

How This Leader Serves the Homeless Despite COVID-19's Challenges

Experts agree that a key part of leadership is adaptability, the ability to flex with the times and make key decisions at critical points. Doug Smith has experienced this during the coronavirus crisis. Right at the start of the lockdown, he had to make the difficult decision to cancel the L3 One-Day Leadership Conference, which he hosts every year. But COVID-19 has had an even more significant impact on his day-to-day ministry as director of development for the Light of Life Rescue Mission, a ministry to the homeless in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Smith tells host John Matarazzo on the *Along the Way* podcast on the Charisma Podcast Network, "Very early on, our leadership team met, and we put together a task force that meets daily. ... We determined from day one that we're going to do everything we can to serve the men, women and children that we need."

But what did that look like? First, "We made sure that all of our programs would be up and running, including our long-term residential programs. Now, [the coronavirus] shifted how they were run," Smith says. "So for instance, we have 30 women and children who live in apartments throughout the city. Well, they can't come in with their kids and everything with the social distancing. So we actually do casework over Zoom. ... And so we've had to adjust a lot. specifically around our meal ministry.

"We serve meals every day; we've had to extend all of our dinner and breakfast and lunch times to allow people to be served in actually three different feeding areas that we had

set up so that people could have social distance,” he adds. “We have a tent outside the mission that we rented, that we allow men to sleep in so that they can sleep a certain distance away from each other.

“So we’ve had to make a lot of changes and adapt a lot on the fly on a daily basis. But as of this moment, we have not had a case [of COVID-19] come into the mission, and we’ve been able to continue to serve and be a blessing to everyone who comes to us,” Smith says.

To hear more about leadership in times of crisis and how God uses Smith and his ministry to serve the homeless, listen to the entire podcast [here](#).