

## Easter Ideas During Coronavirus

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**\*\*\*Please Note\*\*\*** *The following are suggestions, crowdsourced from our amazing online community. As you know, the situation regarding COVID-19 changes on a nearly daily basis. We urge you make every effort to follow the most recent guidelines issued by national, state/province, and local authorities regarding public events and gatherings.*

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### Easter Sunday

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As we all try to navigate doing church during a global pandemic, here are our top suggestions for planning your Easter services:

1. Make sure you're blessing your community. As a team, be asking questions like:
  - a. What does our community need right now?
  - b. How can we serve our community?
  - c. What part of our Easter plan is going to be about blessing other people and sharing God's love?
2. Crowdsource as many elements as you can of your Easter service.
3. Make sure you have a system for digitally collecting people's contact information so that you can follow up.
4. And finally, and most importantly, preach the gospel! The fact that Easter will be digital this year means there are fewer barriers than ever to people going to church on Easter. If they decide to tune in to your service, make sure they're hearing the message of Jesus!

In this doc, you'll find tons of ideas and resources for putting these suggestions into practice, as well as ideas for kids and families, egg hunts, promoting your Easter services, and celebrating Holy week.

## Blessing your Community:

These suggestions fall into two categories: First, we have ideas for meeting **physical** needs in your community. Second, we have ideas for meeting **relational** needs. Both are extremely important right now, and your church's response will depend on your community's needs and what your church is uniquely positioned to offer.

### Ideas for providing food, clothing, and other necessities:

- Buy travel-sized hand lotions to donate to hospitals in your community, so that workers and patients can moisturize after frequent hand-washing.
- Partner with local schools and/or nonprofits who are providing lunches to kids, or donate money to a local organization that is feeding children in need. (One church pledged to donate a percentage of what people gave to the church to a local nonprofit helping feed kids- this idea drives generosity & shows that you are leading the way!)
- Convert an outdoor space (such as a mini library or a foyer that you leave unlocked) into a mini food pantry.
- Take meals to fire, police departments, and/or medial workers.
- Partner with other churches and local restaurants to provide meals to those in need.
- Use door hangers to give out contact information to the people in your neighborhoods, to let them know how to contact the church if you can help by providing prescription pick-up, dinner delivery, etc.
- Give your Easter offering away to a local outreach partner or specific ministry. In order to promote this, start capturing footage of the work that ministry or nonprofit is doing NOW, and make a video that you can show during your service.
- Make sure you are doing everything you can to minimize the exposure of the people you're trying to help, and let them know you're doing that by adding "Sanitized for Your Protection Stickers" to each community giveaway item.
- Host a fundraiser, then use the money collected to buy a gift card from a local restaurant that delivers. Then, give that gift card away to a nursing home, fire station, etc.

### Ideas for meeting relational needs:

- Organize volunteers to make sure they are checking on up to 10 people throughout the week.
- Do an Easter "Parade" for the community around your church, where you all decorate your cars and drive through the neighborhood.
- Send handwritten letters of encouragement.
- Order flowers to be delivered to local nursing homes, with one flower going to each resident and staff member.
- Encourage the church to care for the physical and spiritual needs of neighbors, and share some stories of people who are living on mission right now.

### Crowdsourcing your Easter Service:

- Do a virtual Easter dance montage! Sending out the song and dances moves for families to learn, and have them send their videos back in to be put together and played on Easter Sunday.
- Do an “Easter’s best” photo contest. It gives the family a reason to still dress up (or at least dress up their kids). Collect email addresses and give a prize (or a few prizes).
  - Use different categories if you offer multiple prizes: dressed up, dressed down, pets, etc.
  - If you go the generosity route you could donate \$1 (or whatever) for every submission or every social share...
- Have kids tell the Easter story! Here are a few variations:
  - Send parents 3-5 questions for them to ask their kids about the Easter story, with a link for uploading videos of their interview to a dropbox or Google folder. Then, have someone from your church who’s good at video editing sift through and create a video from their responses. It’s a nice way to transition between your online worship and message, naturally sets your pastor up to tell the *real* Easter story, and, best of all, gets families excited and involved in your service, even digitally.
  - Have parents record their kids talking about what Easter and Jesus mean to them. Short clips. Then edit them all together to make a video.
- Create a testimony video. Here are a few variations:
  - Reach out to a handful of families and ask them to share in 60 seconds or less about Gods provision and what Easter means to them. Have each family record their own videos and compile them together.
  - Ask people to film themselves explaining how Jesus changed their life in 1 min and send it to you. Then, create a testimony video using the clips!
- Ask people to take a picture of themselves or their families watching online in the weeks leading up to Easter, hashtag and post on social media. Then, use the photos in the preservice countdown time before service begins on Easter Sunday.
- Create an Easter skit! Send the kids their lines, and have parents video them acting them out. Then, put them all together to create a video.
- Get parents to send in videos of their kids saying a bible verse from the message, then put them together.

