

Coronavirus: A Time for Courageous Hope

A Word of Guidance from Thomas Louis Brown, Sr., Bishop

Greetings clergy and laity of the Sixth Episcopal District!

The COVID-19 is mysteriously impacting our lives in ways we could have never imagined. While the virus is mysterious, it is not a myth. It is real! This crisis is affecting our homes, churches, communities, schools, jobs and lives all around the globe. The word crisis means a turning point – a moment of both danger and opportunity. The Coronavirus has created for us such a moment.

As the Church, we must do the right and moral thing for the good of our members and communities, indeed our world. While our governmental leaders and medical professionals are offering practical guidelines for conducting our lives during this crisis, it is imperative that the Church remain instructive, faithful and wise. This is not a time to test our faith and certainly not an opportunity to try and test God. Therefore, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, I offer the following guidance and observations:

- I am requesting that we close our churches for worship and other services until at least after the first Sunday in April. We need to do all that we can to help prevent the spread of this virus.
- In the meantime, every pastor should utilize varied electronic platforms in order to offer our members worship, Bible study and prayer opportunities. Among these mediums are Zoom, Skype, Tele-conferencing, Facebook, etc. Let us think and act creatively for the good of our people.
- Financially, I invite us to secure such mediums, as Givelify and others, in order that our people can continue offering God our tithes, offerings and gifts.
- Let us ensure that our people's spiritual and material needs are being met. Especially attend to the needs of our children and youth as well as the elderly in our congregations, and those who may become victims of this virus.

Now, given the COVID-19 crisis, the Sixth District's Spring meeting, scheduled for April 3-4, 2020, has been revised. Instead, I will host a Sixth Episcopal District "Spring TeleGathering" via Zoom on Saturday, April 4th from 8:30 a.m. to 12 Noon. You will receive further instructions and training information about that event.

The One-In-The-Spirit Banquet, scheduled for April 4, has been cancelled. My commitment remains to use 40% of the funds raised to help assist our local churches, utilizing the Presiding Elders as the medium through which this is done. These funds will be needed more than ever. Thus, it's imperative that each of us do all that's in our ability to contribute the \$100.00 for the event. Please know that I will do all I can to acknowledge each contribution. **The Souvenir Journal is being printed and will be distributed to those contributors as soon as possible.**

Let stay connected, always be in posture of prayer for our Church, community, nation and world during this Season of Lent looking to the victory promised in Easter morning! The Peace and Power of Christ be with you!!!

Remember there is the COVID Task Force Hotline – 844-442-2681