An URGENT request from the Macon County Health Department to the Leaders of Faith-Based Organizations

You are the MOST trusted source of information to your congregations. You have an obligation to protect them and do what is in their best interest. Remaining open will encourage people to gather and give them a false sense of security. People congregating in churches or any other location is going against public health recommendations, as putting our community and your congregations at risk. People will die as a result of these actions. I cannot impress upon you enough how critical it is for you to lead with knowledge during this public health crisis. The pandemic will continue for months. You have to do things differently.

We need you to stop in-person services and to continue daily outreach to your congregation through the phone. Organize a phone tree, a call bank, and develop a volunteer team to get resources such as food and medicine to your members over 60 and those with chronic health conditions (drop off delivery). Help link them to resources.

It is likely that you have people in your congregations who live with or work with vulnerable populations. Congregating them risks an outbreak within your church and puts others in the community at risk for illness, hospitalization and death.

We are pleading with you to do the right thing and protect your congregations.