### Digital Connect Cards:

One of the best parts of doing services online is that it allows you to keep your next steps native to the platform. Here are some suggestions for using digital connect cards during your services:

1. Start the LIVE and in a fun way, and also strongly encourage EVERYONE to leave a comment. That is your attendance/roll call.
2. Then encourage a next step of getting into a Facebook Group. As they request to join the Facebook Group, Facebook will allow you to ask people 3 questions. This is now

your “Connect Card.” One idea would be to ask them their email and phone number and how long they’ve been attending the church.

That is the simple next step you ask people to take. It moves people to your digital community and it functions as your Connect Card.

We have a [free course on how to set up and run a highly effective Facebook Group](#) for your church.

3. Then use your Facebook Insights as your high-level metrics. Reach, views, etc.
4. Another option would be to encourage people to use keywords as comments during the live. Then use a chatbot or your hospitality team to follow up. For example, you could say, “If you are new just type connect in the comments. We’d love to reach out and get to know you.”
5. You can follow-up with anyone using keywords after the live and reply with a comment. Then look for the “message” option and send them a message from the page. You could thank them for attending and include a link to your digital connect card via Messenger.

### Call to Salvation:

Again, the fact that you’ll likely be doing church online means that you have an opportunity to keep next steps native to the platform! While we’d love to hear more of your ideas on this, here’s the simple process we’re recommending:

1. Preach the gospel! The good news of Jesus’ resurrection never changes, and your church has an opportunity to share this message with more people than ever.
2. Create an EASY next step that people can take if they’ve responded to the message and accepted Jesus as their Savior. For example, say, “If you’ve accepted Jesus as your Savior, drop the praise hands (🙌) emoji in the comments and someone from our church will follow up with you!”
3. Have people who are available to follow-up immediately and help get people plugged into your online community. Train these volunteers in advance, so that they know what to do.

### Drive-In/Drive-Through Church:

A lot of people wrote in to say that they were planning to do some sort of variation on drive-in church for their Easter services. This is an understandably popular idea, however, some areas currently prohibit it because of the virus. If this is your plan for Easter, great! But, make sure that you’ve considered a back-up plan in case it rains or your state/local guidelines on public gatherings are tightened up.

## Promoting your Easter Services:

### Physical Promotion:

- Send members stickers "EASTER at [Your Church]" w/ times and the web address to attach to whatever items they put together to bless their neighbors.
- Have a few volunteers stand near your church's road or parking Lot with signs that have words like "Jesus is risen," "Happy Easter," or the church's website.
- Get yard signs printed that your people can put up in their neighborhoods with hope-filled Bible verses and/or an invite to Easter online.
- Put up a banner on your church's property inviting people to celebrate Easter online with you.

### Digital Promotion:

- Solicit short videos of Easter invites from your people, then compile them together to make a promotional video that you can post on social media, use in ads, etc. The beauty of crowdsourcing is that it makes it a little more fun for your people to share and invite their friends when they appear in the invite video!
- Do an Easter photo challenge & have people tag your church in their photos. You can use fun prompts like:
  - Take a picture of your reaction if you found the empty tomb!
  - Post your family reenacting the resurrection scene.
  - Tag us in a #throwback Easter photo
  - Post a photo of you looking like you are lifting something heavy. Make sure it's an illusion- we don't want any of you straining your muscles during quarantine!
- If you have connections with local broadcasting stations, brainstorm ways to get the Easter message out through those channels, too.
- Use Facebook photo frames.
- Have everyone from your church post pictures of their view of the Easter sunrise with the caption "Christ the Lord is risen today" and your church's Easter hashtag.
- Do an Easter-themed Tik Tok challenge for the teens in your church!
- Send an email to members and attenders with an email template for them to use to invite neighbors to watch the Good Friday and Easter Services.

