

TFL joins fight to combat COVID-19 crisis

Who could have foreseen just a short time ago, when employers – including The FAMiLY Leader and the Iowa Legislature – sent employees to work from home during the COVID-19 crisis, that TFL would become busier and more needed than ever?

These unprecedented times have created sudden, unexpected needs for people all across Iowa. But by God's grace, and through the relationships our Church Ambassador Network's pastors have built with Iowa's governing leaders, TFL has been thrust into the epicenter of teaming with many partners to meet these needs.

Here's just some of what TFL has been doing since this crisis began:

Daily work

Through online technology, the TFL staff has met daily for prayer and to coordinate our legislative, communication, and humanitarian efforts.

Event planning

We've been able to reschedule **U.S. Secretary of State Michael Pompeo** and author **Joel C. Rosenberg** to speak at the July 17 Family Leadership Summit, and we continue to prepare for **Dr. Sean McDowell** to be our biblical worldview speaker at LEAD, TFL's week-long leadership training experience for teens.

Speaking into the culture

Bob Vander Plaats published an op-ed, "Even in pandemic, a hopeful 'new normal,'" in the Des Moines Journal; and talking with pastors and government leaders helped TFL's Greg Baker to compile a column, "7 ways Christians can help in the COVID-19

crisis," which has been shared on social media and reprinted in area newspapers.

Meanwhile, the immensely popular YouVersion Bible app for smartphones and tablets has made If 7:14's "The Daniel Difference" 5-day devotional one of its featured Bible reading and prayer plans for the coronavirus crisis.

Bringing together the governor and pastors

Through years of building relationships between pastors and Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds and her staff, TFL was able to secure a teleconference call with the governor and over 230 Iowa pastors. The governor answered some of the pastors' most pressing questions, and the pastors in turn encouraged and prayed for the governor.

The governor also shared three of the most urgent needs facing Iowans during this crisis: **Food banks, blood drives, and child care**, particularly child care for emergency and essential-services workers. TFL and the pastors of the Church Ambassador Network have already begun working in partnership with government agencies and community organizations to assist in meeting these urgent needs.

Reassigning staff to community aid

Multiple members of the TFL team are bringing together churches and Gov. Reynolds' administration to meet community needs. Greg and the Church Ambassador Team and community partners like Pastor Al Perez and Serve the City are recruiting churches across the state of Iowa to be a volunteer force to distribute food, give blood, and provide child care. Ashley is coordinating details. Darla is equipping the churches. And Katie is answering the phone for central Iowa's emergency-food hotline. With churches as Christ's hands and feet in time of need, we anticipate helping Iowa food banks increase their distribution by over **500,000 pounds of food**.

Mentoring and learning from other states

TFL's team has also been in frequent contact with the states of TFL's The Daniel Initiative and our partner states in the Family Policy Alliance, looking to learn and share "best practices" among states. We've been able to encourage and guide other states' Church Ambassador Networks to partner with state governments in meeting local needs, while we've also learned from other states how to refine our efforts in Iowa.

Many of these efforts are just beginning, as the needs of Americans become more and more acute.

But here's the encouraging and inspiring takeaway: ***We are seeing years of building relationships between ministers of God in the Church and ministers of God in government bear tangible fruit in a time of need.***

"We never anticipated this pandemic, but it has provided us the moment that these relationships would not only be sorely needed, but would also provide needed relief," says Greg Baker, TFL's vice president of church engagement. "We are grateful God has prepared TFL for just such a time as this. We are grateful for our governor's willingness to reach out to churches. And we are thankful beyond words for the pastors and churches who have joined us in this journey."

Would you join us as well? What better time than when we're "social distancing" to try online giving toward a revived America that honors God AND blesses people! Click here now!

Even in pandemic, a hopeful 'new normal'

The following commentary by Bob Vander Plaats was first published in the Des Moines Register.

The coronavirus has profoundly shaken my daily routines, like it has for many of us. But through my faith, I have found this "new normal" actually gives me hope for our future.

Two weeks ago, my wife and I were dining in Arizona. We were enjoying friends, food, and the desert warmth, a thousand miles from home. But after arriving at the Mesa airport for our return flight, our 23-year-old son texted us that he was out of toilet paper and the box store near his Minneapolis residence was out of stock. This was our first sign of the gravity of the situation.

