



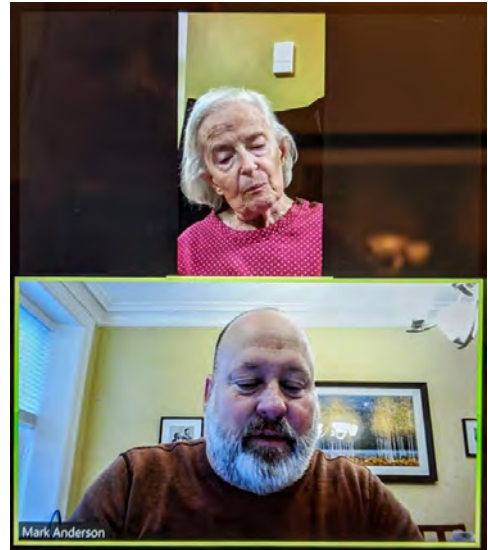
National **Benevolent** Association
of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

A Letter From Our President & CEO Regarding COVID-19

Mark D. Anderson, President & CEO, National Benevolent Association
March 2020

Dear Friends,

Let us acknowledge that it has been stressful these past few weeks as we all have responded, both professionally and personally, to daily concerns related to COVID-19 (Coronavirus). Many of you know my dear 88-year-old mother lives in a senior care facility in Peoria, IL. My sister had been visiting her twice a day to assist her during meals. I was hoping to visit her last week, but alas, like so many of your stories, this will not happen, at least for now. The human connection we long for during this crisis is palpable. Thankfully, technology enables us to meet virtually!



My beloved Mom, Jeanne, and I video chatting together!

Daily, we hear stories of disrupted relationships due to the need to respond to the social isolation requests being made of us all, but we also hear heroic stories, that frequently occur in times of great need. The “first responders” today range from health care workers to grocery store staff, cafeteria workers still preparing meals for children out of school to caregivers in residential care facilities. We are living in extraordinary times, which in turn requires an extraordinary response.

I stand in awe of each of our partner agencies who continue to provide care and compassion to the underserved, the marginalized and oftentimes overlooked in a pandemic. My deepest gratitude to the XPLOR residents and host teams as they navigate these uncharted waters to live faithfully into their covenant to care for God’s people. And, I pray daily for our peer group members—chaplains, clergy working in prisons and jails, executives of nonprofits, and activists—who are on the front lines responding daily to those in need.



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NBA has diligently been reaching out to offer care and support to our myriad of partners across the life of the church. Please be assured that the NBA staff team has been in constant contact to determine how best our ministry can respond during this pandemic. We have also been reaching out to our partners and grantees to check on their needs and to offer our support. This is unprecedented for us all, and I have faith our collective wisdom—as well as science—will carry us through.

NBA Responds

I want to share a few decisions NBA has made as part of our response protocol. We have canceled all NBA-hosted events and all staff travel to any event—including Regional Assemblies, peer group meetings, and partner retreats—through May 15, 2020. Our office in St. Louis will be closed at least through April 22 as per directives from local government agencies. Only part of our staff works in St. Louis; the majority work remotely from their homes across the U.S. NBA is encouraging our staff, regardless of their location, to follow governmental guidelines and maintain self-quarantine if they believe they have been exposed. We also collaborated with the Office of the General Minister and President and Week of Compassion to co-author the [Statement of Compassion and Care Concerning the Coronavirus Outbreak](#).

NBA does not take these actions lightly. It is a balancing act to ensure the safety of our staff and our partners. I trust we will all find ways to show care and concern as we accompany one another from afar.

I know it's hard to be strong during these challenging times. This can be weary on our souls and mental health. NBA will offer up words of hope, examples of compassion, and stories of care to uplift and inspire us as we all work to respond to the pandemic. Please continue to follow NBA on [our blog](#), [newsletter](#), and social media to see these stories of Disciples in action caring for their communities. If you would like to share your story of resilience and hope, please [contact us](#).

We also encourage everyone to utilize resources provided by groups such as the World Health Organization and the [Centers for Disease Control](#). Additional information, including a message from our General Minister and President and tutorials on worshipping remotely, are available at [Disciples.org](#).

Please know that we are actively praying for you, our partners, and our world as together we navigate through this storm.



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With Care,

Mark D. Anderson
President & CEO

As the health and social services general ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the National Benevolent Association partners with congregations, regions, general ministries, and a variety of Disciples-related health and social service providers to create communities of compassion and care. Founded in 1887 by six women responding to the needs of the day and on their doorsteps, for more than 130 years the NBA has continued to serve "the least of these." Learn more at www.nbacares.org.