



COGIC Doctors Contribute Response to COVID-19

May 1, 2020

Dear Church of God in Christ,

The Church of God in Christ remains vigilant in the daily assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on the United States and the world. As the largest Pentecostal denomination in the world, with millions of adherents across the globe, it is imperative that we remain apprised of all pandemic developments, in a timely manner, to ensure the safety of our vast numbers of congregants in all locations.

We continue to communicate and stay connected with the entire denomination via email, our website and various digital and social media platforms. We also continue to encourage and admonish all church leaders on local, national and international levels to adhere to the guidelines outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) during this unprecedented time.

While we understand that many states are now proceeding with efforts to ease stay-at-home mandates with the reopening of restaurants, malls, movie theaters, churches and other public venues at limited capacity, we must continue to stress that we are not yet in the clear with the coronavirus pandemic.

Collectively, as a denomination, we must use wisdom in realizing the need for continued social distancing, which will undoubtedly continue to impact the ways in which we would normally gather for church services, church meetings and church events. We do not recommend the reopening of COGIC churches at this time. Although our current circumstances are not ideal, the Church of God in Christ is resolute in our stance that the reopening of churches, prior to the number of new COVID-19 cases significantly declining, and prior to a tangible, persistent flattening of the curve could prove detrimental to our congregant populations as a whole.

We are the Church of God in Christ. Let us continue to work as one body of sanctified, praying believers to follow and execute our efforts together. We continue to vehemently trust and believe that our God will see us through.

Sincerely



Bishop Charles E. Blake, Sr.
Church of God in Christ
Presiding Bishop & Chief Apostle
Seventh in Succession



COGIC Doctors' COVID-19 RESPONSE

May 1, 2020



Beloved Brethren:

Greetings in the matchless name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The last several weeks have been a season of great difficulty for our nation and our world. The United States has endured several viral pandemics in the previous 100 years. Still, there has never been a time when a viral illness has wrought such a profoundly negative economic impact on our communities.

The Church of God in Christ (COGIC) family has been no exception. In the last six weeks, Bishops, Superintendents, Pastors, and lay members have succumbed to this disease, leaving their families and churches devastated by their untimely passing.

As practicing physicians and pastors, we remain devoted to the Church of God In Christ. We can fully assure you of the appropriateness of the current recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID). These directives may potentially curb the disease and prevent its further spread and loss of life. For this reason, state and local governments have concurred and issued mandatory stay-at-home orders and the prohibition of gatherings, which include church services.

We doctors don't know enough about the disease to disagree with the nation's top experts. They have been very transparent in America's need for isolation and masking. To their credit, the experts have admitted the health disparity that results in more deaths in people of color than whites. Centuries of social and economic inequality



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most likely have caused black Americans to suffer additional consequences of this pandemic, increasing the vulnerability of our members and worshippers. If we are to return to a semblance of the glorious church that we love, we must accept the need for social distancing, masking, and isolation.

The CDC and the NIAID have developed mathematical models to monitor the number of newly confirmed cases and deaths. They are using these models to track the pattern of sickness and death. The data will help them determine when containment has been achieved and that it is safe to resume public gatherings.

To date, there is a consensus between these two organizations that containment has not been made in the United States. The number of new cases and deaths continues to soar without the flattening of the curve. Based on the data available to them, they recommend that the present precautionary measures remain in place, at least through the end of May. Even when regular activity is allowed to resume, it should be done cautiously and methodically in phases.

As you know, several states have decided to relax these restrictions and to resume regular activity in defiance of these recommendations. These premature reopenings will once again put tens of thousands of our COGIC saints in harm's way.

We urge you, the pastors of our great church, to adhere to the recommendations of the CDC and NIAID. We are inviolably responsible should we encourage activities that defy the current public health recommendations. To continue congregating in our church buildings before evidence of safety places more lives at risk and jeopardizes the health of our people.

Respectfully submitted,

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