

H I P A A
CHURCH IN THE ACRES (BAPTIST)

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING VISITATION DURING HOSPITALIZATION
AND LISTING OF NAMES ON PRAYER LIST**

As of December 30, 2004

Dear Members and Friends of Church in the Acres,

The HIPAA regulations concerning privacy with regard to medical treatment and/or hospitalization place restrictions on Church in the Acres' ministry to those dealing with illness or accident.

It is now no longer possible for me or any representative of Church in the Acres to visit you if you are hospitalized unless you have given written permission for us to do so at the time you were admitted to the hospital. If you are unable to give that permission at the time you are admitted (i.e. an emergency) your previous wishes will govern. Should you never have given this permission in the past, it is assumed that you do not give permission now.

In connection with this rule, hospitals can no longer even tell a minister, priest or rabbi, if so-and-so is, in fact, a patient. Hospitals such as Mercy Medical Center may no longer routinely call clergy when someone is admitted. Fines for violating these new "privacy" regulations are enormous.

Additionally, you may not even be visited by the appropriate hospital chaplain unless you register as a member of a denomination at the time you are admitted.

Accordingly, when you are hospitalized and, assuming that you would like me to visit you, you must register as a member of "Church in the Acres (Baptist), American Baptist Churches, U.S.A." (Using only "Church in the Acres" may allow me to visit you but it will not allow the Protestant Chaplain or any other ABC clergy to visit you should I have a covering pastor ministering in my stead.)

If you would like me to visit, telephone me to let me know when you are going in the hospital and the circumstances, and have someone in your family let me know the room number where you will be. In other words, if I know you are there, I will be able to visit you and not even have this conversation with hospital staff. I would be treated as any other visitor.

Please note however, that the hospital visits I make during non-visiting hours and in locations where most visitors are not permitted (such as in the emergency room, ICU or CCU) will not happen unless the hospital has your written approval for such visits to take place.

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Secondly, we have always endeavored to comply with people's wishes to have their name included or *not* included on our prayer list and/or prayer chain. However, until we are sure how these new regulations affect our practice of naming those persons who are ill in our church prayers, we will no longer include any names in our bulletins unless one of the following applies:

1. You have personally requested the inclusion of your name in our prayers, preferably in writing or by means of a personal telephone call to the pastor or church office.
2. You have given written permission on the form below and it is on file at the church office, **and a family member or friend has requested** we place your name on our prayer list.
3. The situation is a matter of public record. (i.e. the specifics have appeared in the media.)

Area pastors are trying to get a better handle on these new regulations and their full impact. In the interim, we take comfort in the knowledge that while we may not know your needs or even to be able respond to the ones we do know of, God does know what you need and God will respond to you and be with you.

Below you will find a tear-off form which we ask you to complete and return to the church office as soon as possible. This will be kept on file and will assist us in being able to minister to you should the need arise. **A form should be on file for each family member.** Additional forms may be found in the blue folder rack outside the church office door.

Each individual should fill in this form and return it to the church office.

1) I hereby give permission for Church in the Acres (Baptist), American Baptist Churches U.S.A. to add my name to the church bulletin prayer list in the event of illness and/or hospitalization.

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____

2) I hereby give permission for the pastor(s) of Church in the Acres (Baptist), American Baptist Churches, U.S.A. to visit me and/or my minor children listed below, in the event that I am/they are hospitalized. My pastor (currently Gregory S. Dyson) is to be given full pastoral visitation privileges which will allow him to be informed of my/their room location and will allow him to visit me/them in the emergency room, ICU, CCU or any other visitation restricted area.

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____

Minor Children: 1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____