

Tips for doing Church online

By Adrian Jackson

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Many of you are dealing with having to do church online in a really short period of time, as a former Assistant Media Director for a mega church I have spent most of the last ten years being asked to think about ways to take church online. Since I don't have time to answer every question, I've listed some ideas here:

- 1) Start simple. We don't have the time to do this right, we are responding to an emergency we haven't planned for.
- 2) Prioritise connection over production or liturgical beauty. The best thing you can do for your community this weekend is connect with them. Instead of stressing about Facebook Live, write a separate text message to each person in your church, asking how they are.
- 3) Reduce screen time. We're all being asked to spend more time in Zoom meetings or reading emails on top of being glued to news feeds. Send people something they can print out or a playlist they can listen to.
- 4) Move away from scheduled activities. While people need to maintain routines in isolation, we're all being asked to attend more meetings and this is causing schedule anxiety. Find ways people can connect in flexibility.
- 5) Focus on spiritual practice over liturgy and preaching. What we need most is assistance in letting go of stress and regaining connection with God and with others.
- 6) Lower expectations. We all need a little grace. Think twice before asking your teenager or church tech guy for help. Everyone is coming to us.
- 7) Invite don't ask or tell. Make everything you do optional. Listen to your congregations needs and let them reflect.
- 8) Keep reassessing. None of us know what's going to work. Last Sunday I would've told you to consider a small group on Zoom. I've spent all week on Zoom meetings and would rather not go to another one. People don't know yet what is going to work for them.
- 9) Thank you. For every person who is trying to do things differently. For every person who is caring for others. For every person who is feeling exhausted. Thank you.
- 10) Forgive the mistakes. If your church isn't getting it right or doing it the way you would like, be patient. None of us trained for this, we're all learning.