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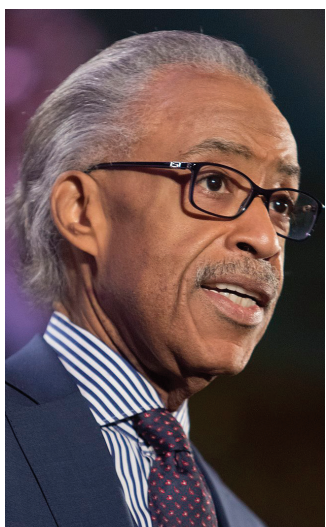
THURSDAY, MAY 14-20, 2020

A PEOPLE'S PUBLICATION

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National Black Faith, Civil Rights Leaders

Encouraging Communities to Continue to 'STAY AT HOME' in States Lifting Orders



Rev. Al Sharpton (NAN)



Dr. W. Franklyn Richardson (CNBC)



Sherrilyn Ifill (NAACP LDF)



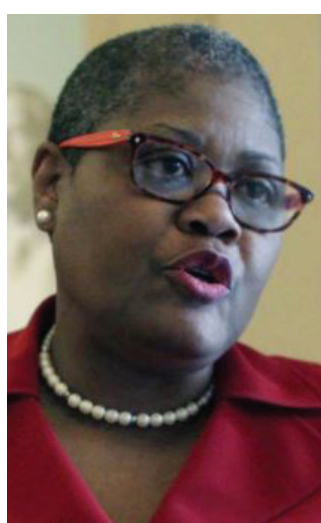
Marc Morial (NUL)

We, the undersigned, have joined together to state our unequivocal and firm opposition to the premature effort of governors to willfully re-open their states. The actions of these governors, which demonstrate reckless disregard for the health and life of Black residents, compel us to speak out and take action to protect ourselves. As faith leaders and civil rights leaders, we work every day on behalf of the needs of our families and communities. We regard this pandemic as a grave threat to the health and life of our people,

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Derrick Johnson (NAACP)



Melanie Campbell (BWR)



Kristen Clarke (Lawyers' Committee)

Renowned Doctor Says, 'Be Vigilant, Don't Be a Vector'

NNPA Newswire Senior Correspondent

As COVID-19 continues to spread amid a growing number of fatalities, Dr. James Hildreth said it's critical that everyone follows stay-at-home orders, social distancing guidelines, and anything else that could help keep Americans safe during the pandemic.

Dr. Hildreth, the president of Meharry Medical College, is not just your everyday physician, or media talking head. He's a renowned infectious disease expert who has repeatedly been called



Dr. James Hildreth said it's critical that everyone follows stay-at-home orders, social distancing guidelines

upon by Nashville Mayor John Cooper and others to inform the public about coronavirus.

He graduated from Harvard magna cum laude in chemistry in 1979, according to his biography. That fall, Dr. Hildreth enrolled at Oxford University in England, graduating with a Ph.D. in immunology in 1982. At Oxford, he studied the biology of cytotoxic T cells with Professor Andrew McMichael and became an expert in monoclonal antibody technology and cell adhesion molecules. He returned to the United States to attend Johns Hopkins University School of

Medicine in Baltimore, taking a one-year leave of absence from medical school for a postdoctoral fellowship in pharmacology from 1983 to 1984.

In 1987 he obtained his M.D. from Johns Hopkins and joined the Hopkins faculty as an assistant professor. In 2002, Dr. Hildreth became the first African American in the 125-year history of Johns Hopkins School of Medicine to earn full professorship with tenure in the basic sciences.

In July 2005, Dr. Hildreth

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COVID-19 Stay at Home Order Lifted for Louisianans

Those who are high risk should continue to stay at home, all Louisianans should wear masks when in public, practice good hygiene and social distancing



Gov. John Bel Edwards

Louisiana will move to Phase One under the White House COVID-19 guidance this Friday, May 15, which removes the Stay at Home order for Louisianans and allows additional businesses to open under strict occupancy, protection and social distancing guidelines, Gov. John Bel Edwards announced Monday. High risk individuals should continue to stay at home, except for essential activities, like getting food or medical care.

