**Building the Body of Christ During the COVID-19 Crisis**

**Resources and Ideas**

**Web-based Resources:**

* The Gospel Coalition: (articles, podcasts, and videos): <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/>
* TGC Coronavirus Resource Page: <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/topics/coronavirus-covid-19/>
* TGC Coronavirus Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/churchcoronavirus/>

**Counseling Resources:**

* Christian Counseling and Education Foundation (CCEF—articles, podcasts, and videos): <https://www.ccef.org/>
* GCN Global Networking - Online Counseling: [http://www.globalcounselingnetwork.com](https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.globalcounselingnetwork.com%2F&data=02%7C01%7Ckwargo%40pcanet.org%7C8568f162fa30499847d808d7cf3c64d9%7C0f18fcd7edb64993b4d03112a12a45f4%7C0%7C1%7C637205730615539681&sdata=FLf2e1Nqk8VMs1U7NNO5%2F%2Fu7ABAMF%2F2B4a4dGxDYHjA%3D&reserved=0)
* Institute of Biblical Counseling: IBCD <https://ibcd.org/>
* [Counseling](https://pcarbi.org/relief/servantcare-ministry/) resources for PCA staff and ministry spouses through RBI, Servant Care.

**Biblical Sexuality Resources:**

* Harvest USA Biblical Sexuality (articles, videos, books, etc.) <https://harvestusa.org/>
* Ellen Dykas: Women’s Coordinator for Harvest USA (Biblical Sexuality) [ellen@harvestusa.org](mailto:ellen@harvestusa.org) is willing to consult or do a Facebook live to come alongside the church in terms of how people are struggling sexually (pornography, sexual temptation, etc...) during this season.

**Equipping Word-based Resources (free or reduced) for Leaders and Women in your Church:**

* Nancy Guthrie’s *Seeing Jesus in the Old Testament Video Series* (All 5 Books--50 videos in total) are free to download at Crossway until May 31st: Click [here](https://www.crossway.org/books/?availability=Available%20Now&category=All&series=Seeing%20Jesus%20in%20the%20Old%20Testament&fbclid=IwAR3ORC0MJ99rPy6HA2BQp2Al6_04MLe0C5Z5SxQGVUFc6OAWPElOaDV9n1w).
* [Ligonier Teaching Resources](https://www.ligonier.org/blog/all-teaching-series-now-free-stream/?utm_source=ligonier&utm_medium=slider): Currently Free to Stream including Melissa Kruger’s Contentment video study: [https://www.ligonier.org/learn/series/contentment/](https://www.ligonier.org/learn/series/contentment/?fbclid=IwAR15hjLoVAIu88tRnnH0pGcDEsKA2emYuskACJbwdBF6LQLlrAx4VOuCl-c)
* Charles Simeon Trust online courses reduced from $19 to $9: [Charles Simeon Trust online](https://simeontrust.org/online-courses/)
* Lifeway: [https://lifewaywomen.com/2020/03/20/free-online-bible-studies-and-5-ebooks-to-stay-in-the-word/](https://lifewaywomen.com/2020/03/20/free-online-bible-studies-and-5-ebooks-to-stay-in-the-word/?fbclid=IwAR2Cj70cldblWm7bbiFZKY4tvtgxbyNSREYrQM-JVfwHfG-teu68Q7o3-tE)
* Reformed Theological Seminary: <https://rts.edu/resources/>; there is also an RTS app.
* Covenant Theological Seminary: <https://www.covenantseminary.edu/resources/>
* She Reads Truth: <https://shereadstruth.com/>
* The Bible Project: <https://bibleproject.com/>
* Bible Reading Plans: <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/read-bible-tgc-2020/>
* Scripture Memory—The Verse Project: <http://theversesproject.com/>
* Community Bible Reading Plan: <https://www.thecbrjournal.com/>