### Follow-up:

- Use a system like Text In Church that will allow you to 1) automate parts of your follow-up process and 2) let people text keywords to get started.
- Consider doing a virtual welcome party via Zoom for people who are new to the church, and a virtual hangout for people who want to ask questions about the message.

### Other Easter Service Ideas:

- Consider using a talk show format with video stories and interviews throughout the service. This can be a powerful way for your church to show what life with Jesus is like!
- Integrate hidden details into your service to help keep kids (and families!) entertained:
  - Have Easter eggs in different spots throughout your service, and encourage kids to count how many they see.
  - See if people can spot the hidden details you've woven into your service and make a downloadable fill-in-the-blank style pdf or bingo board for families to cross off during the service.
- Go live from your driveway, so the people immediately around you can watch from their porches!
- Use a Zoom webinar and stream to Facebook Live during the worship time, so that you can all sing together.
- Go live during your Easter breakfasts at home for a time of fellowship.
- Have a way for people to submit prayer requests- through Text In Church, Facebook messenger, or even a phone call.
- Host an "Easter Sing," where everyone from your church goes outside at the same time and sings, "Christ the Lord is Risen Today" or another Easter song.
- Have each family from your church release balloons or butterflies at the end of your Easter service.
- Mail kids Easter activity packets they can do during your Easter service or provide printable activity pages online.
- Create a live, interactive scavenger hunt for families to do 30 minutes prior to your Easter service kicking off.
- Try to facilitate communion by providing a place where people can pick up the elements, mailing an "Easter box" to your people, or by providing instructions for preparing the elements at home. Then, have the pastor lead everyone in communion during your Easter service (or holy week services).
- Do something low-key and digital for now, then plan to celebrate Jesus' resurrection in person once you can all be together again!

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## Kids / Family Activities

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Wanting to plan something special for the families in your community and church this Easter, but not sure how to do it while maintaining social distancing? Here are some ideas- some revolve around doing a viral-free egg hunt, others are not.

### Egg Hunt Ideas:

- Have people volunteer to put easter prizes outside their home with a designated sign/church logo. Families can drive around town collecting the goodies (from driveways, front porches, etc).
- Ask people to sign up to be “egged,” and have small teams of people hide eggs in their yards early on Easter morning so the kids wake up to an egg hunt in their yard. You can leave one egg empty to symbolize the empty tomb & include information about your online services.
- Provide “drive-up” Easter baskets or do-in-home egg hunt kits to people in your community.
- Create a drive-by window egg hunt. You can create a map on your website of addresses, so people can drive around your city spotting the eggs. If you want to up the stakes, save them, count the number of Easter eggs in people’s windows and let you know in order to win a gift card!
- Create a virtual Easter egg scavenger hunt that leads to a special landing page or multiple pages if designed like a choose your own adventure. Have people leave comments along the way.

### Kids Ministry / Family Activities:

- Do digital or drive-through stations of the cross.
- Create digital resurrection eggs or mail kits so that families can create their own resurrection eggs at home!
- Deliver BLOOM kits to families before Easter. Here’s the description of a bloom kit: “Our small group leaders are delivering BLOOM kits to our kids on Sunday April 5th - dropping on the porch and praying for the family <3 We use Orange and our theme for April is Bloom - ordered little flower pots, zip-loc of dirt and pack of seeds - with a letter (not written yet!) about Easter online! The scripture is "I am alive forever and ever." Rev. 1:18 (what a great verse for NOW!) thinking it will be a family activity and something families can watch together as it BLOOMS!”
- Have families and children submit Easter artwork and create a virtual gallery on your Facebook page.
- Create an Easter scavenger hunt where people can drive around and take pictures of things, or, if your area is under stay at home orders, create one that they can do inside their homes.



- Instead of having an in-person photo booth, have people send you Easter selfies & mail them printed, framed photos as a gift.
- Host an egg decorating contest online or a virtual gallery.
- Create something like a Christmas light drive-through with stations of the cross for Easter. Have families from your church create displays outside their homes, and upload a map and narration to your church's website telling the Easter story so that families can drive around at night & watch the lights.
- Ask the kids to decorate their sidewalks and driveways with Easter messages written with sidewalk chalk, and have their parents take pictures and tag the church!
- Create a virtual, multi-day Easter challenge for kids where you share part of the Easter story and kids submit a creation (legos, drawing, songs, skits, etc.) that goes along with it.

