

7 Sentences You Never Expected to Hear in Churches in 2020

I can only imagine how we would have responded in 2019 if someone had told us we needed to be prepared not to gather for in-person worship services for several months in 2020.

Indeed, if we had been given a glimpse of this crazy year ahead of time, we would have thought the world had gone crazy.

It probably has.

Look at these seven sentences we hear in churches today. We could never have predicted them.

1. “We need to decide if we are going to require masks in church.” If I had heard this sentence would be common in churches, I probably would have wondered if we are having mandatory costume parties in 2020. With the different masks used today, maybe we are.

2. “We can’t take the offering anymore.” Really? I think many leaders would have freaked out if they heard financial support would become dependent on digital giving. Probably many more would have been surprised how many members were willing to move to digital giving.

3. “We can no longer have the stand and greet time.” This issue was contentious in many churches before 2020. While many churches held tenaciously to this tradition, it was fading overall. But imagine if we outright banned it in churches. That has happened for the most part. In case you’re wondering, I’m really okay with this development.

4. “We need to measure our streaming views over 30 seconds.” For sure, a few churches were doing live streaming services

prior to 2020, but they were a distinct minority in number. I don't think any of us anticipated that streaming views would become a common church metric.

5. "We need to arrange our worship center seating to accommodate social distancing." Prior to 2020, I would have thought social distancing was only something we introverts practiced. Now it is something church leaders plan on a regular basis.

6. "We need to move all of our small groups to meet on Zoom." If most church members had heard this statement in 2019, they may have wondered if small groups would be in some drug-induced state. Zoom? What is that?

7. "We will no longer visit church members in the hospital." This development in 2020 is painful both to those confined to the hospital and to those in the church who really want to care for these members. It is indeed one of the tragedies of the pandemic.

Who would have predicted the articulation of these sentences in churches prior to 2020? It has been a strange year. It has been a painful year. {eo}

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