**Podcasts for Listeners:**

* TGC: <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/podcasts/tgc-podcast/>
* Help Me Teach the Bible: <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/podcasts/help-me-teach-the-bible/>
* Risen Motherhood: <https://www.risenmotherhood.com/>
* Knowing Faith—The Village Church: <https://www.tvcresources.net/resource-library/podcasts/by-series/knowing-faith>
* Journeywomen: <https://journeywomenpodcast.com/>
* Revive our Hearts: <https://www.reviveourhearts.com/podcast/>
* enCourage Podcast and Blog: <https://encourage.pcacdm.org/>

**Books and Articles for Readers:**

* *A Small Book for the Anxious Heart* by Ed Welch
* *Fight Your Fears* by Kristen Weatherall
* *Teach Me to Feel* by Courtney Reissig
* *Walking with God through Pain and Suffering* by Tim Keller
* *Songs of Jesus* by Tim Keller
* Christian Biographies that bring perspective
* *His Testimonies My Heritage (Psalm 119)* by Kristie Anyabwile
* *A Heart Set Free: A Journey Through the Psalms of Lament* by Christina Fox
* *Steadfast: A Devotional Bible Study on the Book of James* by Courtney Doctor
* *At His Feet Studies (Romans, I Samuel, Philippians, Luke)* by Christine Gordon and Hope Blanton--Theologically rich yet very accessible in terms of time (20 min prep) and biblical literacy. <https://athisfeetonline.com/>
* One to One Bible Reading Resources: <https://matthiasmedia.com/products/one-to-one-bible-reading>
* TGC articles: <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/>
* Open letter to Seniors: <http://www.katiepolski.com/>
* [20 Prayers to Pray During this Pandemic](https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2020/march-web-only/covid-19-coronavirus-20-prayers-to-pray-during-pandemic.html) by Jen Pollock Michel
* [Helping Children with Scary News](https://www.sallylloyd-jones.com/helping-children-with-scary-news/?fbclid=IwAR3qkLaLp2uhSEzesa1LBMDxKgx_h2y8mlyc2j9R2UkVLfeucb-fEx7BrcY) by Sally Lloyd-Jones
* *Don’t Waste Your Quarantine* by Courtney Reissig <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/waste-family-quarantine/>
* *Blizzard or Winter?* [https://journal.praxislabs.org/leading-beyond-the-blizzard-why-every-organization-is-now-a-startup-b7f32fb278ff](https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fjournal.praxislabs.org%2Fleading-beyond-the-blizzard-why-every-organization-is-now-a-startup-b7f32fb278ff&data=02%7C01%7Ckhodge%40pcanet.org%7C6e27ddfae20645f0f62808d7d7415a78%7C0f18fcd7edb64993b4d03112a12a45f4%7C0%7C0%7C637214548013247056&sdata=ImGYCLBgUqYlRKvFzLyiPWrl4qy6BsW3BQVAYl0Raq4%3D&reserved=0)

**Connection Points:**

* [Zoom.us](https://zoom.us/): a conferencing app; be sure it is password protected!
  + A [How to Video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=arIDQBALrEw&feature=youtu.be) for Zoom
* Google Hangouts: <https://hangouts.google.com/>
* [Loom.com](https://www.loom.com/download): record a video and send a link.
* [Mailchimp](https://mailchimp.com/): sending emails and newsletters
* Marco Polo: <https://www.marcopolo.me/>
* FaceBook: <https://www.facebook.com/> Start a private FaceBook group for women in your church to connect for encouragement and prayer.
* Instagram TV: <http://help.instagram.com> to share encouraging words or devotions
* Free Conference Calls (for prayer): <https://www.freeconferencecall.com/>
* GroupMe and app for text groups: <https://groupme.com/en-US/>
* Canva: To create engaging digital content memes: <https://www.canva.com/>
* Make an actual phone call
* Write an actual letter

