

Ministry Online Engagement Activities

The early church met early in the morning every Sunday, down by the river, in secret (because Christianity was illegal and Sunday was a work day). Sunrise service EVERY WEEK? Yes, maybe! Maybe NOT on Sundays, but middle of the week? Does it have to be evening?

The early church in many areas built worship around house worship/agape love feasts. These were arguably all groups of 10 or fewer. JUST SAYING. And FOOD! I'm convinced this is how the early church grew.

Summer is usually pretty good weather in much of the USA. Outdoor services! Front steps of the church? Parking lot? Perhaps a "Drive-In Movie" concept with a stage and people still in their cars, or bring a lawn chair and come sit up and be a part of our socially-distant choir. At a lake? By a river, beach or top of a city. Building? Oh yeah, and stop canceling when it's not perfect conditions out...welcome to 2020.

Outside in a round, socially distanced anyway, because we needed room to move, and sing, and create an experience of God, cause that's what people are looking in a gathering - singing, dancing's silence? Walking meditation?

Fellowship dinners for small groups, yes eating online. Each week mix up the groups. Come to Zoom or wherever, then split into small group. Send out recipes each week so people are eating the same thing, but maybe they mixed it up for themselves, added their cultural heritage to the meal. Points of conversation and connection. Combined with a pre-recorded short talk could be pretty effective worship, and cultivate worship leaders!

Zoom is lovely, but have you thought about equipping each family unit to worship on their own? Sometimes I wonder if we pastors like the control, and simply aren't comfortable with a particularly Jewish/synagogue approach to learning and prayer that is more family-based.

Is your sanctuary open for individual prayer throughout the week?

Splitting the congregation up randomly, like by first letter of last name (A thru F), and having multiple worship services a week.

Opening the church for in-person worship, all in masks, socially-distanced, and finally finding the benefit of having an overly large sanctuary for the smaller congregation that now worships there.

Maybe a mix of these! It's a lot of work for worship leaders, but it can break open that "We've always done it this way" mentality we have been railing against for years. Now's our chance!

Invite people to change their user name so that it reflects a character connected to the talk, or their favorite superhero, or their favorite Bible character or spiritual leader, or, or, or... (In Zoom hover in the upper right corner of your picture, click on the three dots to find "rename." The host can change the name of anyone, including people who call in on the phone.)

Use the chat feature. Ask questions during the service, talk or meditation or whenever. Capture the responses. Gives voice to everyone at once. It's particularly helpful for people who are more shy about talking over video or for those with a lot to say to channel some of their thoughts while giving some space for other voices to be heard. If concrete information needs to be shared (e.g., website, google doc, etc) this is a great way to do it. Also a great place to crack a joke, tell people where to donate, directions for a game, ANYTHING!

Heads Up Game online (visit your app store)

nextdoor.com, builds connections in neighborhood

Tie prayer requests to fences outside of your building or make an

Set up some of these nature/outdoor themed Prayer Stations or Affirmation Stations to walk, or to contribute to

Sidewalk chalk expressions, at church, in front of a hospital, grocery store, people's homes... anywhere.

Make a group gratitude journal online, or somewhere everyone can contribute

One Sunday create cards and mail them out to members or senior home or, or, or...

Finger labyrinth - send out a document in your enews, or to your mailing list, inviting them to print the doc, and bring to service... walk everyone through the labyrinth with their finger, as your meditation

Make your Zoom room a photo lab! Invite everyone to come one Sunday in their favorite hat, put yourself on SPEAKER VIEW, invite each person to say something, and when they are on the big screen SNAP A SCREENSHOT, then you have a bunch of community pictures to make a collage, mosaic for printing or sharing, or share however you'd like.

Offer to Help: Post this note on the front door of all of your neighbors, report back the next week in service, or report a couple each week. This can be done regardless if in quarantine or not.

HELLO! If you are self-isolating, I can help.

My name is

I live locally at

My phone number is

If you are self-isolating due to COVID-19 I can help with:

<input type="checkbox"/> Picking up shopping	<input type="checkbox"/> Posting mail
<input type="checkbox"/> A friendly phone call	<input type="checkbox"/> Urgent supplies

Just call or text me and I'll do my best to help you (for free!)

Coronavirus is contagious. Please take every precaution to ensure you are spreading only kindness. Avoid physical contact (2m distance). Wash your hands regularly. Items should be left on your doorstep.

#ViralKindness

WHERE AM I?

Save 10 different landscape photos of well-known places around the world. Then, go into your zoom and add them into your virtual backgrounds. You can do this by clicking on your video drop down menu in the bottom left of your screen. Click on choose virtual background. When you get here, make sure to go to the bottom of the menu and check 'I have a green screen'. Once you do this, click the small + sign above the photos and you can add whatever you want. Once these are all loaded, all you have to do is switch the

landscapes back and forth and let people guess where you are. Can be done with children, teens, and adults. Can make the images specific to your talk or theme, makes it fun and educational.

In-home scavenger hunt

Partner with other churches, synagogues, gurdwaras, mosques, etc.

Organize service days: What are some projects people in your church can do in small groups that would speak volumes to your community? Many parks and playgrounds are closed. Maybe a family can offer to pick up trash and clean the equipment. Could you have people volunteer with organizations like Meals on Wheels or those seeking to feed hungry children out of school? Check with local organizations and public health department.

Check out www.justserve.org