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HOW CHURCHES ARE RESPONDING TO THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

THE
UNSTUCK
GROUP®

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In an effort to learn more about how the coronavirus crisis is impacting the Church, The Unstuck Group wanted to take a closer look at the data.

We surveyed more than 500 churches from April 2nd to April 6th, 2020, including churches ranging in size from under 100 to more than 20,000 in attendance, and everything in between.

Generally, the data shows that larger churches were better prepared for this crisis than smaller churches. That's probably not a surprise. However, it's encouraging to see how quickly churches of all sizes have responded.

Read on for some of the key takeaways from the survey results in the categories of weekend service engagement, finances and other ministries of the church.

Summary of the Data

How Churches are Responding to the Coronavirus Crisis	Small Church	Medium Church	Large Church	Megachurch	All
	1 - 199	200 - 799	800 - 1999	2000+	Churches
Average attendance	112	428	925	4918	1052
Finances					
Agreed they had adequate cash reserves set aside in preparation for a crisis like this	61%	79%	90%	82%	75%
Offered online or mobile giving before the crisis	71%	99%	100%	98%	89%
Offer online or mobile giving now	85%	99%	100%	98%	94%
Giving has decreased during this crisis	61%	55%	57%	63%	58%
Have initiated staff furloughs or layoffs	8%	11%	8%	19%	11%
Have reduced staff compensation	6%	3%	4%	15%	6%
Weekend Services Engagement					
Still holding in-person services at the church	4%	1%	2%	3%	4%
Offered online services before the crisis	27%	52%	68%	79%	50%
Offer online services now	91%	96%	100%	98%	95%
Compared to in-person attendance, engagement has increased online	58%	70%	62%	73%	66%
Average increase in engagement online	85%	124%	167%	126%	115%
Other Ministries					
Offering online small groups during the crisis	66%	87%	94%	92%	82%
Providing online resources and/or environments for kids and parents	69%	95%	99%	95%	87%
Providing online resources and/or environments for students	48%	91%	98%	95%	79%

Weekend Service Engagement

Only 4% of churches are still holding in-person services at the church. Almost every other church has shifted to online services.

Only half of churches that were surveyed had online services before the crisis.

The larger the church, the more likely they were to be offering online services. Nearly 80% of megachurches had online services before the crisis, while only 27% of small churches had an online option.

Almost all churches are now using online services in some format. Only 5% of churches have not shifted to an online option. The number of small churches with online services has increased to over 90%.

More people appear to be engaging in the online services than were attending services at church buildings. Two of every three churches indicated online engagement has been higher since the crisis began than in-person attendance was before it began. Megachurches were more likely to indicate an increase in engagement.

Online engagement has more than doubled from before the crisis. For those churches that reported either increases or decreases in engagement, the average change was a 115% increase.

Finances

One in four churches may not have had adequate cash reserves set aside in preparation for a crisis like this. They either confirmed their cash reserves were not adequate or they were unsure. Close to 40% of small churches were not confident they had reserves to sustain through this crisis.

Almost all churches with more than 200 in attendance were offering online or mobile giving options before the crisis. Nearly 30% of small churches with fewer than 200 in average attendance, however, did not have an online or mobile giving option. Three weeks into the crisis, half those small churches have added online or mobile giving options.

Giving has decreased in the majority of churches. Fifty-eight percent of churches indicated that giving has gone down since the start of this crisis. Megachurches with more than 2,000 in average attendance were more likely to report giving declines.

Megachurches have been more proactive with staff furloughs or layoffs and reducing compensation. One in ten churches have already initiated layoffs and furloughs, but almost twice that many megachurches have started that process.

Other Ministries

Four out of five churches have started to offer online small groups during this crisis.

Two-thirds of small churches have made this shift to online groups.

Many churches are providing online resources and/or environments for children and their parents. That includes close to 70% of small churches.

Medium-sized churches and larger are much more likely to be providing online resources and/or environments for students during the crisis. Less than half of small churches are providing online options for students.

For more information related to this survey and the summary of the learnings, contact The Unstuck Group at help@theunstuckgroup.com.

The Unstuck Group helps leaders grow healthy churches by guiding them through experiences that focus vision, strategy, team and action. Our core services include ministry health assessments, strategic planning, staffing and structure reviews, multisite and merger planning. Learn more by visiting theunstuckgroup.com.