- 2. Make a request on the Church webpage.**

Scroll down to the blue “Congregational Care” button near the bottom of the page.

Click on it and you will be taken to a page that gives you 3 options:

"Visiting Form" to fill out if you have offered care to someone.

"Need Assistance?" if you would like to request help for something.

"Can you help?" if you would be willing to help someone else who has a need.

Our Parish Nurses will also be attempting to make phone calls on members in order to check in and offer encouragement. If you would like to be part of a team of callers, please call the church to let our parish nurses know.

5. our plan to care for others in our community

As we care for each other, we also want to represent Jesus by caring for people in our community.

Under the leadership of our Mayor Bob Gallagher, we will be cooperating with other Bettendorf churches to coordinate support to others who may not have a faith community. We will also cooperate with regional authorities in order assist the most vulnerable in the wider area. More information regarding how we'll work with our Quad City emergency management system will be coming as it is available.

In a time of disaster, a city can use all documented volunteer hours to apply for FEMA reimbursements. So we will be determining a way to record volunteer hours that will help the recovery of our city.

Dear friends, we are a part of history as we have an opportunity to demonstrate how God can sustain us through the greatest of challenges.

Psalm 91 can be a source of strength as we trust in God:

*You who live in the shelter of the Most High,
who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,
will say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress;
my God, in whom I trust."*

I encourage you to read all of Psalm 91 as a prayer for God's help. As a people of faith we offer to our community a positive attitude with hope and a pool of volunteers who can care for others.

We can take guidance from Winston Churchill of Great Britain as his nation was facing an imminent threat: "This will be our finest hour."

Now imagine one year from now and how we will be looking back and being thankful for how God had empowered us to persevere.

Jesus is the bridge that will get us to that future victory.

In the hope and strength of Jesus,
Pastor Tom