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3 Ways to Utilize Video During COVID-19

Don't let fear keep you from engaging your audience

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(<https://twitter.com/efca>)

Every EFCA church has felt the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus). As stronger recommendations and guidelines on gatherings are implemented across our country, now is the time for our churches to show their ingenuity, perseverance and creativity.

One crucial element in our efforts to serve churches is the use of video. For years, video has been a powerful tool as we seek to fulfill the Great Commission (Matt 28:16-20). From regular updates from pastors to live-streamed services, video has become a significant way churches engage and serve their communities.

In the midst of today's unique challenges to ministry, the value of video has increased exponentially. Very quickly, many churches lost the ability to gather in person. Video can help bridge the gap in these days of increased social distancing.

The national office wants to help churches—especially our smaller congregations—expand their abilities to shepherd and serve as we navigate current ministry challenges. Here are three ways you can maximize video to mitigate the impact of the coronavirus:

1. Provide regular updates via video

Just because you can't say it in person doesn't mean it shouldn't be said. Take your message of hope online. Record a quick video encouraging your community to find peace and strength in Christ (Rom 8:31-32). Start a daily devotional. Challenge your community to serve in a new way. The opportunities are endless. Be encouraged and try to engage your community in ways they don't currently expect.

You now have a very captive audience due to the number of individuals who are spending more time online. Post your message on a platform like YouTube, Vimeo or Facebook. Share it via your all-church emails. Post it on your website and social media. Pastors and leaders: your voice needs to be heard in these times when our communities are bombarded by countless messages with no eternal worth.

As you consider video as a means of communication, keep these things in mind:

- **Be yourself.** Don't feel the need to be polished or perfect. Your people want to see you!
- **Keep these videos short.** Keep your content simple and poignant.
- **Edit the content or publish one take.** Do what feels comfortable.

The services we've mentioned (YouTube

(<https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/1646861?hl=en>), Vimeo

(<https://vimeo.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/categories/201496018-Uploading-to-Vimeo>) and Facebook

(<https://www.facebook.com/help/166707406722029>)) have simple tutorials to guide novice leaders to success with video. Setting up a YouTube or Vimeo account can be completed in minutes, and their free accounts provide more than enough space to share with your community on a weekly basis. Facebook provides simple steps to making video available on your personal or church page.

And don't forget about one of the most powerful resources at your disposal: your phone. There is no easier way to capture and post footage. You don't need expensive cameras or tons of additional gear. Everything you need is in your pocket. Use your phone to easily communicate and share your messages. (For

tips on how to shoot better footage with your phone, check out [this blog post](https://blog.pond5.com/4936-how-to-shoot-better-mobile-video-lighting-audio-accessories/) (https://blog.pond5.com/4936-how-to-shoot-better-mobile-video-lighting-audio-accessories/).)

2. Record your services

For years, churches have recorded and distributed videos of their services to better serve their communities. This is the easiest way to take video from your services and make it available to people at home. This on-demand service requires a small amount of work in order to make a significant impact.

Consider the minimal impact it will take to record a service on Saturday afternoon and have it prepared and uploaded for your community on Sunday morning. In three simple steps, you can prepare an online sermon for your community to view on Sunday morning:

- Record the sermon on your phone or camera.
- Upload your sermon video to YouTube, Vimeo or Facebook.
- Share the link.

One note: in order to record and distribute worship elements (songs or other material with copyright), you must obtain the proper licensing to be compliant. If you'd like to post worship in your video, consider the services provided by **Church Copyright Solutions** (<https://christiancopyrightsolutions.com/>).

3. Consider live-streaming

In the last decade, our capabilities in the area of video have grown significantly. Advances in mobile phones and connectivity (internet) have given us the ability to show anyone what we're doing at any given moment throughout the day via live-streaming video.

While it's easy to over-complicate live video, don't avoid it because it seems too difficult. Live-streaming can be accomplished in just a few simple steps. Just think through a few crucial elements as you pursue streaming:

- **Good connection.** Make sure you have a stable connection to high-speed internet.
- **Stable camera.** Think through how you will position the camera.
- **Test your stream!** Always test before you go live.

If you're a beginner, Facebook is a great place to start. They've provided tutorials (<https://www.facebook.com/facebookmedia/solutions/facebook-live>) to help you get familiar with their systems. YouTube (https://support.google.com/youtube/topic/9257891?gclid=CjoKCQjwx7zzBRCcARIsABPRscNm_N5tv0XeYsUD9mzvO5b9F8lpEzhKK) and Vimeo (<https://vimeo.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/categories/360002793531-Vimeo-Live>) also offer live-streaming capabilities, and their services are great for those who feel more comfortable with the basics of video.

Conclusion

In these days that are riddled with uncertainty, don't allow fear of the unknown stop you from engaging and shepherding your community. Lean in and take a leap of faith in this area of video. There are thousands of tutorials available to churches investigating this capability.

It's also important to remember those who may not be as engaged online. Video probably won't be the most adequate way of connecting with them. Reach out with a phone call or text. Send an email. Get creative.

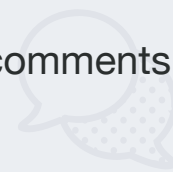
In the end, it comes down to this: Don't overthink video. Simple messages are encouraging and helpful. Love and serve your communities as we boldly share Christ's good news in these unique days.

*For additional information about video for churches, check out **Church Motion Graphics' blog**. (<https://www.churchmotiongraphics.com/?s=video>)*

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[Blog \(/blog\)](/blog)

[Resources \(/resources\)](/resources)

[Contact \(/contact\)](/contact)

ABOUT

[Our identity \(/about/who-we-are\)](/about/who-we-are)

[Our faith \(/about/what-we-believe\)](/about/what-we-believe)

[Our mission \(/about/why-it-matters\)](/about/why-it-matters)

MINISTRIES

[Global mission \(/ministries/reachglobal\)](/ministries/reachglobal)

[National mission \(/ministries/reachnational\)](/ministries/reachnational)

[Crisis response \(/ministries/reachglobal/crisis-response\)](/ministries/reachglobal/crisis-response)

OPPORTUNITIES

[Ways to serve \(/opportunities/serve\)](/opportunities/serve)

[Internships \(/opportunities/internships\)](/opportunities/internships)

[Employment \(/opportunities/employment\)](/opportunities/employment)

TRAINING & EVENTS

[Conferences \(/resources/conferences\)](/resources/conferences)

[Courses \(/resources/library?rtype%5B%5D=24&orderby=date&searchterm=#results\)](/resources/library?rtype%5B%5D=24&orderby=date&searchterm=#results)

[Credentialing \(/resources/credentialing\)](/resources/credentialing)

[Statement of Faith \(/resources/document/efca-statement-faith\)](/resources/document/efca-statement-faith)

[Theological positions \(/resources/document/theological-definitions-positions\)](/resources/document/theological-definitions-positions)

[National office \(/ministries/office-president\)](/ministries/office-president)

[Church districts \(/districts\)](/districts)

[Ministry contacts \(/ministry-contacts\)](/ministry-contacts)

[Preferred providers & partners \(/resources/preferred-providers-and-partnerships\)](/resources/preferred-providers-and-partnerships)

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