

NOW & NEXT

HOW THE CHURCH IS CHANGING FOR GOOD

presented by  AMPLIFY MEDIA

Episode 2 – Digital Church: A Practical How-To Guide

Watch this episode on demand and download related resources at AmplifyMedia.com/NowandNext/digital-church/.

Host – Rev. Lisa Yebuah, Lead Pastor, Southeast Raleigh Table, Raleigh, NC

Panelists –

Sophia Agtarap, Director of Communications, Vanderbilt Divinity School, Nashville, TN

Katie Allred, Creator, Church Communications, Mobile, AL

In this second episode, Sophia and Katie joined host Lisa as they discussed the technical hurdles many pastors are facing as they try to learn, use, and improve on many new digital platforms.

Sophia and Katie had many pieces of advice and encouragement during the webinar, such as:

- Instead of thinking of your Sunday services as a one-time event, consider them within the larger presence of your community and a tool for sustaining relationships.
- Now is the time to get creative with both your approach to the digital space and how you reach out to people in your community who are not connected online. This isn't just an issue of accessibility but hospitality. For example, Sophia suggested, when delivering groceries, include written notes from other people in your church. Both recommended bringing back phone trees.
- Don't try and learn every single platform out there. Pick one and go deep. Take a page from late-night hosts and other television shows posting content online – you don't have to be perfect and you can get creative with your content. Now is the time to invite people from other parts of the country and world to join you in a virtual conversation to then share with your communities.
- There are many group texting services available to help connect with people who are not online.
- Don't rush into buying lots of equipment. Digital outreach and services are here to stay so you have time to figure out what works best for you and your churches before you make high-investment decisions.
- This is not an either/or scenario. It must be both/and. We are hosting digital services now and will continue in-person worship and relationships.

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Here are links to the services Sophia and Katie recommended, which you should research to determine what best suits your church. (The underlined words are links to these resources.)

- Facebook groups. Katie shared that Facebook groups have a much higher reach than Facebook pages. She said you should think of your Facebook page as your church's front door and the Facebook group as the living room.
- There are multiple good group video services available:

Zoom – This is the most talked about but might not be the best fit for everyone.

Cisco Webex – Is free up to 100 people and doesn't have the same time limits.

Free Conference Call – This site allows for members to call in who are not digitally connected.

Adobe Connect – Like many services, they are offering free webinar services right now.

Google Hangouts – This is ideal if your church shares Google docs and their other suite of services.

Facebook Live – Facebook Live is now available to view to those without a Facebook account.

Many churches are concerned about using music in their service. Both Christian Copyright Licensing International and Christian Copyright Solutions were recommended.

Sophia consults with churches at sophiakristina.co. She recently wrote [this article](#) on the topic for UMC.org.

Katie consults with churches at churchcommunications.com. They also have resources for people with accessibility issues.

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