Gov. Edwards outlined the first phase of the Roadmap to a Resilient Louisiana, which adopts every major recommendation of the White House plan in Phase One. The Governor also highlighted data that shows that the Stay at Home order improved Louisiana's overall situation in relation to new COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations.

Louisiana meets the statewide threshold criteria from the White House related to declining COVID-like symptoms, new cases and hospitalizations. In addition, testing and contact tracing are ramping up, which further supports the decision to go to Phase One.

"Because of the Stay at Home order, Louisianans were able to dramatically improve our trajectory, reduce the number of new cases, keep our health care system from being overrun and save lives. It is because of this hard work that I, in consultation with public health experts and business and industry leaders, feel confident that all across the state we can move forward with entering into Phase One. Because we meet the White House statewide threshold criteria, starting on Friday, additional businesses may open with reasonable limitations to ensure safety for their employees and their customers," Gov. Edwards said. "Louisianans who are at high risk of dying from COVID-19, including the elderly, residents of long-term care facilities and those with poor control of certain illnesses, should continue to stay at home and only leave their homes only for essential reasons, like seeking medical care, going to an essential job or getting food."

"Right now, the data shows improvement, and we also now have a much more robust testing and contract tracing program underway, which will allow us to

better identify cases and isolate those who may have been infected. However, we are not out of the woods and if we see a dramatic spike in cases, we may have to increase restrictions. Our lives will not go back to normal for some time," Gov. Edwards said. "I know this has been a trying time for our people, our churches and our businesses, and I am truly grateful for the continued adherence to mitigation measures designed to slowing the spread of COVID-19 and saving lives. Louisianans are a remarkably strong and resilient people, and by working together, we will continue to protect each other and our state."

Gov. Edwards will issue an updated proclamation, the Roadmap to a Resilient Louisiana: Phase One, on Thursday, May 14 that removes the Stay at Home order for Louisianans, encouraging people who are at a higher risk of becoming ill from COVID-19 to continue to Stay at Home. However, all individuals are still Safer at Home and should limit their exposure to the novel coronavirus when in public by wearing a facial covering like a cloth mask, practicing good hygiene, including frequent handwashing, and maintaining at least six feet of social distance from people who are not in their households.

The Governor's order will detail categories of businesses that can be open and those which must remain closed. All non-essential Phase One businesses and churches will be limited to 25 percent of their total occupancy, which meets the White House Guidance for Phase One that calls for "strict" social distancing measures. All Phase One businesses and churches must have their employees who deal with the public in face coverings or cloth masks and enforce social distancing.

The 25 percent occupancy rate is based on the advice of public health officials who recommend that people generally have 110

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READ OUR DIGITAL INTERACTIVE EDITION ONLINE @ BRWEEKLYPRESS.COM

REOPENING SMALL BUSINESSES WITH FRUSTRATIONS



Small businesses in small towns all across Indiana have looked for ways to survive COVID-19...See Page 5

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SEED STARTER KITS TO YOUTH

SU Ag Center's Growing Healthy program has been working with its partner, Front Yard Bike Shop, to provide youth with seed starter kits during the stay at home order.See Page 2

STATE & LOCAL



LOCAL CHARITY HONORS HEROES

As a token of appreciation to the frontline workers of East Baton Rouge Council on Aging (EBRCSOA), Southern Grit Growth has funded a three-week take-home meal program...See Page 3

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COGIC HIT HARD BY COV-19

The Church of God in Christ (COGIC), the nation's largest African American Pentecostal denomination, has been particularly affected by coronavirus as many among its leadership...See Page 5

STATE & LOCAL NEWS

Send your news to the news department at the Baton Rouge Weekly Press by emailing it to: brweeklypress@yahoo.com

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CLASSIFIED

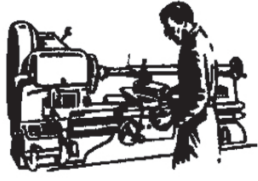
Buying or selling a service, looking for a good job? Check out the classifieds.



