



12 Emails to Send Your Church

Communication for the New Reality

#1 – Being Honest

As you've heard, our city's shelter in place order has been extended to [date].

But please hear this, too: church is not canceled.

It just looks different.

Honestly, this isn't the 2020 we had in mind. Navigating what church looks like during a pandemic has been a challenge, but we find hope in seeking our faithful God and knowing that nothing can cancel the Church.

Our community, all of the people of God around the world included, is not canceled. We'll just worship differently from where we are until we can be back together again.

And we will be back together again. I know you're facing disappointment, grief, and other difficulties in this season too, but we're all in this together and we're here for you.

Here's how:

- If you have financial, physical, or other needs right now, please [click here](#) to let us know.
- We haven't stopped praying for you. Please [click here](#) to update us on any prayer requests you may have.
- We'll keep updating [this page](#) with the latest news about how our church is "meeting" and serving during this time.

What we won't do:

- Meet in-person. All of our in-person events, groups, and other gatherings are on pause as we practice loving our neighbor through staying at home as much as possible.
- Panic. God is still on the throne and in control. As hard as it is to rest right now, we can choose to remember this and rest in Him.

- Waste this season. All of us have a huge opportunity to connect with people online and serve our community right now. Let's leverage this.

What we will do:

- Stay connected. Isolation isn't good for anyone and we're making sure that having to be physically distanced doesn't mean we're completely disconnected. Check out our online service details and virtual small group information.
- Love our neighbors. There are needs inside and outside of our church that we can work together to help meet. Even if you're not in a position to donate financially, a kind word through the phone, volunteering in local relief efforts, or spreading a hope-filled message on social media can really help.
- Remember our Hope. Our shared faith in Jesus Christ is what brought us together and will help us stick together. We should lean on and remind each other of God's promises when we're feeling weary.

Our church leadership is praying continuously and trusting God. We encourage you to do the same. Please feel free to reach out to us with any questions or concerns.

[Name]

Be honest with your church about the disappointment and changed plans. Share how you're keeping faith through it.

#2 – Telling Stories

[Customize this idea and template with a story from your church. You could also coordinate a video for this instead of typing out the full story.]

Insert a story about people in your church who are serving others, needs that the church has been able to help meet (and has permission to share or can share anonymously or generally), or how people in your church are staying connected/encouraging each other.

Even though we can't be together physically right now, this is what the Church looks like.

It's possible because of your hearts to serve and your generosity.

The Church isn't canceled.

God's love isn't canceled.

Serving isn't canceled.

And you're proving that right now, [Church Name]. Even in this strange and scary time, you're being the hands and feet of Jesus to a worried world.

Keep caring for one another and showing the hope of Christ to all. We'll get through this together.

[Name]



#3 – Prep for Sunday

We're doing Sundays in a new way right now. And I'm still so excited to share God's word with you.

I hope you're looking forward to joining your [Church Name] family on Sunday at [insert service times]. [Click here](#) for more information about accessing our online service.

Insert your main sermon scripture and a brief overview of the topic here. Below is an example.

I'll preach from the book of 1 Chronicles. I encourage you to let the words of 1 Chronicles 16:11 spur your heart to seek God:

"Look to the LORD and His strength; seek His face always."

Our human strength will surely fail us. We can't hope in ourselves right now or ever; our hope has to be found in seeking the Lord. The strength we find Him never, ever fails.

To prepare for Sunday...

- Read 1 Chronicles 16 and note what it says about praising God.
- Have crackers or bread and juice ready to participate in communion.

If you know someone who is a part of our church but not receiving our emails, please let them know that they can [sign up for emails here](#) and always find information on our website too.

Can't wait to worship with you on Sunday.

[Name]



Encourage your church to use some of their free time to read God's word and prepare for Sunday's message.

#4 – Encouragement for Today

Psalm 23:4 says, “Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”

Having faith in the darkest valley—during a global pandemic, for example—is bold. It’s natural to feel fearful right now, but believers can have a bold faith and hope during a crisis because of who our God is.

He is never changing, even when our world does. (Malachi 3:6)

He is all-powerful, strong and able to do anything He wills. (Psalm 147:5, Romans 1:20)

He is all-knowing, having knowledge of everything past, present, and future. (Isaiah 46:9–10)

He is faithful and always will be. (2 Timothy 2:13)

And He is so much more. He is beyond what we can conceive in our limited human minds. His purposes and promises are sure, even when we don’t understand them. Even when we aren’t sure where He is or what He’s doing.

