**We Are Church Together: Ideas for the Offering Online**

As worship is adapting to a digital space, congregations have an opportunity to be more intentional about making the connection between offerings and ministry. Here are 5 suggestions for the offering in a digital worship environment.

1. **Maintain the offering as an element of worship**. Since there are no offering plates, you might be tempted to omit the offering as a part of worship. Resist that temptation. Individuals are supporting your congregation’s ministry with financial gifts, with their time, and with their prayers. Make sure to acknowledge and give thanks for those gifts as a part of worship.
2. **Ask people to continue to give or to make a new gift**. As you give thanks for the gifts, invite people to continue to give or to make a new gift. Some people are finding your ministry online for the first time each week, invite them to respond to the ministry they are experiencing by sharing their financial gifts, their time or their prayers.

**Sample Worship Offering Announcement:** “Thank you for being a part of [*insert church name*]’s digital worship experience today. Thank you for investing your time in this opportunity to hear God’s Word and to pray together. Thank you for the gifts you share to make this ministry happen. Whether you share a financial gift or you make a call to check on someone who is isolated at home or [*describe some element of your ministry*], your gifts make ministry happen. In a moment, we will share a prayer of thanksgiving for all of the offerings that have been shared this week. If you’d like to make a financial gift to support our shared ministry, the easiest way to do that is through [insert correct information for website or mailing address]. With your help, [insert church name] will continue to be a light of hope in our community.”

1. **Make it easy to give financially**. If you are offering a digital worship experience, put your donation information on the screen or in the comments as a link, so people know how to make their donation. Do not simply say “Go to our website”, put the actual link on the screen or in the comments. For example, <https://www.vasynod.org/give/>. If you don’t have a simple donation link, like vasysnod.org/give, ask your website manager to create one. Creating a link like this is relatively easy and it allows you to put information on how to give online or through other means in one accessible spot.
2. **Consider having an ‘offertory’ with pictures of ministry during your digital worship**. If you are providing digital worship, invite people to send in pictures of themselves engaging in ministry while they are at home. Pictures of people praying, sewing masks, participating in an online meeting, for example, can be put together in a slideshow using public domain music and shared at the offering during digital worship.

**Sample Offertory Introduction**: “We give thanks for all the ways people are living out their faith while at home and sharing their gifts so we can be church together even if we aren’t physically present with one another. As you listen to this music recorded by [*insert musician name*], you can see some of the offerings we gift thanks for this week. Please share a picture of the ways you are living out your faith this week with me at: [insert email address], so we can include you in the offering next week.”

1. **Write a new offering prayer for digital worship.** Consider creating an offering prayer that specifically names the gifts that are being shared to make ministry happen.

**Sample Offering Prayer:** God of hope, we give you thanks for the gift of empty tomb and the risen Lord. We give you thanks for all of the financial gifts shared this week to make ministry happen at [*insert congregation name*]. We give you thanks for all of the people who have shared their time, their wisdom and their creativity to [*insert three specific ministries happening*]. We may not be able to gather in-person, but no matter where we are physically, we are church together as we share our gifts to be God’s people in [insert community name] and in the world. Amen.