**Practical Ideas:**

* Using your small groups to shift towards gathering virtually for prayer.
* Consider your audience. Do they need the spiritual rhythm of completing the study you began or should you consider shifting the content to contextualize to meet the spiritual needs of your women during this season?
* Consider how you might identify and train new leadership especially if your leadership is rotating off or is not currently available to participate.
* Coordinate communication across your congregation about virtual meeting opportunities. Consider ways you can streamline and combine efforts.
* Write sample discussion questions for virtual groups: Below is an example of Spiritual Health Questions from Restoration Community Church\*\*
* Consider allowing young congregants to come alongside older congregants to learn methods of navigating digital connections.
* Empowering women to share the lessons they are learning devotionally on a FaceBook page or in written form.
* Be strategic about pushing too much content as many young moms are drowning in schooling, childcare, and home responsibilities.
* Remember everything is teaching...including modeling how to lead a virtual group. Engage them on a Zoom call and then give them the tools and empower them to use them as they gather their own groups.
* When preparing for a video lesson, assign a few people ahead of time to be prepared to share for each question so that you can encourage participation and avoid awkward silence.
* Since gathering virtually is new for many, review group dynamics and encourage women to fully participate (audio and video) to be all in, so that everyone can be seen and heard.
* Here are some tips to set group dynamics for virtual groups:

1. I will initiate the call to you on Google Hangouts
2. Try to be on time
3. Have your Bible, book, and coffee/water ready
4. Remember to MUTE your line when you come on
5. Find a quiet place where you can participate undistracted
6. Turn your VIDEO ON so we can see each other, build a sense of community, and guard against distractions

* For Women’s Bible Study, consider facilitating virtual small groups or have the teacher prepare a video/podcast recording of the teaching to be shared and then follow up with small group discussion.
* Consider ways to engage non-believers and neighbors with Bible study and prayer.
* Consider removing barriers for women to engage with Bible study by providing a truncated homework plan. Here is a 15-minute version example that Redeemer Presbyterian did could be adapted to any study.

This study does a great job of helping us with that! It is rich and full. This study recommends 30 min. of study a day, and you will be amazed by the depth of study you can do in 30 minutes. For some of you, that may not be your life stage right now. If you are in the 2nd group, will you commit to 15 min. a day, 5 days a week to God’s Word in your life?

We believe God’s Word is not an optional activity but as necessary as eating and sleeping for our lives.

How we suggest using this study for the 15 min. plan:

Each day—Set a timer for 15 minutes. If you want to study more, great! But if you do 15 minutes of this study a day you will gain much wisdom and be prepared to bless the other women in your group!! Begin and end with prayer and our memory verse.

Day 1—Mark up your Scriptures today, but don’t worry about the questions.

Day 2—Do the Day 1 questions.

Day 3—Work on Day 2 questions for 15 min.

Day 4—Work on Day 3 questions for 15 min.

Day 5—Work on Day 4 questions for 15 min.

The last day is a guide to help you in praying through and meditating on what God is teaching you in your study.  *“He gives more grace…” James 4:6—****ENJOY!***

**Care:**

* Celebrate small victories when women take a step of faith to engage with a new platform or engage in community in new ways.
* White Ribbon Prayer—Identify healthcare professionals in your congregation. Tie a white ribbon around their mailbox and place a note inside letting them know they are appreciated and prayed for and with a verse. Create a general email such as whiteribbonprayer@gmail.com so they can share their prayer requests. Encourage your congregation to pray for these families as they see the white ribbons.
* Consider how you can intentionally assimilate new women who are now available for the first time to participate in women’s ministry studies and prayer.
* Take the emotional and spiritual temperature of your women often to assess their real time needs.
* Care Coordination: Male Leadership and Female leadership coordinating care for the congregation. If you do not have a shepherding plan in place, perhaps this is a time to develop a model for your church.
* Work with the deacons to come alongside families who are now unemployed.
* Run a list of your church congregation and divide up the names. Mobilize a team to connect with their group for prayer and systematically checking on people seeking to ascertain their needs. Below is a Sample Call Guide\* (talking points and questions).
* Using your primary means of communication (e-blast, web, bulletin) to shift from events to support and encouragement resourcing.
* Use these questions to create an electronic survey to gather people’s primary means of communication: We used a google survey:

1. How would you describe your age + stage?

Examples: 30’s with kids, married no kids, college student, living alone, etc.