As Charles Spurgeon said:

“God is too good to be unkind and He is too wise to be mistaken. And when we cannot trace His hand, we must trust His heart.”

Again, trusting God and having faith during a pandemic is a bold stance. But do you know what else is bold? Coming before the Almighty God of the universe in prayer. Hebrews 4:16 instructs us: “Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace in the time of need.”

Come boldly to the God who is unchanging, always faithful, and never caught by surprise. Keep your faith in Him and let the knowledge of who He is calm your fears.

Forward this to someone who needs encouragement for today.

[Name]

Many people are feeling discouraged right now. Use your emails as a tool to speak to their hearts.

#5 – Follow Along

Maybe we can't exchange hugs or handshakes right now, but we can still see smiles and hear laughter. Thanks to technology, our world is more connected than ever before.

We're still able to have service online and virtual small groups. We can encourage each other through text, email, and video chat. Praise God!

And we can keep in touch on social media. Follow along as we share what the church is up to and encouragement for your day-to-day on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).

Share your sweet moments at home with us by tagging @[\[church social media handle\]](#).

We still want to see you!

[Name]



#6 – What About the Kids?

Parents, how are you doing?

I know you might be using your only five free minutes of the day to read this email, so I'll make it quick.

When our church is able to meet physically again, we want you to come back without having pulled all of your hair out, so here are some ideas for entertaining your kids and engaging them spiritually.

If you're not a parent, forward these ideas to a parent you know. I'm sure they'll appreciate it.

- Life.Church has free online kids service videos to watch [on this page](#).
- The Kennedy Center has "Lunch Doodles with Mo Willems" with 15 videos and downloadable activities [on YouTube](#).
- [This Pinterest board](#) has some awesome indoor craft ideas.
- The Cincinnati Zoo is offering videos of the zoo and different animals with facts about them and activities to do at home [here](#).
- The Austin Stone Church has weekly kids resources [on this page](#) that is updated weekly (such as [this curriculum](#) with coloring sheets and activity ideas) and a [helpful, Scripture-based guide](#) on talking about the coronavirus with your kids.

We're praying for you as you navigate this new normal. Please let us know what you need.

And if you know about other resources for kids, send them our way and we'll share them with other parents in our church.

[Name]



#7 – Bible Verses to Memorize

Memorizing scripture helps us know God more, renew our minds, and encourage others.

And while some of us have extra time on our hands right now, it's the perfect opportunity to hide God's word in our hearts and seek Him more through His holy Word.

I recommend starting by memorizing these five verses that are especially truths for facing our current fears:

Isaiah 41:10

"Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."

Deuteronomy 31:8

"The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged."

2 Timothy 1:7

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."

Philippians 4:6-7

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Psalms 91: 1-2

"Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, 'He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.'"

Download an app like [Verses](#) or [The Bible Memory App](#) to make memorizing Scripture even more enjoyable. We're spending a lot more time on our phones anyway :)

[Name]

Send your church Bible verses or chapters you recommend to encourage them and teach them how to walk through hard seasons.

#8 – Book Recommendations

As much as we all love our screens, we're starting to realize that staring at them all day can't be our only quarantine activity.

Puzzles, coloring sheets, board games, and books are other great ways to entertain yourself and your family with no screens involved.

If you're looking for a few good books to read—other than your Bible... :)—here are a few I recommend:

[Insert books you'd recommend for your congregation. We started a list below as an example, but we also recommend these books :)]

1. Anxious for Nothing by Max Lucado

We're (understandably) living in a high-anxiety time. This comforting book helps you rest in the peace of God that surpasses all understanding.

2. Confronting Christianity by Rebecca McLaughlin

This Christian apologetics book is approachable, charitable, and eye-opening in examining 12 questions that are often barriers to people when they consider placing their faith in Christ.

3. Creativity, Inc. by Ed Catmull

This book by the co-founder and president of Pixar isn't a Christian book, but it's very good and will inspire your growth in both creativity and leadership.

Also, check out this awesome list of [free \(or discounted\) books to read in quarantine](#).