While waiting at the airport, a lady showed up at our gate masked and gloved. She looked pale, and she was obviously fighting a respiratory illness. The other passengers noticed, and all were silently wondering if she'd be their flight companion. One gentleman couldn't resist and asked the question, "Are you all right?" She told him she had been to the doctor and tested negative for the coronavirus. While those who overheard were relieved, no one was in a hurry to give her a congratulatory embrace.

Since our return flight, our linen closet has been stocked with toilet paper, our church services have convened online, and our office meetings are conducted via Zoom. Our uniquely gifted son, Lucas, is confined to his group home with no allowance for visitors, including us, his parents. During this time we also await anxiously the arrival of our first grandchild, whom we will likely meet for the first time via Skype. While we are grateful for technology and our modern

means for coping with this declared pandemic, our new norm is anything but normal.

This new normal is a reminder that we are not in control. This is why a billionaire president of the United States calls our nation to prayer and encourages worship online. COVID-19, just like 9/11, reminds us that when there is nowhere to run and nowhere to hide, we turn to God. It's more than ironic that the two ships deployed to give aid to potentially overrun hospitals are called "Mercy" and "Comfort." These two words accurately summarize our prayer for God to have mercy and for God to provide comfort.

For people of faith, we needn't be alarmed. Wise? Yes. Alarmed? No. As believers in Jesus, our hope isn't in this world. We are all going to die. None make it out alive. Therefore, we can live with an eternal focus and hope. Further, we can point our family, friends, and neighbors to look higher than COVID-19. Our help comes from the Lord.

And through Him, we must remember that we are often the help He sends. We should comfort those who are depressed, discouraged, and mourning. We should help and protect the weak, the disabled, the elderly, and the frail. We should exercise patience with everyone and resist retribution and retaliation. Simply put, we are called to pursue what is good for family, for neighbors, for country, for all.

And finally, we should rejoice ... always. Praise God that this crisis and every crisis does not take Him by surprise, and He has it under control and will use it for His purpose. This is why we pray without ceasing. It is wise to seek Him with all of our heart, all of our minds, and all of our strength ... all of the time. When we do this, we will love our neighbor – even the one who is masked, gloved, and coughing – as ourselves.

Seeking God and loving our neighbor in prosperity and in crisis would be a good "new normal." May God hear our prayers,

forgive our sins, and heal our land.

Bob Vander Plaats is president and CEO of the FAMIly Leader, a ministry that inspires Christ-like leadership in the home, church, and government.

TFL's Capitol Connection: An update from home, Church, AND government

"Social distancing" is keeping many Americans apart today, including the staff of The FAMIly Leader!

So instead of the usual "TFL's Capitol Connection" video that our team produces each Friday, we worked from three different locations to give you three, brief updates: one from my home, one from Greg Baker on what the Church can do in this time, and one from Chuck Hurley on what's happening with the Iowa government and the Protect Life Amendment:

Bob from home

Download the FREE If 7:14 prayer app here!

Greg on the Church

Read Greg's column, "7 ways Christians can help in the COVID-19 crisis."

Chuck on the Iowa government

7 ways Christians can help in the COVID-19 crisis

Coronavirus is having a deep impact on our communities, well beyond the virus itself. Many are hurting from the impacts of social distancing and quarantines, and even more are struggling in the economic aftermath.

At The FAMiLY Leader, we are looking for ways we can be a blessing to our communities, and we wanted to take an opportunity to share 7 potential ways you can help others, too:

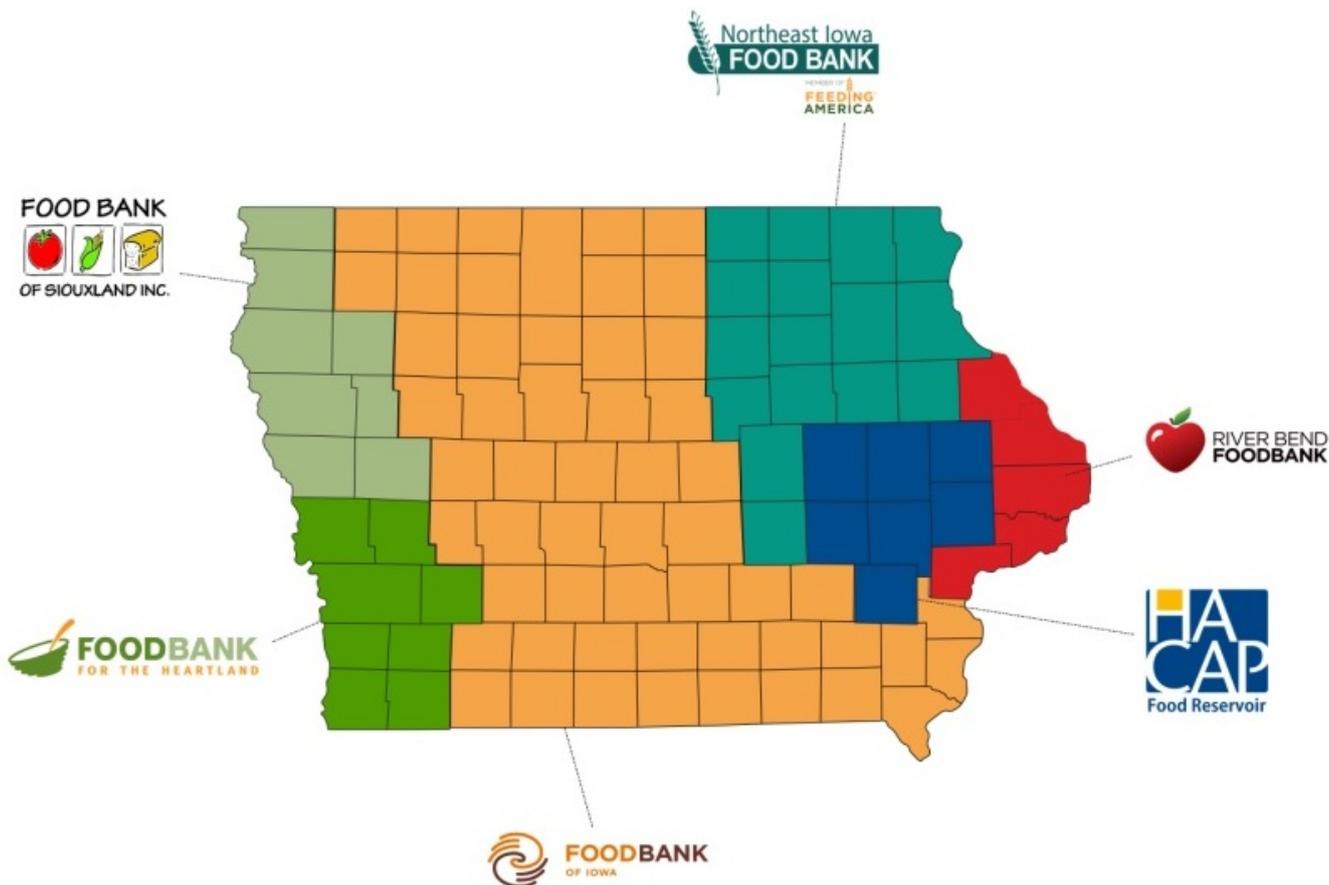
1. Pray: The most important thing the people of God can do right now is pray. Yes, pray for containment and cure and for those sickened by the disease. Pray for those who are mourning death today. But pray also for governing leaders as they make difficult decisions, many struggling to balance public health needs and economic implications. And pray for churches, that God will give pastors wisdom in leading their congregations and serving their communities.

Join tens of thousands around the world praying for revival through the FREE If 7:14 app!

2. Reach out to a neighbor: Many around us do not have a church fellowship to fall back on in these times of isolation. If there is someone you have been meaning to have over for a meal or to bring a gift to, consider doing it now. Many of our elderly neighbors, in particular, need someone to deliver meals or take them to a doctor's appointment. There may be community organizations near you that help the elderly and that need volunteers now more than ever. You never know how God will use these incredible opportunities.