STATE & LOCAL

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READER INFORMATION



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The office is open 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
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Correction Policy

The Baton Rouge Weekly Press strives to be fair and accurate. The newspaper corrects any significant errors of fact brought to the attention of the editor. If you think an error has been made, call 225-775-2002

The Weekly Press

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SU Ag Center and Front Yard Bike Shop Provides Seed Starter Kits to Youth

BATON ROUGE, La. – SU Ag Center's Growing Healthy program has been working with its partner, Front Yard Bike Shop, to provide youth with seed starter kits during the stay at home order.

The kits consist of four different types of vegetable seeds, a seed tray, soil, and plant labels.

"This will give the students something to keep them occupied and maybe some of them will even turn into successful vegetable gardens," expressed Stephanie Elwood, SU Ag Center Extension Associate.

During the governor's stay at home order, the staff of Front Yard Bikes has been delivering up to 150 meals daily to their students who would have normally participated in their after school programming, along with grade-appropriate academic worksheets. The SU Ag Center provided the starter kits to add to their efforts.

Front Yard Bike Shop is a non-profit bike mechanics and afterschool program. It also serves as the location of the SU Ag Center's Growing Healthy program, which is the gardening component of the Ag Center's SNAP-Ed program.

SNAP-Ed is the nutrition promotion and obesity prevention component of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the U.S. domestic hunger safety net formerly known as Food Stamps that provides economic benefits to eligible, low-income individuals and families for food purchases. The program teaches people using or eligible for SNAP about proper nutrition and how to



make their food dollars stretch further. SNAP-Ed participants also learn to be physically active.

The SU Ag Center's SNAP-Ed program has been in existence for more than 20 years and operates in 13 parishes throughout the state of Louisiana: Ascension, Avoyelles, Calcasieu, East Baton Rouge, East Carroll, East Feliciana, Evangeline, Jefferson Davis, Madison, Morehouse, St. James, Richland, and West Carroll.

For additional information about Front Yard Bikes, visit www.frontyardbikes.com. Information about the SU Ag Center's SNAP-Ed program is available at, <https://www.suagnutrition.com/>.

square feet around them. This occupancy capacity includes customers and employees.

The State Fire Marshal and the Louisiana Department of Health will continue issuing guidance to different types of businesses about Phase One in the coming days, in order to ensure that businesses and churches can safely operate to the maximum level allowed in Phase One. Business owners and faith leaders can register at OpenSafely.la.gov to receive this guidance, which will also be placed online.

With the exception of gaming establishments, no church leader or business owner is required to register or to get approval of their opening plans in advance. Registering for the Open Safely site is not required to reopen, but it is encouraged as it will allow businesses and churches to get the latest information quickly.

Phase One guidance will allow essential businesses, as defined by CISA, to remain open. Non-essential businesses (sometimes called "gray area" businesses) and places of worship may remain open at 25 percent of their occupancy. All business owners should read the order to understand which category their business falls into.

New types of businesses that may open beginning on May 15, with 25 percent occupancy limits, sanitation guidelines and spacing for physical distancing include:

- Gyms and fitness centers
- Barber shops and hair and nail salons
- Casinos and Video Poker
- Theaters
- Racetracks (not open to spectators)
- Museums, zoos, aquariums (no tactile exhibits)
- Bars and breweries with LDH food permits

The following businesses remain closed: massage establishments and spas, tattoo parlors, carnivals, amusement parks, water parks, trampoline parks, arcades, fairs, bars and breweries without LDH food permits, pool halls, contact sports, children's play centers, playgrounds, theme parks, adult entertainment venues, and other similar businesses.

All business owners should review the updated order, which will be formally issued on Thursday, to understand if their business can be open as of May 15.

State buildings will begin to be open to the public on May 15 at 25 percent occupancy and state agencies are directed to continue to bring more state employees back to work in person, with proper distancing and protections in place. In line with the White House Phase One guidance, all employers that can be encouraged to continue to allow their employees to work remotely where possible, and to plan to space out their employees, close communal spaces, require face coverings like masks and increase sanitation protocols when employees do return to the office.

INFORMATIONAL RESOURCES:

Business and faith leaders should register at OpenSafely.la.gov to receive guidance and updates from the State Fire Marshal's office and the Louisiana Department of Health.

For a guide of businesses that can be open at any given time, visit <https://gov.louisiana.gov/can-this-business-open/>

Members of the public can continue to get information from the Governor's office by visiting Coronavirus.la.gov and by texting LACOVID to 67283.

