



CORONAVIRUS GUIDANCE AND RESOURCES: *What Do I Do RIGHT Now?*

Should I go to church?

We are a people of hospitality who care deeply about our neighbors. And our hospitality this time is not governed by the question “will I get infected?” but rather “will I risk becoming a carrier and expose someone else, without my knowing it?” The latest information is that the lag time between being infected and being diagnosed is at least 2 weeks, maybe longer – so you won’t know immediately. And that 4 out of 5 people diagnosed with COVID-19 are saying that they did not know who infected them.

Disciples churches are much like most Mainline Protestant Churches in America – many of our members are older than 65, thus they are the most vulnerable. Our hospitality today may look different than what we are used to because hospitality today is about keeping a safe distance from the very people we love the most. But, the value of hospitality is not being lost – it’s being re-imagined and renewed in the face of the reality(ies) that we are facing.

Church Leaders and Their Health

The leaders of our churches are working tirelessly to sort out all of the data, stories, and compelling reasons to change, or not change, everything that the church has been doing for decades, is doing still today, and will be able to do tomorrow and in the weeks and months to come. As if their lives weren’t already stressful enough.

One of the things that I love about being a Disciple is that our leadership style is built into our DNA – we are a people both of the Chalice, and of shared leadership. Remember, Jesus took the Cup from the Common Table and shared it with his co-leaders, the people he no longer calls “servants,” but now calls them “friends.” (John 15) May our pastors and church leaders hold one another in the bonds of love as they discern each of the steps that lay ahead for the church that they serve, for you as individuals, and the communities where we worship and serve.

Please remember that our leaders also need to self-quarantine – they, too, need their rest, and they need to keep a safe distance. And as a leader of your church we want them to teach us, and lead us --- both in word, and in deed – in action, in example. So, please support your leaders’ need to take good care of themselves by self-quarantining, resting, and spending time with family and friends.

On-Line Giving

Each of the following [underlined blue words](#) are live links so that you can go directly to the sources themselves.

[Center for Faith and Giving](#) – An article that walks you through some common choices: Electronic Funds Transfer (ETF), PayPal, Square, QR Codes for Smart Phones

[Electronic Funds Transfer](#) – Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) is all about convenience for you and consistency for the church. Electronic giving eliminates frequent check writing and helps members stay on track with pledges even when they are unable to be at church. The church in turn benefits from much-needed donation consistency and a reduction in the volume of check and cash contributions that must be handled and manually processed. Contributions are transferred automatically from your checking or savings account to the church's bank account.

Churches simply need to talk with the financial institution where you do your Church banking and ask staff there how to set-up the ETF program, including what forms and information your members will need to enroll --- and if they can enroll electronically (without having to go the branch office).

VIDEO: [YouTube Video on What is ETF, and is it Safe and Secure?:](#) (7 minutes)

ARTICLE: [Article on ETF and the Local Church:](#)

The first three listed reportedly have no fees for transactions or percentage costs (but verify for yourself --- I can find no evidence of such...but, please double-check – the basic service may be free, but they may try to get you to upgrade to “premium” services for a fee)

[Zelle](#) – The introductory page (linked) is a good place to begin reading about Zelle, and how it works. Clicking “Get Started” will take you to the page where all of the major banks with whom they have accounts are listed (in Alphabetical Order). (One of my children has transferred funds from Citi (listed) to my credit union (not listed). The church member simply needs to set up a Zelle account with their financial institution/bank. And follow their instructions (and the bank will usually be more than willing to help guide anyone who feels stuck along the way).

[Apple Pay](#) – This is for Apple products, and Apple has made it user-friendly to donate to churches. If a church has Smart Giving, it can be even simpler.

[Learn How To Set Up Apple Pay](#) – simply follow the link and follow their directions.

