**Why I Love What Churches Are Doing**

**with Technology During COVID-19**

**By Chuck Lawless**

We’re livestreaming our services. Holding small groups and meetings via Zoom. Reaching out to people via Facetime and other means. Listening to choirs singing their parts while they raise their voices from different locations. Preaching the Word to more people than is typically the case even though we’re preaching through a camera. Taking pictures of our families worshiping and sharing them with our church body.

It’s all quite amazing, actually—especially when I think of these technology memories from almost forty years of ministry:

Churches with no sound amplification at all. You just had to scream when you proclaimed the Word—which is what they expected from their preachers.

Pulpit microphones that were bigger than my fist, on a pulpit that was wider than my house. It almost felt like you were hiding behind the pulpit, and you had to look around the microphone to see the congregation.

Reel-to-reel film projectors with a notorious “click, click, click” as they ran. I still remember some of the movies we watched: “A Thief in the Night,” “A Distant Thunder,” “The Burning Hell.” All were popular in the 1970s.

Missionary slide shows. They were really cool, to be honest. Pictures from around the world projected on a screen. Missions in front of us.

Handheld microphones with cords a mile long. You could break a leg tripping on them, but they were still progress.

Lapel mikes with equally long cords. No one was operating wirelessly; instead, you were wired to a microphone jack in the ground. If you moved around the pulpit, you almost had to carry the cord with you.

Soloist and choir music on cassette tapes. It seemed revolutionary. As long as you had a player that connected to your sound system, you didn’t need instrumentalists. Some folks didn’t like the “canned music,” but it was often better than what churches could offer live.

Cassette tape duplicators to distribute sermons that members requested. There was no website to which to send them. We even produced cassette “albums” of sermon series.

Praise choruses introduced via an overhead projector. Lyrics on a cell projected on the wall – who would have ever dreamed?

Handheld video cameras recording church events on VHS tapes. I still have some of the memorable tapes my church produced in the 1980s and 90s. I just don’t have any means to watch them anymore. . . .

Projectors on the ceiling and screens on the wall. Many of us had to fight battles to get them there. Sometimes the projector wasn’t the best, and we had to pull the screen down by hand—but progressive churches made these changes.

Email. You couldn’t wait to crank up the modem with its quiet roar, and you listened with anticipation for the words, “You’ve got mail.” You could communicate with church members almost instantaneously. It was almost addictive, in fact.

Now, look at all the opportunities we have today to do church via multiple means—even if crisis has forced us to broaden our perspectives. I’m deeply thankful we get to do ministry in the day we live.

The above article, “Why I Love What Churches Are Doing with Technology During COVID-19,” was written by Chuck Lawless.

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This article may not be written by an Apostolic author, but it contains many excellent principles and concepts that can be adapted to most churches. As the old saying goes, “Eat the meat. Throw away the bones.”