Members of the public can continue to get information from the Department of Health by visiting ldh.la.gov/coronavirus

People with general questions about COVID-19 in Louisiana can call 211.



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The Weekly Press

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Local Charity Honors Unsung Heroes

Frontline Workers Receive Restaurant-Prepared Meals to Take Home to Their Own Families



BATON ROUGE, La — As a token of appreciation to the frontline workers of East Baton Rouge Council on Aging (EBR/COA), Southern Grit Growth has funded a three-week take-home meal program for the entire families of 57 Meals on Wheels drivers, Lotus Food Pantry workers, Care Managers and Social Workers.

Throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic the EBR/COA's staff has worked around the clock tire-

lessly to serve over 5,000 seniors' meals on a weekly basis. Since the onset of the pandemic, EBR/COA has provided over 50,000 meals, 1,500 bags of groceries, cases of household cleaning supplies and toilet paper to seniors across East Baton Rouge Parish. These numbers are steadily growing by hundreds weekly as the pandemic persists and new seniors request

additional services.

"My staff and I are so very appreciative for each and every meal donated by Southern Grit Growth. These meals will be the energy needed to continue helping our seniors through this unprecedented pandemic. It raises our spirits to be recognized as critical and frontline," said Tasha Clark-Amar, Chief Executive Officer of EBR/COA.

Southern Grit Growth President Ken Duncan said "We salute EBR/COA and their 57 dedicated warriors who risk their lives to bring food to our most vulnerable senior citizens - and a special "shout-out" to Monjunis Restaurant for partnering with us to prepare over 2,000 delicious, well-balanced

"home-cooking" style meals for these frontline workers and their families."

Southern Grit Growth is a Baton Rouge based 501(c)(3) Tax-Exempt Charity led by former Louisiana state treasurer Ken Duncan. Its purposes include a broad range of activities and programs that promote the health and well-being of individuals, families and communities

The East Baton Rouge Council on Aging (EBR/COA) is a non-profit organization serving the senior population of East Baton Rouge Parish. Annually, our agency delivers 1,105,820 meals through our "Meals on Wheels" Program and our senior centers and meal sites.

Councilwoman Doris Alexander Thanks Baker Nurses

Dear nurses who live and work in the City of Baker.

Your bravery in selflessly saving lives and comforting the sick among us has made you my new heroes. While your skill, dedication, and compassion fill me with amazement and joy, I am saddened at the heavy burden, physically and psychologically, you bear each and every day.

With gratitude and humility, I bow to you angels of mortal flesh walking in our midst as you superbly reflect our Heavenly Father's grace.

Words do not exist to adequately express my appreciation and amazement at what you have accomplished with hands and hearts even though supplies and equipment may have been inadequate. You deserve more than I can ever say or do; No flower can match the smell I want to send you, no candy is sweet enough to compare to you.

What do we offer you in return when you are asking for nothing, respect, honor, and acknowledgment is what I and my fellow citizens prayerfully submit to you.

National Nurses Week begins on May 6, Florence Nightingale's birthday. If you are a nurse, thank you, particu-



Councilwoman Doris T. Alexander

larly now!

When the city council begins meeting again, after it is safe to do so, I intend to offer a resolution of acknowledgment of your selfless sacrifices and the immeasurable healing and comfort your skilled hands have brought to us.

"To do what nobody else will do, in a way that nobody else can do, in spite of all we go through... that is what it is to be a nurse." Rawsi Williams

Be safe, be well, be strong, and wash your hands!

Councilwoman Doris T. Alexander District 4

Community Leaders Partner With United Cajun Navy to Bring Masks, Hand Sanitizer to Baker, Zachary

The United Cajun Navy, Miracle Place Church, City of Baker Mayor Darnell Waites, Senator Regina Barrow, Representative Barbara Carpenter and volunteers from various groups will

distribute masks and hand sanitizer to residents of Baker and Zachary. Residents are asked to bring their IDs to show proof of their addresses.

