

# CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

Board of General Superintendents

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Eugénio R. Duarte • David W. Graves • David A. Busic • Gustavo A. Crocker • Filimão M. Chambo • Carla D. Sunberg

27 March 2020

Dear Pastors and Leaders,

These continue to be challenging days as COVID-19 has made its way around the globe. Ministering during a pandemic is new territory for most of us; therefore, we are all relying upon the Lord and the knowledge we have been given to minister in the best way possible.

From every timezone of the world, it was possible to worship with a Church of the Nazarene this past Sunday. The valiant efforts of our pastors and leaders were visible as the good news of Jesus Christ was broadcast in many creative ways. Sunday was a great reminder of Jesus' words to Peter, "On this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not overcome it" (Matthew 16:18). We are encouraged when we recognize that this is not *our* church, but this is Jesus' church, and we are called to partner with Him in His work.

We encourage you to continue seeking the Lord and His guidance during this time. The ways in which the Holy Spirit has flowed through your work and ministry has resulted in many people outside the walls of our buildings being touched by the Lord. The virus is unable to contain the work of the Holy Spirit flowing through the life of the church. While we may not be able to continue with business as we have in the past, we do press on.

We are in the process of working with all the districts that had assemblies scheduled within the next few months. Some of these assemblies are being cancelled and the work is being managed by the District Advisory Committee, some will be held electronically, and some are delayed. Ordinations are being worked out on a district by district basis.

Last week, we encouraged you to follow the directives given by your local and governmental authorities. We must live out the great commandment given to us by Jesus Christ: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself'" (Matthew 22:37-38). If we are to love God and to love our neighbor, then we must be good citizens who are not engaged in the spread of the virus.

The Board of General Superintendents (BGS) also recognizes that the current crisis will result in some long-term ripple effects. Consequently, the BGS is implementing a dynamic plan that attempts to frame the short, medium, and long-term responses to

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GLOBAL MINISTRY CENTER

[www.nazarene.org](http://www.nazarene.org) 17001 Prairie Star Parkway Lenexa, KS 66220 913-577-0510

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the crisis. The COVID-19 Contingency Plan covers the following main action plans, led by different members of the BGS:


- 1) Communication– Basic/Sunberg
- 2) Prayer Initiative – Duarte/Graves
- 3) Crisis Care/Compassion — Crocker
- 4) Operational – Chambo
- 5) Jurisdictional – BGS

We are currently building out these plans and working with different teams of leaders who are assisting in the process. The work in these areas will help us navigate the days ahead, and we will keep you informed as the work progresses.

Today we lift you all in prayer. We rejoice with what God is doing in and through you all in this crisis. At the same time, we mourn with those who are facing loss and grief. The church has not been untouched by this illness as we have already lost pastors and lay leaders, friends and loved ones. May the Holy Spirit flow through you today as you minister in Jesus' name.

Grace and peace to you,

The Board of General Superintendents




Filimão M. Chambo




Eugénio R. Duarte



David W. Graves



David A. Basic



Gustavo A. Crocker



Carla D. Sunberg