



Hi Friends,

We're curating a real-time collection of pastoral insights, links, resources, and ideas that we hope you find helpful as you and your churches respond in love to the evolving COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you so much to all who have contributed already. Let's do this together!

If you have anything to add or recommend, please drop us a line at connect@jesuscollective.com and we'll keep updating this list to make it as helpful as possible.

For now, this list is segmented into the following categories:

- Pastoral Insights and Encouragement
- Church Leadership Ideas / Responses
- Other Links & Resources
- Popular Digital Platforms

Peace!

Team Jesus Collective

Pastoral Insights and Encouragement

The following is a brief summary of comments from the Jesus Collective Online Discussion on March 18, 2020. (Thoughtfully summarized and published by [Faith Today](#).) Feel free to share additional insights that might be an encouragement to others: connect@jesuscollective.com.

Bruxy Cavey – [The Meeting House](#), Oakville, ON

In this challenging time, let's remember the image Jesus gave of himself as a mother hen ready to gather his people under his wings. Unlike the "you were not willing" mentioned in the Bible, we are willing. We are called to "restful work," we rest in Jesus which enables us to calmly serve others without overextending ourselves. The church was made for situations like this pandemic. The church is all about being practically compassionate.

George Bedlion – [Whitewater Church](#), Puyallup, Washington

What does the church do when our buildings and programs are at stake? We turn them inside out so that they serve our neighbours instead of ourselves. For example, a youth group

becomes a service group, not so much a mutual care group. Did we use our assets during a crisis to take care of ourselves or did we use them to help our neighbours?

We need to be conscious of our role as a scattered church not a gathering, and support especially our doctors, politicians, businesspeople, etc. in their secular work. Contact leaders in church community and local community and say you are praying for them and ask them what they need, saying the church wants to support them. Commission some church members to form a team focused on blessing the local community. The messaging is not only “We church members will pull together for each other” but also from the start must be “And we’ll go out to serve our neighbours.” The youth are off school and bored – what creative way can you include them in service planning and action? If your neighbourhood has an app that people use for local help and shopping, get members to post messages on it of offers to assist.

Tara Beth Leach – [First Church of the Nazarene](#), Pasadena, California

We must be wise stewards. Some say maybe 40% of churches won’t survive this pandemic for financial reasons and otherwise. But we need to act not out of anxiety, we protect the vulnerable. The church can be a place that works with government, a point where people sign up to volunteer to help neighbours or for the vulnerable to register their needs. When some Christians complain about government restrictions and urge churches to meet defiantly anyways because God will take care of us, we need to guide them to recognize over-spiritualization can be irresponsible.

This summer will be a time of heightened spiritual sensitivity for many nonbelievers, a great opportunity, and we should look forward to major revivals in the fall when the curfews are lifted.

Josh Hinman – [New Life](#) Church on the Peninsula, Silverdale, Washington

We don’t need to wait until the curfews are lifted. Let’s aim to double the number of our small groups right now. Everyone needs community now. We need to cooperate across denominations. We need to show generosity, not fear and hoarding. I’m looking to cut the church budget by 25% (savings partly coming from less meeting expenses such as rented spaces) and reallocate that to helping community needs at this time.

Arrange a phone tree to call everyone you have phone numbers for at least once a week to check in how they are doing. If you have young people calling, make a script because some of them are not used to leaving messages when there’s no answer and you need them to. 😊

Church Leadership Ideas / Responses

- Take advantage of the available tools in your church database, enter in important pieces of information that can be shared with your pastoral team (without having a phone/video meeting).
- Now's the time to offer marriage counselling resources and support parents who are suddenly work-at-home multitasking homeschoolers.
- Create a rotation of church groups to hold virtual devotions on Facebook Live for the congregation. (Give them a shopping list of recommended equipment.)
- Encourage small groups to keep meeting virtually, provide instructions on how to use the tech. Check out this resource from The Meeting House for group leaders – [Home Church – Creating Community Online](#).
- Try to keep all communications simple and concise. People have information overload.
- Partner with other churches, reach out to smaller churches with aging demographics and maybe little tech expertise. Invite such a pastor to use your facilities to preach live or record a service for their people.
- Reach out to your city mayor and school superintendent, tell them you and your church support them and are ready to help in whatever way they need. "We've got your back. We're not separate from the community."
- In the UK midwives can no longer have appointments in hospitals, so churches are offering them space to meet.
- Consider asking everyone (even those who deal with mental health or addiction) to be the church. Give people specific tasks to do like phoning others, getting shopping, etc. helps gives them focus and reduces anxiety.
- Create an online care form that your community can fill out. View the PazNaz Care Form [HERE](#) for ideas to create a form within your own context.
- Create a simple phone script and share with your care teams to help them make valuable check in calls to friends and neighbours. Check out this simple [phone script](#) from New Life Church.
- Consider hosting in person Easter services later in the year, when it's safe to do so. Celebrate!
- Foodbanks are still open, encourage people to continue to give in various ways (i.e. purchase food online and have it delivered your local food bank).
- Create an at home video recording studio and start recording impactful stories to share. [Check out this document](#) from New Life Church. It provides helpful guidance to create content and the equipment you need to get started.
- Regular online prayer – Jesus Collective is pleased to host a weekly 30-minute online prayer gathering on Thursdays at 1 PM ET for the next several weeks, recognizing many pastors' desire to connect and be fueled and focused through times of prayer together right now. [Click here](#) to find out more and add these prayer sessions to your calendar.
- Consider reaching out to those on the front lines when it comes to healthcare:
 - Call/text/email healthcare workers (including those working in Seniors Homes, and those cleaning facilities) recognizing their specific work and offering spiritual and resource support to them and their families. Note the added stress and their own feelings as people.

