ADVICE #1

ONLINE CHURCH WITH 2 PERSON GATHERING RESTRICTIONS

30th March 2020

(NOTE: We'll keep updating this as new information and ideas come in)

With the latest update from the Prime Minister on 29th March, and echoed by the Premier of Western Australia on 30th March, around the restrictions on indoor and outdoor public gatherings of 2 people, it is important now to consider how to do Online Church within these limitations.

Even though it might be possible to argue that technically, church staff are 'working' when live streaming or pre-recording a service, it is also important to consider the perceptions we portray to our communities. It is our responsibility to show we are also complying with the Government regulations and for this reason, we recommend only 1 or max 2 people on screen at any time.

If you are pre-recording, you can do multiple segments with 1 or 2 people filmed at different times. If you have been doing on-line church already or are considering it, then we have some thoughts and guidelines for you to look through below.

WHAT'S IMPORTANT

Firstly though, work out what it is you are trying to accomplish. You don't have to imitate what your Church would have normally done on Sunday, or what other Churches are doing. It is important that you are true to your Church community and importantly that you can sustain and/or adapt this into the future.

Consider what is important for your Church – for example:

- Staying connected as a community to each other and leadership
- Creating some point of worshipful connection for people – song, prayer, response
- Encouragement in word (and consider the length of this - 10 minutes might be enough)

- Make what you are doing warm and invitational - Consider those who might be visiting for the first time, and perhaps those who have never even visited your Church before
- Think about what people will do in response to having watched on-line? What is the call to action – generosity, faith, courage, peace, prayer, caring for others through the week?

OTHER PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Here are some guidelines for how to do church online within the bounds of the 2-person restriction:

- You can continue to live stream or pre-record services as long as you only have 1 person on screen at any one time, given that you will need a camera / sound operator as well. The exception to this is that you could have 2 people if the sound operator / production team are part of the 2 people.
- Obviously, you will need to adhere to the social distancing and good hygiene rules - 4 people per 100sqm or 1.5m apart
- Remember that going to video is a lot different than being before a live audience. Don't shy away from a little more rehearsal to make sure that everything is executed as well as it can be!

TECHNICAL ADVICE

If you need more information about technical requirements these are a couple of great video resources on equipment:

Low budget High quality sound for online church

A more comprehensive overview

ON-LINE SERVICE RESOURCES AND PLATFORMS

1) Church Online - Free resource from Life.Church

https://churchonlineplatform.com/

This is a simple shell provided free of charge for churches to get their services online.

This platform allows you to upload a vimeo or you tube video or embed your code. It also provides a Chat function and a Live Prayer option which are nice ways to engage your congregation and ensure they have the feeling of community, even though remotely.

Before using this platform, make sure you have contacted CCLI to ensure you have a live streaming license - Click here

Here is a you tube video from Life.Church on how to set up Church Online - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ptzUybDtJng

2) Zoom

When you can't meet in person, ZOOM is the next best thing. Live streaming services (e.g. Facebook Live) can lack meaningful interaction. Yes, some allow you to click 'like' or add a comment, but these don't satisfy our need for human connection.

ZOOM is versatile. It is a platform that allows for online gatherings of different sizes. All ZOOM plans allow up to 100 participants and with Large Meeting add-on, you can have up to 500 people.

Hosts can be in different locations so this is ok for the current 2-person restriction. A number of our Churches have started using this platform.

Interactive Online Church with ZOOM.

3) Facebook Live

FB Live is also an option but will be difficult with the 2 person restriction as you can only broadcast from one location. Therefore, this means only 1 or max 2 people can be involved in the service. Here's a link to some tips for using Facebook Live. https://www.facebook.com/facebookmedia/blog/tips-for-using-live

LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER

As online church will be new to a number of our Churches, we are really keen to hear your Church's experiences and lessons learned as you develop with these platforms, so we can share with our wider Church community. Send through your thoughts, ideas and tips to admin@cocwa.com.au

COCWA will be advertising weekly in our On-Mission email a list of our Churches providing online church services. Please use this information to send to your members. If you are recommending that your Church joins another online Church, please let the online Church know so that they can acknowledge any new churches joining them for the day.

If you have any queries or require further advice, please contact COCWA at admin@cocwa.com.au

COCWA's COVID19 updates and additional resources are available at www.cocwa.com.au.

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