

# THE TIDINGS

GOD'S MISSION FOR TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH IS TO LOVE HIM FULLY AND FOLLOW HIM FAITHFULLY.

## *The Pastor's Perspective*

**Dr. Reggie Bridges**

“But we, brethren, having been taken away from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavored more eagerly to see your face with great desire” (1 Thessalonians 2:17 NKJV). Never before have Paul’s words resonated in my life like they do right now. How I long to see you, my faith family! I’m grateful for the technological advancements that allow us to maintain some connection as a church body, but I also know that an online/electronic presence is not the same as the people of God gathering together collectively and physically. As one pastor noted, “These [current] efforts are not a replacement for the gathered church but a supplement for the scattered church. The situation we face keeps us spiritually hungry; this temporary and limited provision stops us from spiritually starving.” There can be no true comparison between feasting together and scavenging separately. We devour the scraps now knowing that we shall return to the banquet table with our spiritual family at some point!

With that being said, God has transformed the impossible into the possible. In the past couple of weeks alone, more of God’s Word seems to have been pushed out on social media platforms than ever before. Services are streaming, and lives are still being changed. Just this last Sunday, we had a couple of visitors fill out “communication card” through the livestream service. Moreover, many of you have taken advantage of resources like Facebook and Zoom to continue your Sunday School class. One specific class reported 28 members present along with 2 guests! How awesome! Even the slower pace has enabled some of you to do more Bible reading and reflection daily. I’m telling you that the church’s worship and study continue!

Ministry also continues! Obviously, we have to be wise and sensitive in the approaches we employ, but God is still giving us opportunities. Whether you are sewing masks for distribution or whether you are delivering groceries to the most vulnerable, you are making a difference. Even a simple call to check on others is a welcomed and necessary act of love! Personally, I am so grateful for how so many have reached out to others in these ways!

There are a lot of uncertainties as to when we might gather together physically and even what that may look like, but at the risk of being repetitive, let me encourage you to:

**PRAY** – At 5:17 a.m. and/or 5:17 p.m. each day, stop with us and pray that our powerful Lord will intervene on our behalf. There is something powerful about God’s people praying together, so let’s set this time aside to ask Him to heal the sick, stop the virus’ spread, protect medical personnel, guide government officials (President, Governor, etc.), empower grocers, etc.

**WORSHIP**—Maintain a private time of worship with Christ, but also seek to join with us as best you can. Every Wednesday evening around 6 p.m., I will bring a short devotion that will be posted on social media. And of course, our Sunday morning online worship will continue at 10 a.m. If you can’t join us online, remember a recorded version of my sermon will play at 9:30 a.m. Sunday on KRLQ 94.1 FM or you can always find the previous week’s service via television on Channel 11 (K A Q Y) at 9 a.m. on Sunday.

**CONNECT**—Continue to reach out and check on folks in your neighborhood and in our church. Make a simple phone call. These isolated days can prove even more difficult for some. And if you see any need that we should address from a wider congregational perspective, please contact the Church Office (318-255-3745).

**GIVE**—I say thanks again for you consistently undergird the ministry of Temple Baptist Church. Over the past few weeks, you have responded as you always do. Through your gifts (online, mail-in, etc.), we are better resourced to meet the needs before us. I would ask that you continue to think of how you can give to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering as well. Some of our church planting partners are getting hit very hard by the financial impact of this pandemic.

My friends, you may have been physically taken away from me for a short time; but like Paul said, you have not been removed from my heart! You still occupy a big area there! You are loved dearly! Don’t forget that! And don’t forget that King Jesus is still on the throne!

THE TIDINGS (USPS #020005), Published Weekly except Christmas by:  
Temple Baptist Church, Periodical Postage Paid, Ruston, LA 71270  
Postmaster send address changes to:  
Temple Baptist Church, 1515 South Service Road West, Ruston, LA 71270

Even though the Church Offices  
are closed, we are here to assist  
you by calling the Church Office  
(255-3745).

We are navigating unprecedented  
times and not able to gather  
physically, but we believe our God is  
still in control and can use us to share  
the Gospel in creative and powerful  
ways! Church family, we LOVE you  
and are here to serve you!

Label here

Phone: (318) 255-3745 • Fax: (318) 255-0134  
Website: temple.life

#### Some Ideas for Individuals/Families:

- 1.) Continue to worship with us online together as a family on Sundays, *live.temple.life*.
- 2.) Use our NT Reading Plan available at *2020.temple.life* to read the Bible together.
- 3.) Go to *rightnow media* and pick out a Bible study on marriage or for men/women. Visit *rightnow.temple.life*
- 4.) Have a family worship night together on Wednesday nights. For younger children, download some Seeds Family Worship songs and let them go crazy while they sing.
- 5.) Allow your kids to watch *rightnow media* during the day instead of regular tv. There are many great shows and resources for all ages. Visit *rightnow.temple.life*
- 6.) Check on your neighbors, especially if they are senior adults and might need some help. Share with them the hope and peace you have in Christ.

#### Annie Armstrong Easter Offering



Temple's Goal: \$65,000  
More information found at  
[anniearmstrong.com](http://anniearmstrong.com)

#### North American Mission Board

WAYS TO GIVE  
IN PERSON ONLINE AND TEXT

CHURCH OFFICE: Mail or Dropoff  
ONLINE: [giving.temple.life](http://giving.temple.life)  
TEXTING: Text any amount to 84321 to give

A row of colorful icons representing different ways to give: a hand holding a coin, a computer monitor, a smartphone, and a hand holding a coin, repeated in a sequence.

5:17 PRAYER

LUKE 5:17

**Broadcast Hours:** Sundays: 9 a.m. Channel 11 (KAQY); 9:30 a.m. 94.1FM (KRLQ); 10 a.m. Live Stream (*live.temple.life*)