

How Spanish-Speaking Churches Are Ministering During the Pandemic

The crisis in which we are living took most of us by surprise, and it has hit harder and longer than expected. As COVID-19 spread throughout the world, in the US, we only heard of its impact through the news and social media for a while. Then the day came when it began to affect our cities and neighborhoods too.

For the most part, immigrants and minorities have been severely impacted by the pandemic. Many have had their hours cut or lost their jobs entirely, and most cannot access state or federal aid.

As in any other crisis, this is an opportunity for the Church to share and show the love of Christ. Northern Virginia has witnessed this firsthand through **McLean Bible Church** based in Vienna, VA. They took the initiative to prepare aid boxes, each containing personal hygiene items and groceries for a family of five. Their volunteers and staff work faithfully each week to buy groceries and assemble the boxes.

Our Hispanic SBC of Virginia planters have been part of what God is doing. Raúl Santamaría, SBCV's church planting strategist for Hispanic Ministries, helped coordinate efforts so that planters could

deliver boxes in the communities where they are already ministering.

At the time of this article, McLean Bible Church had prepared more than 3,000 boxes of food and, in coordination with SBCV planters, has served communities in the Greater Metro DC area. SBCV planters collect the boxes and take them directly to the houses of the families in need. They show them God's love by attending to them personally (following all of the recommendations of the health department), presenting the Gospel, and praying for their needs.

One of these planters is Jefferson Hernandez from **Iglesia Bíblica Campo Blanco** in Leesburg, VA. He has distributed several boxes to people in his congregation and in his community. He has also helped to distribute goods with other church plants.

This is truly a united effort. McLean Bible Church and these church planters pray that when the quarantine is lifted, they can visit the people they have ministered to and can disciple them. ■

