

# CBF launches COVID-19 work group

March 23, 2020

DECATUR, Ga.—In response to the spread of the novel coronavirus, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship has formed a COVID-19 work group.

The work group will streamline the flow of updated information across the organization, aid in decision-making and help facilitate timely communications across CBF staff and field personnel, partner congregations and all Cooperative Baptists.

CBF also announced it has launched a [website](#) for quick access to COVID-19-related information, including relevant links, updates on CBF events and a CBF-developed resource for congregations to help them prevent the spread of the coronavirus in their congregations.



Paul Baxley

CBF Executive Coordinator Paul Baxley said CBF leaders have been monitoring COVID-19 and are working to monitor its impact and make informed decisions during this uncertain time.

“CBF staff members have been monitoring the rapidly evolving spread of COVID-19 for months because we have field personnel serving in Asia and all across the world,” Baxley said. “I am deeply indebted to Steven Porter, Sam Harrell, Eddy Ruble and others in our global missions leadership for their extraordinary work in monitoring the situation, engaging field personnel and responding to the challenges that have emerged.”

CBF created the work group “to make sure that we monitor the impact of the virus, discover best practices in response, make the most informed decisions about how to carry out our witness to Christ in the midst of this uncertain time and have consistency across our mission and ministry endeavors in the ways we respond,” Baxley said.

“Because CBF exists for congregations, we are also seeking to learn from congregations regarding their response to the virus, and we will provide resources for congregations on the CBF website, along with updates on how we are adjusting plans for major events, mission participation and other ministries in light of the impacts of COVID-19. It’s important that we seek guidance from the triune God to respond faithfully during these uncertain times,” he said.

## **Responding to ‘evolving situation’**

CBF leadership is keeping COVID-19 in mind as it plans the CBF general assembly, which still is scheduled June 22-17 in Atlanta, Ga., Baxley said.

“The spread of COVID-19 is an evolving situation. We will work actively in our staff, with our officers and with our meeting planners to make sure that we prepare for the meeting in ways that maximize the health of all who participate, and we will communicate actively about measures we put in place,” Baxley said. “Should conditions require a change in plans, we will communicate that as soon as we can.”

The safety of CBF's 70 field personnel in the United States and around the world is a top priority, Fellowship leaders noted.

Last month, CBF International Disaster Response Coordinator Eddy Ruble sent a memo to all CBF field personnel advising them to take precautionary measures to protect themselves, volunteers, partners and the communities they serve from novel coronavirus, which included limiting nonessential travel.

The spread of COVID-19 has affected CBF's Global Missions. CBF has evacuated a field personnel family from China, and in conversation with its Japanese Baptist partners, a CBF field personnel family presently in the United States has delayed its return to the region.

Also, CBF field personnel in Asia canceled their annual meeting planned for March in Indonesia, and CBF field personnel who are a part of the Europe team have shifted their meeting online.