3. Give to local food banks: Perhaps the most urgent need right now, we're hearing from community and government leaders, is food banks. With schools closing, and with even more Iowans economically displaced, the needs continue to grow. Iowa has divided its food banks into parent organizations. We recommend reaching out to your parent organization to learn of their specific needs. The most universally communicated need is funds. For example: Food Bank of Iowa is expecting to spend \$80,000 a day to meet needs, a number significantly higher now than during typical operation.

- River Bend Food Bank (Davenport): <https://riverbendfoodbank.org/>
- Northeast Iowa Food Bank (Waterloo): <https://www.northeastiowafoodbank.org/>
- Food Bank of Iowa (Central Iowa): <https://www.foodbankiowa.org/>
- DMARC (Des Moines Metro): <http://www.dmarcunited.org>
- Food Bank of Siouxland (Sioux City): <https://siouxlandfoodbank.org/>
- HACAP Food Reservoir (Hiawatha): <https://www.hacap.org/>



4. Keep giving to your churches: As many churches will not have services over a prolonged period of time, it is important that we as attenders do not cut back on giving. Times like these can be a huge strain on church budgets.

5. Give to church benevolence funds: The virus is having a significant impact on our economy and will result in many people in our churches and communities having hours cut, or losing their job all together. Consider giving to a benevolence fund or something like it in your church to help those who are in urgent economic need.

6. Be ready, willing, and available to serve: Over the coming days, The FAMiLY Leader's Church Ambassador Network will continue to coordinate with churches across the state on ways we can best assist our communities. And many churches are already laboring in your community right now. We recommend letting your church know that you are ready, willing, and available to serve and intentionally looking for opportunities

to serve in your community. The Next Door app and Facebook are wonderful ways to find opportunities of needs.

7. Support local restaurants: As restaurant dining rooms are closed across the state, locally-owned small businesses will be taking a huge hit. Unfortunately, many will not be able to re-open their doors. If you are able, consider ordering food “to go” from some of your favorite local places. This helps keep important cash flow for the business, as well as keep hourly people employed.

These are just a few of the many ways you can be a blessing and a light. We are sure you have many great ideas of your own. Above all, let us all encourage each other in Jesus, love one another, and keep our eyes on Him, that we may walk with Him and in His peace in this time of storm.

Do you have other suggestions on how Christians can help? Share them with others in the discussion on our Facebook page by clicking here!

Coronavirus: Now is the time for the Church to step up

The FAMiLY Leader has been a trailblazer in forging biblical – and constitutional – cooperation between local governments and local churches. Both of God’s institutions, when they work together in separate roles but deliberate relationship, can meet community needs far better than either can working alone.

And now the coronavirus pandemic is pressing practical and personal hardships upon our friends and neighbors, many we may not even realize.

The FAMiLY Leader's Bob Vander Plaats and Greg Baker discuss this incredible opportunity for the Church to be the hands and feet of Christ:

Join tens of thousands around the world in prayer for revival with the FREE If 7:14 app!

TFL'S Capitol Connection Special Edition: Legislature suspended

The Iowa Legislature will be suspended for 30 days as a safety precaution during the coronavirus pandemic.

The FAMiLY Leader's Bob Vander Plaats, Chuck Hurley, and Danny Carroll break down what that means for the Iowa government and what that means for our top legislative priority, the Protect Life Amendment:

Join tens of thousands around the world in prayer for revival with the FREE If 7:14 app!

TFL's Capitol Connection:

“Gender identity” bathrooms spark confrontation

Typically, The FAMiLY Leader’s Capitol Connection highlights bills and amendments currently being debated in the Iowa House and Senate.

This week, however, it’s an old law – which placed “gender identity” into Iowa’s Civil Rights Code in 2007 – that sparked a controversy at the Capitol.

TFL’s Bob Vander Plaats, Chuck Hurley, and Danny Carroll discuss not only the nonsense over “gender identity,” which included a confrontation between students and State Troopers over which bathroom to use, but also the status of the Protect Life Amendment and in the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on our planned event with U.S. Secretary of State Michael Pompeo:

TFL’s Capitol Connection: Iowans rally for Protect Life Amendment

This past week, roughly 200 Iowans gathered in the Capitol Rotunda to pray for life and passage of the Protect Life Amendment. Among those speaking was Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds, who again made the case for why the amendment is so needed.