- Note that caring well for healthcare workers requires following public health guidelines
 - Share light-hearted/distracting things with them
 - Bring a meal - they are especially busy (confirm it was made in sanitary conditions)
- Some things to think about when it comes to those most vulnerable in our communities:

Elderly

- Do you have a good handle on who these people are?
- Collect data and have small groups “adopt them”
- Are they connected with technology?
- Loneliness/Isolation - how to communicate?
- Get creative - e.g. family with kids at home adopt a grandparent and have kids call/send pictures

Special & Disability Needs

- Do we know who these people are in our community?
- Do they have access to mobility services? (many services are cutting back)
- Acknowledge that while for many within the disabled community it can be exciting for things to be now moving to a platform that is accessible to them, it’s also causing a lot of pain that a) it wasn’t done sooner and b) when this is over, they’re worried things will just go back to “normal” and they will be left behind.
- What are the lessons God’s wanting to teach us as a broader church family to be more accessible? [This is a helpful article to read about ableism](#) in the time of COVID-19.

Other Links & Resources

- At this time of upheaval, uncertainty and fear, what should followers of Jesus think and do? [Read this article](#) written by a friend of Jesus Collective. (The author has requested to remain anonymous, but we're pretty sure you'd like them!)
- [That Discomfort You're Feeling Is Grief](#) – an interview in the Harvard Business Review with David Kessler, the world's foremost expert on grief, helps us understand the different grief we can experience during this time.
- Share simple resources that can normalize feelings and provide basic good mental health tips for us all. Check out this [article from Psychology Today](#)
- List of resources for coping with anxiety, depression and stress - put together by Fiona Miles, MDiv, RP (Qualifying), Tyndale Family Life Centre. [Read it here](#).
- [Sanctuary Mental Health Ministries](#) recognizes the need for access to online mental health resources in this season, and they are happy to make The Sanctuary Course available for free. Use the code "mental health" at checkout to receive a 100% discount for the next month (discount code expires April 18, 2020). They recognize the need for community and relational support during anxious times. This course is intended for use in small groups, and so now more than ever you can gather online with friends or your church community to engage with the material together. This is a free resource to help address mental health in this time
- Looking for high quality, Jesus-centred **kids and youth** curriculum that can be used in any setting? Check out a full line up of high quality video based curriculum and supporting resources at [curriculum.church](#). This is a great way to keep kids and families engaged in discipleship at home in lieu of meeting in person. Full range of curriculum from pre-school to Jr. High.
- [Homeschool and Activity Resource List for Parents](#) written by a parent who homeschools, from The Meeting House.
- COVID_19 [Resources for Refugee Sponsors and Newcomers to Canada](#)
- [Church Online](#) – This is an online livestreaming platform made available for free through **Life.church**. Many churches are now using it to livestream services in place of in-person gatherings.
- Not set up to receive online donations? Check out [Canada Helps](#), or the [charitable Facebook platform](#). Or share other recommended options we can post here for others to see.
- Check out these church sites who are posting valuable tools on their websites, helping their communities to see different ways they can be Jesus-centred when there is no building or programs.
 - [PazNaz Church COVID-19 Response](#)
 - [Whitewater Church – Community Care Plan](#)
 - [New Life – COVID-19 Update](#)
- The [PEACE Community Resource Center](#), a ministry of Saddleback Church, is a place for people in need of basic resources and assistance. Programs, educational workshops, and services are available to everyone in the community. This may inspire ideas in your local context. Or if you want to reach out to them to inquire further, they are very generous in their response and willingness to share resources.

- How are we ensuring we are caring well for ourselves as pastors and ministry leaders in the midst of a season when we're offering a lot of extra care to others? What are some best practices?
 - Preserving days off
 - Neighbourhood prayer walks (if you're still able to do this in your community)
 - Therapy (online)
 - Spiritual direction (online)
 - Walks in the park (if you're still able to do this in your community)
 - [Online Workouts](#)
 - [Take a free course](#)
- Review this document that outlines [Financial Resources offered by the Ontario Government and Government of Canada](#) (created and updated by The Meeting House)
- Not sure how / where to start as a pastor, or how to engage with your community? Check out a [Missional Mobilization plan](#) created by The Meeting House.

Popular Digital Platforms

Here's a starter list of digital tools and platforms that churches / ministry organizations can utilize to communicate and/or meet together virtually online.

[Zoom](#)

A subscription based online meeting platform. Review their site for details for accessing free and paid accounts.

Note: Zoom has recently removed some restrictions on the free account option in light of COVID-19.

[Google Forms](#)

Create online forms; for example, forms for people to share their needs, or skills / ways they are available to help.

[WhatsApp](#)

WhatsApp is a popular, simple, secure messaging and calling app that can be used for free*, available on phones all over the world. If you use WhatsApp, you may be surprised how many others don't, or aren't even aware of it. It could help your small groups, leadership teams, volunteer teams, etc. communicate more easily and efficiently in the coming weeks.

** Data charges may apply. Contact your provider for details.*

[Nextdoor](#)

Nextdoor is a way to stay informed about what's going on in your neighbourhood—whether it's finding a last-minute babysitter, planning a local event, or sharing safety tips. There are so many ways we can help our neighbours and vice versa. This could be an easy way to connect with them.

[Church Online](#)

This is an online livestreaming platform made available for free through **Life.church**. Many churches are now using it to livestream services in place of in-person gatherings.

[Dwell](#)

Dwell is an audio bible app that can be used by churches. The app is now free for the next 60 days if you sign up for your "church".