

Coronavirus

Lent

Seasonal Worship

The background image shows a close-up of a weathered wall with graffiti. The graffiti includes the words 'lets', 'love', and 'community' in a hand-drawn style. There is also a heart symbol and some other abstract markings. The lighting is somewhat dim, suggesting an outdoor setting at dusk or dawn.

Three Ways to Encourage Your Church to Be Missional This Easter

By Laura Osborne, Eliza Cortés Bast and Eduardo Rodriguez

This Easter will be an Easter like no other. Without the ability to celebrate in person, your church will need to get creative about how to mark the occasion. Since you won't be able to connect with the usual Easter-Sunday visitors to your church, here are three ways to be missional in light of the coronavirus.

Connect

How do we socially connect with each other? With our neighbors? As small groups, life groups and missional communities are moving to meet online, we encourage you and your neighbors to do the same!

Find new ways to know your neighbor.

1. If you can, or you feel comfortable, leave a note in the mailbox, [make a door hanger](#), and introduce yourself.
2. Gather information: make a contact list, a Facebook group, use [Nextdoor](#), or make a phone tree.
3. Try to meet! Using apps like FaceTime, Zoom, Google Hangouts, or Skype are great ways to continue to meet together or even meet for the first time.

What can you do now that you're connected?

Here are four ideas:

1. Invite your neighbors to your small group or missional community! This might be a great way to let them experience a faith community in a very low-risk way.
2. Host a neighborhood online game night or [scavenger hunt](#). Give people space to know each other, and still connect over laughter and humor.
3. Host a virtual Easter meal. Coordinate eating a Holy Week meal together, even if it's online.
4. Starting a virtual Easter egg hunt in a neighborhood. Download [free printable eggs](#), which your family can color and “hide” in window(s) of your home. Now when neighbors go for walks, they can search for all the eggs!

Serve

How do we meet the needs of our community? Easter is a time that reminds us to connect with the most vulnerable in our communities. In this current reality, it is important for us to make sure that those that need the love and support of the faith community can still receive it.

Find new ways to serve your community.

1. Call your neighborhood nonprofits. Even if you never have before, find out what they need. Don't assume; ask if there is something particular they need and mobilize your community to meet that need.
2. Connect your congregation individually with nonprofits you already serve. Sometimes we fall into the rut of writing checks to partner ministries that we never personally engage with. This is a time to connect the people in your church with what your ministry partners are doing on the frontline of this pandemic.

What can we do to serve together?

Gather support for your “essential workers” like healthcare workers, first responders, food service people, and government workers. Leverage social media to curate letters and notes of encouragement and support for those on the front lines.

Pray

How do we spiritually care for our neighbors in this season? Easter is usually the time where we make a courageous ask for someone to join us at church, a church activity, or participate in our faith communities. You may not be able to invite someone into a church building to experience God alongside of you. However, you can ask God to be present with them, wherever they are. And that they can experience the resurrection

power of Jesus in their homes, their hearts, and their lives.

Find new ways to pray.

1. Gather to pray. You can do this via phone tree, online, or even by typing out your prayers on social media. And when you gather to pray, remember to fervently pray for your communities. Pray that people would come to know the hope of Jesus, especially during this Easter season.
2. Walk and pray. Use [our prayer walking guide](#), updated for physical distancing.
3. Journal your prayers. This is what the Psalms are all about. Write down your prayers to God. Give God your hopes, fears, and anxieties—for you, your loved ones, your communities, and your world.


What can you do when you're connected to prayer?

Dedicate a prayer focus for each day. Text, email, or snail mail send it to your congregation. Ask them to consider a combined prayer focus for each day.

[Download the prayer walking guide](#)

About the author

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