2. What is the best way to communicate with you online?

Examples: Facebook, Instagram, Email.

3. What are your main needs in this period of isolation? What are some life-giving ways we can minister to your spirit during this time of limited community?

Examples: Prayer, Recipe Ideas, Grocery Delivery, Workout Plans, To be left alone.

4. If you had immediate needs, how would you feel most comfortable communicating them?

Examples: Email to Brian, Texting Community Group leaders, Contacting Susan, Contacting Deacon/Deaconess etc.

5. How would you rate your ability to utilize online platforms such as Lectures posted online, Facebook Live, and Zoom small group meetings? (1 being low, or difficult to operate, 5 being high, or easy to operate)

6. When is the best time of day/evening for you to access group gatherings online?

7. Is there anything else you would like our team to consider while planning the best ways to engage and communicate with our women while we are in this period of isolation?

* Find creative ways for your congregation to have fun, laugh or celebrate: Netflix watching party, eating dinner together on zoom, drive-by bridal or baby shower, preparing new baby care kits with gift cards and a note, remembering to celebrate and thank those women who have been serving all year in women’s ministry with a small gift and note delivered to them, having a drive-by goodbye parade for a family who is moving, playing games together with Air Console: <https://www.airconsole.com/>
* Find compassionate ways to weep with those who weep. Feeding families who have lost a loved one, sharing stories to memorialize and remember their loved one. Mobilize children and women to write cards to those who are in nursing homes.
* Be strategic about moving towards single women who may be drowning in silence.
* Identify College and Grad students who have had to return home and are separated from their college support groups (friends/churches) and find ways to enfold them during this season.
* Meals for those in need: Collect gift cards or have a cooler by the front door for non-intrusive drop-offs.
* Here is a video from a doctor about how the disease is spread that may provide insight in handling food. Click h[ere](https://vimeo.com/399733860).
* Consider starting support groups for various issues (unemployment, pornography, domestic abuse, etc.)
* Find ways to support those in our congregations who are called to foster care in a season of no respite care or outside support.
* Corporate Prayer Calendar (see below)\*\*\*: Westminster Pres. Church 30 days of Prayer for Leaders, Family, Medical Personnel and others

**Questions we can be asking ourselves as leaders...or even using these questions to start meaningful dialogue in your circles of influence?**

1. How can I seek to be faithful today...because tomorrow has enough trouble of its own (Matt. 6:34)?
2. What version of myself do I want God to transform me to be at the end of this pandemic?
3. How do we come alongside others with Word-based and creative ideas to help them redeem their time?
4. How might God use me to help the gospel go viral in this pandemic?
5. How can I personally seek to be vitally connected to Christ so that I live and minister out of the overflow of my relationship with Him?
6. What does self-stewardship (biblical care) look like in the midst of this crisis?
7. How can I make equipping and encouraging resources more accessible to those in your circles of influence?
8. How can I involve the gifts and graces of others, especially when I feel I have a significant learning curve in this virtual age?
9. How do we equip women to think biblically about silence? Waiting with Hope? Fear and anxiety?
10. How do we identify and bring strategic care for the most vulnerable among our congregation? (older adults, singles, single parents, immunocompromised, mentally ill, unemployed, those with familial/relational struggles...)
11. How can we leverage the platforms we have to draw women's eyes upward to God?
12. How can I use this time to figure out women’s preferred methods of communication (Email, text, phone)?
13. How can I use this time to consider various learning styles (auditory, visual, kinesthetic, interactive) when considering content?
14. How can I use this time to discover what constitutes meaningful care for those in my circles of influence?
15. How can I equip women with processing skills during and after this crisis? (Biblical reflection, journaling, small group discussion, learning to listen to others.)
16. How can we leverage this time to build up the church by equipping women to do the work of ministry not only for this season but for years to come amidst this crisis (leadership development)?
17. How can we use this season for fruitful evangelistic connections?
18. How do we weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice in an age of social distancing?
19. How does isolation compound chronic struggles?
20. How can we care for people and seek to equip the body with sustainable methods?