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## Observing Holy Week

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Going digital doesn't mean you can't observe Holy Week. In fact, it means that many of your people are more available to join you! Here are some ideas for commemorating the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus all week long.

### Communion:

Before we dive into Holy Week, let's talk communion. For some of you, taking communion while you're unable to meet in person isn't really a workable idea. You may scroll to the next page without fear of missing anything. :) However, if your church & theological beliefs allow, many of you are considering how you can provide elements and guidance for people to take communion in their homes or cars during the week of Easter. While you need to be careful to make sure that you're keeping things sanitary, here are some ideas we've seen:

- Create an "Easter box" that you mail or allow people to pick up at your church, with elements for each portion of your Holy Week celebrations: palm leave, communion elements, etc. (Brady Shearer talks about this idea in a recent video.)
- Create a drive-thru experience where people visit the stations of the cross and then have an opportunity to take communion from pre-sealed, sanitary communion kits. (Please note, this strategy will not work in areas with strict "shelter-in-place" orders.)
- Give people instructions for how to make their own communion bread in preparation for your services. Consider shipping them a bottle of grape juice, too.
  - Recipe #1: [Unleavened bread](#) for communion.
  - Recipe #2: Second [unleavened bread option](#) for communion.
  - Recipe #3: [Leavened bread recipe](#) for communion.



**Palm Sunday:**

- Leading up to Easter, creating a devotional beginning on Palm Sunday that discusses the meaning of Good Friday and Easter for Adults/Teens /Kids.
- Do a virtual palm processional. Send out a template for “making” palm branches at home, then instruct kids to make them & take pictures and video of them having their own parade in their yards or homes.

**Passover/Seder:**

- Do a video or social post explaining the significance of the Passover in the context of our Christian faith, and how to recognize/celebrate the Passover at home.
- [Post a recipe](#) for unleavened bread that families can make together at home!
- Host a live Seder Dinner from the pastor’s dining room table & have his family explain the parts of the meal. Let people know what’s needed beforehand so they can celebrate at home, too!
- Create a worship medley or watch party so you can have a time of worship together from their homes.

**Maundy Thursday:**

- Have a virtual communion service, using the suggestions above.
- Create an online, live foot washing service. Have the pastor and his wife talk about the significance of foot washing and Maundy Thursday, while people watch and wash each other’s feet at home.
- Use Zoom webinars feeding into Facebook Live and/or conference calling software so that you can include all members of your church family.

**Good Friday:**

- Provide a Good Friday devotional in the morning, followed by a 3 p.m. gathering on Facebook. Because of COVID-19, we don’t necessarily have to keep our Good Friday service times to the lunch or evening hours.
- Create a box for Good Friday with a devotional, craft, activity pages, and communion elements.
- Ask people to send in their thoughts (or their kids or teen’s thoughts!) on Good Friday and include them in the service.
- Create a reflective service by hosting a service with songs and reading devotionals on the sayings of Jesus on the cross. You can use this order of service as an outline:
  - Read about two of Jesus’s sayings from the cross.
  - Sing
  - Read two more devotionals on Jesus’ sayings
  - Sing
  - Read two more devotionals on Jesus’ sayings
  - Sing
  - Read the remaining devotional
  - Sing
  - Prayer + dismissal / 10 minutes for people to greet each other and share in the comments.

- Do a “Show and tell/talent show” style Good Friday service. Pre-record or ask people to send in their submissions and edit them together to create a Good Friday video for your service.

### Creative Sunrise Service Ideas:

- Scope out the best places in your area to watch the sunrise. Then, on Easter Sunday, plan to go live from that spot. Use a simple equipment set-up (even just your phone), and plan a quiet time of Scripture, music, and reflection against the backdrop of an actual sunrise.
- Host the sunrise service from your yard/balcony/front porch and encourage others to head outside as they watch!

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## Resources

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[ProChurch Connection Postcards](#)

Free [Text In Church 60-day trial](#)

[Free Easter Webinar](#) from the Unstuck Group

[CREATIVE Easter Ideas For Churches 2020 \[COVID-19 Response\]](#) from Brady Shearer

[Door hangers](#) for offering help to your neighbors.

[Boxes of Hope](#) Vision Presentation.