The FAMiLY Leader’s Drew Zahn, Chuck Hurley, and Danny Carroll sit down to discuss what that prayer rally meant for the

amendment and how some high-level meetings with government officials are continuing to build the momentum for protecting life:

Watch video from the 2020 Prayer Rally for Life here!

Get YOUR tickets for “An Evening of International Impact” with U.S. Secretary of State Michael Pompeo and bestselling author Joel C. Rosenberg before the March 21 event sells out!

WATCH: Gov. Reynolds champions Protect Life Amendment

Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds spoke a crowd of roughly 200 pro-life supporters at the Prayer Rally for Life at the Iowa Capitol on March 2, 2020.

Chief among her topics: Iowa’s need to pass the Protect Life Amendment.

“With one ruling the Iowa Supreme Court moved [Iowa] from being one of the most pro-life states in the nation to being one of the most abortion friendly,” the governor explained. “That one ruling was more aggressive than the U.S. Supreme Court was in *Roe v. Wade*.

“It laid the groundwork to challenge every single regulation and restriction on abortion on demand and opened the doors for public funding of abortion,” she continued. “I believe this decision is wrong, and it’s up to us to correct overreach by the judiciary.”

Watch Gov. Reynolds' full speech below:

Get the facts on the Iowa Supreme Court's radical ruling and why Iowa needs to pass the Protect Life Amendment: Click here now!

You can also watch video of the whole Prayer Rally for Life below, or use the time codes below the video to skip to specific speakers:

0:00 Opening Remarks/Introduction – Danny Carroll – The FAMiLY LEADER /Coalition of Pro-Life Leaders

2:10 Opening Prayer – Terry Amann – Pastor at the Church of the Way

6:52 Update on Constitutional Amendment

8:32 Representative Steve Holt

15:41 Senator Jake Chapman

23:52 Introduction of Governor – Bob Vander Plaats – The FAMiLY LEADER

29:22 Governor Kim Reynolds

39:25 Coalition of Pro-Life Leaders – Maggie DeWitte – Executive Director – Iowans For LIFE Coalition of Pro-Life Leaders

46:24 Mothers, Victims, and the Role of the Church – Laura Limmex – Restored by Grace Ministries, 515.971.5522

58:30 Prayer for Life – Father Mark McGeary – Associate Pastor of St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, West Des Moines

1:03:13 Recognize Legislators in attendance – ChuckHurley – TheFAMiLYLEADER

1:04:52 Prayer for Legislators and Governor – A.J. Potter – Pastor at Pleasantville Baptist Church

1:09:40 Closing Prayer Pastor Shawn Powers – Pastor at Redemption Hill Church

1:11:57 Closing Remarks – Danny Carroll

TFL's Capitol Connection: Public hearing on life and 2 big events coming!

This week the Protect Life Amendment was given a public hearing before a crowd of hundreds and the focused eye of TV cameras. TFL's Bob Vander Plaats, Chuck Hurley, and Danny Carroll not only update you on how it went, but also keep you in the loop on the Prayer Rally for Life at the Iowa Capitol March 2, and "An Evening of International Impact" on March 21.

Plus, click below to:

- Watch the testimonies from the Protect Life Amendment public hearing
 - Get the details on the March 2 Prayer Rally for Life
 - See how you can join us for "An Evening of International Impact" with U.S. Secretary of State Michael Pompeo and bestselling author Joel C. Rosenberg
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WATCH: Exclusive, behind scenes interview with Joel Rosenberg

One year ago, New York Times bestselling author Joel C. Rosenberg came to Iowa, to a FAMiLY Leader Foundation event, to debut his newest novel, “The Persian Gamble.”

Before that evening’s dinner and presentation, TFL President and CEO Bob Vander Plaats sat down with Joel in an exclusive, never-before-seen video.

The two talked about how America has changed since the day in 2012 when, at TFL’s Family Leadership Summit, Rosenberg issued a call for God’s people to humble themselves and pray to seek revival in our nation. That Summit significantly changed the direction of TFL’s ministry. And in this video, Vander Plaats and Rosenberg discuss why the Church must lead the change if we’re to see God stay His hand of judgment upon our country:

Now, one year later, Rosenberg is returning to Iowa to debut another new novel, “The Jerusalem Assassin.”