NOTE: There is also [Google Pay](#) and [Samsung Pay](#)

[Venmo](#) – (owned by PayPal) This may be a good way to transfer funds within your personal accounts, but it appears to have some fees to transfer funds to others (e.g., churches). The linked page has a series of boxes with drop-down details on fees --- which are mostly \$0, but there are a few places where there is a 1% or 3% charge (please take the time to review). If you decide this is for you/your church, “Next” box at bottom of page will take you to the Sign Up page (which you can do directly, or through Facebook).

The following do have fee-structures that you may want to investigate, and let members of your church know.

[GiveFly](#) – This is a fee-based program (2.99% credit card fee plus 30 cents per transaction (so, for a \$100 pledge, they would keep \$.33). The church enters their banking information and the funds will be transferred immediately to your account.

[PayPal](#) – A safe and secure way to transfer funds, and they say that it has no costs. [Click here to learn about how to set it up so that there are no costs](#)
[Click here to watch a 1 minute YouTube video on “how to” set up the account.](#)

Worship - from home

Live Streaming (links to churches with live-streaming worship)

1. [Facebook](#) – A brief step-by-step guide on how to use Facebook Live Video Feed for Worship (or any other reason)
2. [How to Set Up Live-Streaming for Worship](#) – A YouTube video by Rev. Josh Toulouse of The Table Knoxville where he explains how to create a live stream of a worship service with a few simple tools.

[SEE INSTRUCTIONS FOR TECHNOLOGY AND THE CHURCH](#) for the following:

3. Adobe Flash Media Live Encoder -
4. Vimeo-Livestream
5. OBS (Open Source)

Communion - from home

A. Visiting, Bread, and Cup – There are a number of options, if you believe that you must visit someone in person. But please remember that you may be visiting someone who is **very** vulnerable. But, if you feel you must visit and bring them Communion, one might think it’s OK to use the traditional “home communion kits,” but I would suggest that you don’t because it means your handling food and cups. Instead, consider calling ahead and asking your friend/member to have some bread and some juice or wine in a cup. And do not participate with the person – so that, again, you can avoid the touching of elements that might transmit any germs (disease?). When you arrive, visit for a while and the ask if you can offer Communion: 1) a brief reflection; 2) the Words of Institution – following the bread

ask him/her to eat some bread, and following the cup ask her/him to drink from the cup; 3) offer a prayer.

Another option, if you are planning on handling the bread and/or the cup, is to have gloves with you to protect from passing or receiving germs (disease?).

B. Or, you can offer Communion via technology – by live-streaming.

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C. Or, finally, you can record a Communion service, posted it to the church's web site, or Facebook page, and make it available anytime that people want/need Communion.

Video to play when you want/need (we will add videos as we receive them)

[Omaha First Christian Church's Rev. Josh Sawyer](#)

Pastoral Concerns and Care

Consider visiting with members and visitors via teleconference. Yes, it's simpler to pick up the phone and talk with them, but there is an added dimension when you can see each other even if it's on the screen. You may have to go to their home once to help them with setting up Zoom, but below are two links that will help you with downloading Zoom onto a computer or laptop or tablet. And a second link to some videos to watch so that you can learn/teach people how to use Zoom.

The Regional Board and Committees has moved to Zoom for a growing number of our meetings and once the people have used a 2nd and 3rd time, it becomes very comfortable – it's that first time, or two, that it feels awkward. (***SEE Technology and The Church for more detailed instructions on downloading and learning how to use Zoom***)

Download Zoom Here: <https://zoom.us/download> and **click on Zoom Client** for Meetings.

Learn How To Use Zoom Here: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206618765-Zoom-Video-Tutorials>

Helping People in Need (e.g., food pantries, health care, housing, employment)

[Arizona Food Bank Network Guidance](#) – a helpful pdf/handout if your church provides emergency food relief of any kind – consider establishing a special fund so that members can support your efforts (and reach out into the community to ask them for their support too)

Study Groups

5 Ministers Offer a Study and Discussion

It's an idea...are you interested in offering such a "Zoom Room"? Please let Chris know.