This event will take place

Saturday, May 16th, at 10am to 12pm, at the Miracle Place Church Campus, 2080 Main Street in Baker. Mr. Todd Terrell is providing these resources on behalf of the United Cajun Navy. Please

come and line up in your vehicles and wear a mask or face covering.

For more information, contact Cedric Murphy at 225 955-4813 or email at cmurphy@cityofbakerla.com.

VIGILANT from page 1

became director of the NIH-funded Center for AIDS Health Disparities Research at Meharry Medical College.

In an interview with NNPA Newswire, Dr. Hildreth stressed that "there has to be a new normal," and he implored all to understand that they don't "want to be a vector."

"I think that vigilance has to be raised to a new level. The response to this situation by the [Trump] administration was late," Dr. Hildreth stated.

"There needed to have been a coordinated response to this.

A lot of what's happening now could have been avoided had we had strong leadership from the beginning. We would be having a different conversation," Dr. Hildreth added.

As America and most of the world hunker down, Dr. Hildreth said there must embrace a new normal.

"It's possible that we identify people that are affected and treat them and go back to a somewhat normal life. But if you don't have that, then it means that the social distancing aspects and the hygienic practices to avoid spreading the virus will have to continue," Dr. Hildreth noted.

"On any given day, as many as

46,000 flights are carrying over 3 million people, and you have people from Florida, New York, and Miami and other places on there. If one person has the disease, then it starts all over again," he said.

Dr. Hildreth also warned of a more cataclysmic situation arising if there's no vigilance.

"And as human beings continue to push into habitats we have not been in before, and come into contact with pathogens we have not come into contact with before, I'm just saying that this may not be the last time we as a world have to respond to a pandemic like this," he stated. "We could have a situation where billions die."

Dr. Hildreth noted that that

already this century, there's been three pandemics - SARS, MERS, and COVID-19. He said that SARS and MERS occurred in 2002, and 2019, respectively, while COVID-19 entered the scene late in 2019.

"It's almost at a frequency that every nine to 10 years we have to deal with this. And then, as the population grows and we have to encroach on more and more habitat that we have not been a part of before, there is an expectation that we will have to deal with emerging infections that we have not had to deal with before," Dr. Hildreth said.

"Not all of them are necessarily going to become a global contagion, but some of them probably will."

Baton Rouge Community College to hold Spring 2020 Virtual Commencement

BATON ROUGE, LA - Baton Rouge Community College will host a virtual commencement ceremony honoring Spring 2020 graduates on Friday, May 29, beginning at 10 a.m. The institution will host the ceremony on the college's Facebook page (Facebook.com/mybrcc) for graduates and their

loved ones. The virtual ceremony will include many components of BRCC's traditional graduation ceremony with messages from BRCC Chancellor Dr. Willie Smith, the academic deans and college officials. The name of each graduate will be read aloud and pictures of the graduates will be displayed.



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RELIGION

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<https://livestream.com/accounts/27567249/events/8379840>

■ **Rose Hill Church:**
Pastor Danny Donaldson
See website for times
<https://www.facebook.com/rosehillbatrouge>

■ **Living Faith Christian Ctr.**
Bishop Raymond Johnson
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• YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiHSeRaHIS8ewCoFhcYHGnQ>
• Pkxel: <https://campus.pkxel.com/living-faith-cc>
• Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LivingFaithChristianCenterBR/>

■ **Mt. Carmel Baptist Church**
Rev., Dr. Andra Johnson
Sunday at 9:30am
<https://www.mtcarmelbtr.com/?fbclid=IwAR2yeejE375iY6MvJarHBFFsg9uWpJc1ExcVVjZNIhUvsJf-C30AiyTGow2k>

Church Of God In Christ Hit Hard By Cov-19

WRITTEN BY
MADISON J. GRAY

The Church of God in Christ (COGIC), the nation's largest African American Pentecostal denomination, has been particularly affected by coronavirus as many among its leadership have died of the disease.