What’s more, he’s joining a very special guest – U.S. Secretary of State Michael Pompeo – for **“An Evening of International Impact”** at the Des Moines Marriott Downtown on Saturday, March 21, at *6:30 p.m.

**CLICK HERE TO
PURCHASE TICKETS**

“As tensions mount in the Middle East, we wanted to set apart

an evening to begin a conversation,” says Bob Vander Plaats, president and CEO of The FAMiLY Leader Foundation. “We have invited Rosenberg and Secretary Pompeo to sit down with us and discuss the current global situation, America’s role, and the impact our faith has on these circumstances.”

The evening dinner, brought to you by signature sponsor Lindell Recovery Network, will include an update from Vander Plaats on TFL’s “The Daniel Initiative” and presentations by both Secretary Pompeo and Rosenberg.

Secretary Pompeo has served the U.S. as an Army officer, a U.S. representative from Kansas, and the director of the Central Intelligence Agency. He serves today as the U.S. Secretary of State.

Rosenberg will join the dinner as part of the debut book tour for his newest novel, “The Jerusalem Assassin.” Author of 13 previous New York Times bestselling novels, Rosenberg has repeatedly proven his uncanny ability to foreshadow geopolitical realities, marking his place as a leader in fact-based fiction. Attendees will receive one complimentary copy of “The Jerusalem Assassin” per family unit, and Rosenberg plans a book signing following the event.

*** Please plan on arriving early and leave personal defense items at home or in your vehicle, as the event will be monitored by diplomatic security.**

Hotel offering your special group rate:

- **Des Moines Marriott Downtown for \$125 USD per night**

**Book your hotel room with a group rate for
The Family Leader Fundraiser Dinner**

Last Day to Book: Friday, February 28, 2020

Tickets on sale NOW! >> Get yours here <<

WATCH: Protect Life Amendment public hearing

On Tuesday, Feb. 25, observers at the Iowa Capitol were truly surprised and inspired: Pro-lifers came to the Capitol by the hundreds to pray, to testify, and to cheer on Iowa's pro-life champions at a public hearing for The Protect Life Amendment.

While long-time Capitol observers remember well the days when Planned Parenthood's pink-shirted crowds chanted and drowned out small gatherings of pro-life activists, Tuesday night marked a significant shifting of the tide. The former State Supreme Court chambers, the hallways, the Rotunda, and an overflow room were all crowded this time with a comparable crowd of pro-lifers. Those who have seen the ultrasounds and those who know that infant lives in their mothers' wombs are babies deserving of protection came to cheer on the Protect Life Amendment.

In fact, as the night concluded, House members noticed, the pro-abortion forces ran out of people willing to testify, while the pro-life list still ran over a dozen long of people hoping to speak.

The FAMiLY Leader's camera and communications team was there, covering the action. You can watch the entire night's slate of testimonies below, or use the time-stamp list below the video to skip to a specific speaker:

Click on times to jump to spot in video.

0:00 Rep. Holt – Opening Comments on HJR 2004

2:43 Dr. Mary Browning

6:01 Opposition

8:59 Lisa Ambrozic

12:05 Opposition

15:18 Renee Aamodt

18:15 Opposition

21:14 Brittany Hruska

24:11 Opposition

27:21 Pastor Josh DeGroote

30:35 Opposition

33:45 Kim Laube

36:47 Opposition

39:59 Maggie Dewitte

42:42 Opposition

45:55 Jim Lamb

49:08 Opposition

51:48 Daniel Sunne

54:30 Opposition

57:42 Danny Carroll

1:00:46 Opposition

1:03:30 Caitlyn Dixson

1:06:21 Laura Limmex

1:09:23 Opposition

1:12:30 Luana Stoltenberg

1:15:31 Opposition

1:18:31 Serena Dye

1:21:47 Opposition

1:24:57 Nancy Lincoln

1:28:08 Opposition

1:30:26 Eric Borseth

1:33:37 Opposition

1:36:42 Joan Thompson

1:39:28 Rebecca Oleson

1:42:21 Opposition

1:45:30 Opposition
1:48:23 Drew Zahn
1:51:34 Lindsey M.
1:54:29 Opposition
1:57:47 Chuck Hurley
2:01:22 Nathan Oppman
2:04:02 – Closing/end