

Tools for Ministry during the Coronavirus Outbreak

During the Coronavirus outbreak, we will be faced with a range of unusual situations and challenges which we, as church leaders, will need to respond to. As Andy Crouch recently wrote, 'A leader's responsibility, as circumstances around us change, is to speak, live, and make decisions in such a way that the horizons of possibility move towards shalom, flourishing for everyone in our sphere of influence, especially the vulnerable.' We hope that the following suggestions will help you to start thinking creatively about how we can offer support to our church members, in both spiritual and practical forms.

Safeguarding guidelines

Once you have decided which of the following ideas (or your own) you are going to use to support others and continue your ministry during this time, ensure that you consider all of the safeguarding implications to allow your ministry to be fruitful, while not putting anyone at further risk. [Click here](#) to read the Methodist Church's safeguarding guidance during the coronavirus pandemic.

Practical ideas

- Create a team of 'non-at-risk' people to do shopping and create food parcels for church members who are self-isolating.
- Ensure that you have up-to-date contact details for all church members, particularly those who are most vulnerable.
- Encourage those with some free time to make regular phone calls to older members of the church, and those who are more vulnerable, to encourage them and remind them that they are not alone. Perhaps create a list with your leadership to make sure nobody is left out.
- Ensure that church members collect repeat prescriptions in advance.
- Create a WhatsApp group (perhaps in pastoral groups) for church members who have smart phones, to enable them to stay in contact and continue to build community.
- Encourage church members to let neighbours know if they are going into self-isolation, to enable them to offer appropriate support.
- Consider setting up extra donation stations for your local foodbank. [Click here](#) to download JPIT's ideas about supporting your local foodbank during the coronavirus pandemic.
- Be clear on your church's guidance to ensure church members feel informed and supported.

Spiritual ideas

- Create 'Church at Home' bags to be delivered to members who are self-isolating. Contents could include: The Connexion Magazine; The Word For You Today booklets; Church News sheets; prayer activities; craft ideas and resources etc.
- Create and publicise a way for people to send prayer requests (Text, WhatsApp, Facebook etc)
- 'Post' a sermon - Write up sermons, including questions for reflection, and post them, either on social media (your church's Facebook page/group), or print it out, pop it in an envelope and put it through the letterbox of church members who don't use social media.
- When dropping off items at the homes of self-isolating church members, try to give a 'wave through the window' to show them that you've been and reinforce that they are not alone.
- Live stream church services or worship. It's less complicated than it sounds and could allow church members and the wider community to engage in collective worship in a familiar setting at a very difficult time. Click [here](#) for a beginner's guide to live streaming.
- If you are unable to live stream yourself, signpost to other churches who are, including [Wesley Chapel](#) and [Swan Bank Methodist Church](#).
- Encourage those who self-isolate to continue times of worship using radio (such as Premier Christian Radio and UCB), television (Songs of Praise), and podcasts ([The Methodist Podcast](#), [Sermons from Methodist Central Hall](#), etc) or the regularly updated [service sheets](#) created for use during the outbreak by the Ministries Team.
- Enable families to start/continue conversations about their faith using some of the following online and print resources: [The Kitchen Table Project](#), [Care for the Family](#), [Messy Church](#), [Mothers' Union: Faith in the Family](#), [Care for the Family: Raising Faith book](#), [D6 Family](#), [Methodist Children, Youth & Family Ministry](#).

Extra resources

- For those who are anxious about the current situation and uncertain future, Will Van Der Hart has written an [article](#) which some may find helpful. Please note that this article uses gender specific language, so you may wish to find a similarly encouraging resource which better suits your reader.
- Print 'Viral Kindness Cards' and post through the doors of people whose contact details you don't have. Print-ready designs are available [here](#). When using this resource, it is important to carefully consider the safeguarding notes mentioned at the beginning of this document.
- For free graphics and images that can be used online and in print to accompany coronavirus news/updates, use [Sunday Social](#) or [Unsplash](#).
- For further guidance and resources from the Methodist Church, [click here](#).

Keeping up-to-date

- Updates, guidance and resources are regularly being posted on the [Methodist Church website](#).
- You can keep up-to-date with what is going on in the district by subscribing to the weekly District Mailing. To subscribe, email your request to admin@wsmethodist.org.uk
- You can also find regular updates and shared resources on the following Facebook pages and groups:
 - [Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury District Facebook Page](#)
 - [Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury District Facebook Group](#)
 - [Learning Network West Midlands Facebook Page](#)

If you have any other suggestions or creative ideas, but need support in implementing them, please get in touch with one of us and we will do all we can to help.

Every blessing

Jon & Jo

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