Amazon isn't shipping books very quickly these days, but you can still order online from Christian publishers like [Crossway](#) and [InterVarsity Press](#) or through [Bookshop](#), which supports local bookstores.

Reading is a wonderful way to rest. I'd love to hear what you've been reading at home.

With love,

[Name]



#9 – Who (and What) is Helping



"When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, "Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping." — Mr. Fred Rogers

We're all adjusting to new versions of our "normal" lives: being thrust into homeschooling if you weren't already, dealing with wide-scale unemployment, and going to church exclusively online.

But like the wise Mr. Rogers, we find comfort in these anxious, scary times by looking for the helpers. And there are plenty right in our church community.

It takes work behind the scenes to make sure we're prepared to worship together online on Sundays.

Insert a story about someone (or someones) on your staff or volunteer team that help make Sundays online or outreach efforts happen. See below for an example.

Kayla has served as an administrative volunteer for two years. She's a little more tech-savvy than the rest of our leadership team and she stepped up to help set up the livestream that you see on Sundays.

Recognize James? He's been a member of our church for eight years now. As soon as he heard about the need to transport groceries to people in our community who can't leave home right now, he got his truck ready to make some trips.

And you're helping, too. Your faithful generosity over the years has helped make it possible for us to continue to worship together on Sunday and serve people in our community who are in need right now.

To see how to give online and continue supporting this ministry, [click here](#).

If you have a need right now, we have helpers. [Click here](#) to let us know.

[Name]

#10 – Sermon Follow-Up

I hope you're still finding Sunday the most life-giving day of the week.

So much has changed because of the pandemic. But from one Sunday to the next, our God is still the same faithful God and our church is still the loving, familiar community of God's people.

In yesterday's sermon, I taught about [topic] and [summary].

But let's not stop there.

When you have free time this week, re-read [insert sermon Scripture passage here]. And ask these questions to help you further understand [topic] and live out God's word in your life.

- What does this passage teach us about God?

- What are the personal implications (for you)?
- What does this mean for the Church as a whole?
- What do we learn about human beings from this passage?
- How did this passage and sermon challenge or encourage you?
- What questions do you have about this topic?

Diving deeper into God's word and getting to know Him better is always a wise use of time.

I pray that reflecting on Scripture and this week's sermon will bring you closer to Christ and fill you with a confident hope that can only come from Him.

[Name]

Use email to equip people to engage with God's word and the sermon topic throughout their week.



#11 – See a Need, Meet a Need

If you've been spending any extra time on Instagram these days (come on, I know you turned off the screen time limits...), you might have noticed a new challenge: see a _____, send a _____.

For example...see a dog, send a dog (someone sends a picture of their dog and you then post a picture of your dog).

Well, we've been keeping a pulse on the needs in our community and many of you have asked how you can help.

[Click here](#) to view some of the needs and sign up to serve.

See a need, meet a need.

(Insert examples)

They range from sending craft supplies for children to doing a grocery store pick-up.

A few ways you can serve outside of our church are:
(Insert examples)

- [Our local food bank](#) is asking for financial or food donations.
- [Send a few dollars to Meals on Wheels](#) to help them deliver meals to seniors in our community.
- Contact a local school to find out what they need most right now.

If you're struggling and have a need yourself, there's no shame in that and we'd love to help you. [Click here](#) to fill out a benevolence request.

If you have a prayer request, [click here](#).

We're here for you and we're in this together. Let's help each other through.

[Name]



#12 – Pretending with Prompts

One of the things I miss most about being together physically on Sunday mornings is that time after service when we hang around, chat, and catch up with each other.

We'll be back together one day and we can talk after service, make lunch plans, and even give out hugs.

But in the meantime, I have an idea.

After online service this Sunday, start a video call (via Zoom, Skype, FaceTime, etc.) with someone you would normally chat with after service (or even someone you haven't talked to as often!).

Here are some conversation prompts to help you get started.

- How has this time been for you?
- What are you grateful for lately?
- Have you started any new hobbies?
- How is your family doing?
- What are you reading or listening to?
- How can I pray for you?

Connection with others is so important—especially now. Social distancing doesn't have to mean social isolation.

Reach out to someone, start a conversation, check in on your church family.

Keep connecting and keep hope alive. We need each other.

[Name]

Send your church ideas for how to stay connected with each other virtually until you can meet in person again.