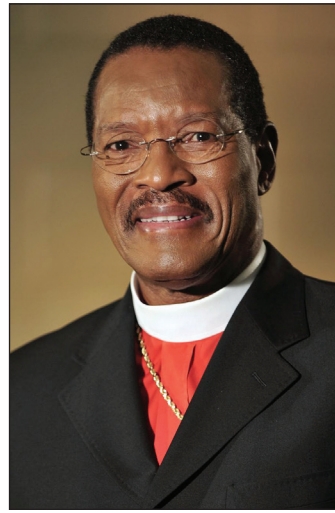
The Washington Post reports church leadership in states like Michigan, New York, California and Mississippi, all states where COGIC has a strong presence, have seen as many as 30 bishops and other clergy felled by COVID-19.

Deaths in the church include First Assistant Presiding Bishop Phillip A. Brooks of Detroit; Bishop Tony Scott of Clarksdale, Miss.; and Bishops Robert E.

Smith of Flint, Mich., and Robert L. Harris, also of Detroit were reported by various news outlets. Similar losses have taken hold in Southern California, according to the Los Angeles Sentinel.

COGIC presiding Bishop Charles Blake has been providing directives for church members since March and has advised that services and other functions stop, including major conferences planned for 2020.

"I'd like to take this opportunity to unequivocally state that all Church of God in Christ local, district, state and international gatherings should absolutely cease," Blake said in a video to church members. "Saints of God, let us please continue to do all we can to contribute to the flattening of this pandemic's



Presiding Bishop Charles Blake

curve. I cannot stress the vital importance of doing so for the safety and well-being of all."

Like the National Baptist Convention, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and the United Methodist Church, COGIC is an institution within the African American community with 7.7 million members worldwide.

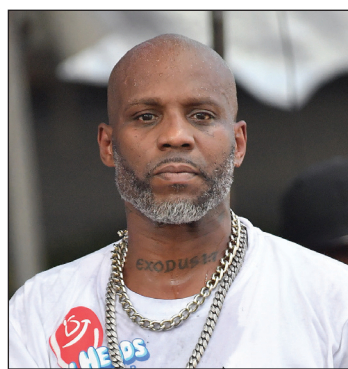
People who study the Black church say what is happening to the denomination is another exposure to how health disparities are being exploited by coronavirus to harm African Americans.

"This will change the ecosystem of Black church life," Anthea Butler, a University of Pennsylvania associate professor of religious studies. "It's showing the inequities of health disparities and economic disparities in the black community."

Churches across the country

have stopped traditional formal services. Many who could opt for virtual churches broadcast on social media or live streaming services. Others are keeping congregants engaged through phone prayer lines. But pews, normally packed for Easter Sunday, were empty on a day when flocks are usually drawn to church.

A handful of churches have stayed open with preachers refusing to let COVID-19 stop them from providing religious services. But at least one minister has died since his refusal. Bishop Gerald Glenn of New Deliverance Evangelistic Church in Chesterfield, Va., died earlier this month of complications from the virus.



DMX recently hosted a Bible study on Instagram

DMX Hosts Virtual Bible Study and Everybody's Being Blessed By It

During this time of the pandemic, many are turning to do more online: from grocery shopping to meetings, parties, graduations, and even church. In fact, many churches have upped their online experience to share the word of God to the masses virtually.

DMX has also taken to social media to share the good news

of the Bible. The rapper took to Instagram Live and hosted a virtual Bible study. The only notice he gave was a very vague video announcement earlier that day where he said he had "something personal to share." Many wondered if it was bad news since a lot of us only know the DMX whose very public battle with substance abuse, domestic disputes,

dogfighting, and numerous run-ins with police were on display constantly in the news.

But during DMX's Friday live session on Instagram, he went through scriptures in the bible in hopes to share God's good news and help people deal with the uncertain times of this coronavirus pandemic. One particular piece of his bible study X was going

through the book of Ecclesiastes 3. It was during this section that he spoke about "a time being for everything" happening right now, even social distancing.