**\*Spiritual Health Questions from Restoration Community Church:**

**General Questions**

1. How are you doing?
2. How is Coronavirus impacting your work, livelihood, and household?
3. How have you been structuring your days? How's that going?
4. Are there family members or friends/neighbors that you are particularly concerned about? How are they doing?
5. What's bringing you joy and delight these days? What are you watching/reading/listening to? How are you staying relationally connected?

**Going Deeper: Spiritual Health Check-in Questions**

*Spiritual Disciplines*

* What is your time in God's Word and in prayer looking like these days?
* What truths from Scripture are encouraging you this week?
* What aspects of God's character and the work of Christ do you most need to be remembering right now?
* How have you been engaging with our church's corporate spiritual disciplines? (e.g. Bible Study, Lenten Devotional Guide, 7pm prayer, and livestream worship)

*Relational, Emotional, and Physical Health*

* How are you caring for your own physical and emotional health right now, especially in light of anxiety and stress?
* If you are prone to chronic anxiety and/or depression, how are you doing with that right now?
* Are you finding time and ways to exercise and to eat healthily?
* What losses and disappointments are you experiencing because of cancellations and isolation?
* What are the relational dynamics in your household looking like? What conflicts are surfacing?
* Or what is the experience of living alone in the midst of such isolation looking like?

*Dying to Sin*

* What sins are more tempting to you right now, either in light of increased isolation or increased relational demands in your home?
* How are you fighting against temptation?
* What do you need right now in terms of accountability?
* Where do you need to seek repentance?

*Love of neighbor*

* Who are you connecting with in your neighborhood, workplace, or broader community these days?
* What concerns or needs are you aware of?
* How are you seeking to provide and/or pray for those needs?
* How might the Gospel speak into the concerns of those who are other than Christian?

**\*\*Sample Call Guide: Making Connection Recommendations**

**Introduction:**

* Intro: Explain who you are (hopefully they know you but just in case!). Share with them that we as a church want to stay connected to our church family during this time and that you just wanted to check-in and see how everyone was doing.
* Ask “How are they doing?” or “How are you holding up?” type question

**Questions or Things to Discuss:**(It’s okay to keep it brief because many of them are working from home and managing their kids/school, etc. But many of them may appreciate the personal conversation in the midst of these circumstances)

* Discuss how things have changed in their routines. School, work, family life, etc.
* If their kids are around, feel free to talk or FaceTime them but know that they may be occupied with school. If so, ask if there is a good time to call back to talk to their child if interested.
* Let them know that we will be sending out some resources for them to have Sunday School with their families, activities, ways to be intentional, etc.
* These will be often emailed but tell them about the new*Immanuel Preschool and Kids Facebook page.* Tell them they can search for it on Facebook and request to join or email lindsay@ibclr.org if they have problems. You can also add them to the group right then too if you are a member of the group yourself.
* Ask if there is anything they need or could use help with right now (food, health, connection, etc). If they need something but you aren’t sure what we can do or who could answer that it is okay to say “I don’t know but I will get back to you on that.” Make a note in the spreadsheet and share these things in the notes section or contact Lindsay after the phone call.
* Ask how you can be praying for them
* Ask if it would be okay to pray with them on the phone. It may feel awkward but it is a powerful thing to be in a stressful circumstance and to have someone call and just pray with you. The kids may be listening and also may want to pray too.
* Need: Please highlight in the spreadsheet if you make a note of a specific need. I want to make sure we prioritize these. You can also email me or text me if it is an urgent need.