A number of fans who were viewing the live commented on how sober, clean and clear the rapper looked while speaking. It's something many fans haven't seen
See JUMP, on page 5

Pastor Patricia Hatch Haynes
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Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. - Hebrews 10:25

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Hour of Power 12 Noon Each Wednesday
Sunday School 8:00am
Church Service 9:00am
Communion Service 2nd Sunday 9:00am
Bible Study Wednesday 7:00pm
Sister/Brotherhood Meeting 6:00pm

New Jerusalem Faith Fellowship
982 N 46th St, Baton Rouge, La. 70802
We believe the Bible to be the inspired and only infallible written Word of God. We believe that there is One God, eternally existent in Three Persons; God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.
PASTOR DONALD A. MONTGOMERY

ST. JOHN BAPTIST CHURCH
Dr. Donald R. Ruth, Pastor
820 New Rafe Mayer Road
Baton Rouge, LA 70807
Phone: 225-775-9756
Web Address: saintjohnbc.org

NEW BIRTH FULL GOSPEL MINISTRIES
1283 Rosenwald Road
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Bishop I. J. Payne, Pastor
'THE NEW LIFE' Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. — 2 Corinthians 5:17
SUNDAY WORSHIP Every Sunday at 11:30 A.M.
SUNDAY SCHOOL Every Sunday at 9:30 A.M.
HOLY COMMUNION Every 3rd Sunday at 11:30 A.M.
HOUR OF POWER Every Friday at 12 NOON
Radio Broadcast 1st and 3rd Sunday WXOK at 8:00am

NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH
5856 Greenwell Springs Road • Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70806
Telephone: (225) 926-0246 • Facsimile: (225) 925-8022
Toll Free: 888-700-6174
Websites: www.newhopebr.com
Rev. Leo Cyrus Sr., Pastor
CHURCH SCHEDULE
Sunday Morning Worship 10:45 AM
Lord's Supper 3rd Sundays
Sunday School 9:30 AM
Prayer Service Wed. @ 6:00 PM
Bible Study Wed. @ 7:00 PM
Mission Statement: New Hope Baptist Church is a family of baptized believers who worship the Lord our God in spirit and in truth, teach the saved to reach the lost and minister to the needs of others, while encouraging one another through acts of love and living in obedience to Gods Word

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

A Guide to Local Businesses Serving the Community

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BUSINESS

Reopening Small Businesses Comes With New Frustrations

Small businesses in small towns all across Indiana have looked for ways to survive COVID-19.

Jiffy Treat in Linton is a prime example.

"We have decided not to let people come in and dine in just yet," said owner Doug Wasnidge. He has owned the popular ice cream shop for almost two years.

Customers can still come in to pick up a call-in order or go through the drive-thru, where it's not unusual to see the owner actually helping, taking orders.

He says the reason he can't have customers at the tables is obvious.

"If we leave this one, close this one, open, close that one, open, even if they gave us 6 foot of separation, you will have people standing next to people sitting down," he said, as he literally walked from booth to booth in his business.

Not to mention the problems



that eating with a mask creates. "I was closed 6 and a half weeks," Nicky Carr said, picking up scissors while cutting a cus-

tomers hair. "A long time," I responded. She has just gotten the clearance to re-open. Since I was need

of a haircut and she needed to talk, I took a seat.

"It should have been my choice to decide and my customer choice to decide whether they did or didn't want to," she vented.

Nicky Carr has cut hair for 34 years, owning her own shop for 28.

"I feel like I could be shut down every day for the next two years. Even by taking every precaution, I could still be asked to quarantine continually, over and over and over again," she said.

And that isn't the only frustrating thing about the shutdown.

"Had it not been for the extra \$600, my unemployment would have been \$107," an exasperated Carr declared.

"You can't live on that," I added.

So she has re-opened with precautions. Jiffy Treat has remained open with precautions. For now, it's the best they can do.

AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana Donates \$20,000 to Combat Food Insecurity During COVID-19

BATON ROUGE, La. — AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana, a Healthy Louisiana Medicaid managed care plan, today announced a \$20,000 donation to support Feeding Louisiana in addressing food insecurity in the state.

Access to nourishing food is a key determinant of overall health. Research shows communities with the highest rates of food insecurity also face a higher prevalence for chronic disease[1]. Louisiana has one of the highest levels of food insecurity in the United States. According to Feeding America:

- One-in-six Louisiana households already struggled to put food on the table before the COVID-19 pandemic.

- One out of every four Louisiana children lives in a food-insecure household. In rural parishes, it's one in three. School closures, job disruptions, lack of paid sick leave and the health threat's

disproportionate impact on the elderly and low-income families are only a few aspects of this evolving crisis.

- Food banks are experiencing a decrease in donations, unique product distribution challenges, declining volunteer groups, and an increased product demand for vulnerable populations.

"Few things are more fundamental to our ability to lead healthy and productive lives than having adequate access to nutritious food," said AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana Market President Kyle Viator.

"AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana is proud to support Feeding Louisiana's mission to serve as a unified voice for Louisiana's hungry by providing short-term food relief while seeking long-term solutions to hunger."

"Feeding Louisiana and its members are deeply appreciative for AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana's support of its efforts in responding to increased food assistance needs due to the spread of COVID-19," said Feeding Louisiana Executive Director Corey Patty. "This gift will allow Louisiana's food banks to

serve more impacted individuals and families through the distribution of more than 70,000 meals to communities in need across all 64 parishes of the state."

Today's donation is a continuation of AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana's long-standing support of Louisiana's food banks. In addition to the health plan's monetary contributions, its associates have volunteered hundreds of hours to organizing food drives and packing food boxes at food banks throughout the state.

LEADERS from page 1

and as a threat to the integrity and vitality of the communities we are privileged to serve.

For these reasons, we encourage all Black churches and businesses to remain closed during this critical period. The denominations and independent churches represented in this statement, which comprise a combined membership of more than 25 million people and more than 30,000 congregations, intend to remain closed and to continue to worship virtually, with the same dedication and love that we brought to the church. The civil rights organizations represented are working tirelessly to protect our communities from injustice and inequality as this country responds to the pandemic. But they are doing so remotely, working from their homes to continue the vital work of civil rights.

This pandemic has ravaged Black communities in both urban and rural areas. The CDC reports that Black people constitute 20% of all U.S. coronavirus deaths, although we are only 12% of the U.S. population. Across the country, we see the same disproportionate impact. Our families need us. Our communities need us. We must continue to telework wherever possible, and to tele-worship for however long it is necessary to do so.

Opening too soon also threatens our financial future. As church leaders and business owners, we must take responsibility for helping to protect the health of our parishioners and patrons — the very people with whom we must work in the coming months to rebuild the economic strength of our communities.

Of course, we recognize that some members of our community may feel compelled to engage in some aspects of public life. For those who must, we strongly encourage you to take seriously the need to wear masks and gloves in public spaces, to limit your contact with others, to engage in continued physical distancing, to regularly wash your hands and to refrain from touching your face. Please reach out to your local churches if you are having difficulty obtaining masks and gloves.

We do not take it lightly to encourage members of our communities to defy the orders of state governors. But we are compelled by our faith, by our obligation as servants of God, and by our commitment as civil rights leaders, to speak life into our communities. Our sacred duty is to support and advance the life and health of Black people, families and communities in our country. And so, we link arms in our shared determination to protect our communities from the ravages of this pandemic. For now, that means encouraging each and every one of you to stay home.

And because we are surrounded by the "great cloud of witnesses" who came before us — Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Thurgood Marshall, and Fannie Lou Hamer — we encourage you to use this time at home to do what is necessary to ensure that our community will emerge from this challenging time stronger than ever: register to vote, take the necessary steps to prepare to vote in the upcoming elections (in person or by mail, depending on your state laws), and complete your census form. This is work we must do now if we are to secure a brighter future for our children and for generations to come.

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PUBLIC NOTICE
Request for Proposals
Microtransit Pilot Program
Solicitation #2020-Microtransit-001

The Capital Area Transit System (CATS), a political subdivision of the State of Louisiana, operating the public transit system in EBR Parish is accepting Offers for **Microtransit**. Sealed offers are due to CATS Procurement Department by **March 11, 2020 at 10:00 AM (local time)** at 350 N. Donmor, Baton Rouge, LA 70806. A copy of this RFP can be found on CATS website at: <https://www.brcats.com/page/procurement>. Written questions will be accepted through February 19, 2020 via email at: catsprocurement@brcats.com. Offerors are reminded to check CATS website often for addenda and other important dates in reference to this RFP. CATS is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Get Serious

LOUISIANA

USE YOUR HEAD...STOP THE SPREAD!

STOP COVID-19



WHICH ONE ARE YOU WEARING TODAY?



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