**Frequently Asked Questions:**

* **What if they ask when we will meet at church again?** All church related questions (closures, events cancelled/postponed, start back dates, etc.) will be posted online at ibclr.org/coronavirus. They can also go to the homepage (ibclr.org) and they can click the red banner on top to be directed to the updates page. Try to avoid definitive answers, be positive and encourage them.
* **What if they have a need?** Do not promise anything but let them know we will get back to them on how we can possibly help. Add it to the spreadsheet so, we can follow-up with them.
* **What if they share ideas of things we can do as a church?** That’s great. Be open to Ideas they may have about ways we can minister. Don’t ask for ideas because they might feel put on the spot but if they want to share some or collaborate, let’s foster that and help them to see how they can help others. Again, do not promise we can do what they suggest but make a note of the ideas in the spreadsheet.
* \*If you talk with kids (FaceTime or on the phone):

**Use this as a guideline:** (ask these things but also share what has been doing on in your life too...to an appropriate extent)

* Ask them how they are doing
* Ask about the activities they been doing at home
* Ask if they have a new favorite subject in school and why
* Ask what is something that has made them laugh today
* Explain what a “high” and a “low” is and ask them what has been their high today and
* what has been their low (the older kids usually like this)
* Ask if it would be okay to pray with them. They may want to pray too!

Once the call is done, please add notes and the date you contacted in the following spreadsheet next to the specific child’s name. Make note if parents have already been contacted for another sibling if you can.

\*If no one answers, leave a voicemail

Send a follow up text. Most people will respond to your text after they missed your call.

**\*\*\*Corporate Prayer Guide**

**Leaders**

1. Pray for wisdom for all world leaders as they try to protect their citizens and decrease the mortality rates of their countries.
2. Pray that leaders of wealthy countries would be willing to share their resources with countries who are less fortunate.
3. Pray that COVID-19 would bring unity to the United States. Pray that leaders at the federal, state and local levels would be willing to reach across party lines for the welfare of Americans.
4. Pray for Vice President Pence as he coordinates the U.S. government response to the Coronavirus.
5. Pray that the hearts of leaders would be softened and that many would come to know Christ.

**Family**

1. Pray for families who have lost family members from the Coronavirus.
2. Pray for children who are afraid as their schedule has been disrupted with school closings. School for many children is where they feel safe, they are encouraged, they receive warm meals, and they feel loved.
3. Pray for family members who have been quarantined due to an exposure to the virus. Pray that the quarantined remain healthy as they seek things to occupy their time. Pray that the quarantined individuals who experience symptoms of the virus will seek medical help.
4. Pray for a hedge of protection for individuals whose health is already compromised and for the elderly as they are being hit the hardest.
5. Pray for individuals who are in the hospital and nursing homes who cannot have visitors. May God fill their void and give them a peace and comfort.
6. Pray for families to unite and love each other well.
7. Pray that families will look to Christ for their strength and joy during these difficult circumstances.

**Health Care Providers**

1. Pray for the protection all health care workers who are on the front lines of dealing with the Coronavirus.
2. Pray that health care workers who are believers will have opportunities to share the love of Christ with others through word and deed.
3. Pray for providers who are vigorously working to develop a vaccine for the Coronavirus.
4. Pray that health care providers are able to rest, exercise and eat healthy as they care for others in our community.
5. Pray that health care providers will have access to medical equipment that is needed to protect themselves and to assist their patients.
6. Pray that there would be a sense of calm and not panic as individuals are coming into hospitals or other health care facilities.
7. Pray for a daily renewal of strength and endurance for providers.
8. Pray that providers would come to know Christ.

**Believers**

1. Praise to our God who is merciful and faithful to his people.
2. Praise that our God is sovereign-the Coronavirus was not a surprise to Him.
3. Praise that as believers we can put all of our hope and assurance in Christ.
4. Pray that believers would share the love of Jesus with our families, neighbors and strangers.
5. Pray that we would not be selfish, but willing to share our resources (even TP).
6. Pray that we would have compassion on those who eyes are still closed to the gospel.
7. Pray that we would only say kind words to essential workers.
8. Pray that we would take time to reflect on all of God's goodness.
9. Pray that we would not experience fear, but a peace that surpasses all understanding.
10. Pray that those around us would see something different during this storm- Pray that they would see Jesus.