

Associate Pastor's Report 2020

The year 2020 was a very different year. Obviously, as I am sure is mentioned all though the year end reports, we had a Covid 19 pandemic to deal with. This created many challenges for us especially in the area of tech. In March, as it approached we quickly realized the situation and the fact that we would likely have to close for a time, I immediately put into place online giving so to give the ability for people to continue to give their tithes and offerings from home.

The next immediate hurdle was to provide an online livestream service. This isn't something we had done in the past. I jumped straight into the research and putting together a list of equipment we would need. I wanted this to be a quality product that would provide as much of a familiar feeling to our regular in-person service complete with the lyrics on screen. I attempted to do what most churches would do over the course of several months with a team of people in a mater of a couple weeks. Purchasing equipment proved to be difficult as every church in the US was in the same boat. Cameras and such were flying off the shelves. I would have items in my online cart that would sell out before I could complete the purchase. In the end I was able to get what I need, not what I wanted but I knew that God would make it work.

I was able to get it all together only to discover another obstacle, our internet service was not fast enough to live stream. Thanks to Auston Rush who was able to help me work though that and the use of his phone and booster antenna we were able to get a livestream out just in time for our Easter Services. There were many bumps and fails along the way and trying to find a good signal was a weekly gamble. It took the whole summer of trial and error to finally find the right cell tower to use. At the end of may I was faced with another challenge. How to do both in-person and livestream at the same time. Again with the help of Auston we were able to work it out.

This new ministry of livestreaming has been an adventure. We have seen many people from all across the globe tune into our service. People that have attended bethel before and are curious to what we are doing not to friends and family. To those that are shut in and cannot attend in person to those who have simple stumbled upon our stream and have stayed. We have seen numbers up over 500 views quite often.

We also utilized Zoom Meetings for several online Sunday school and for Conenct groups.

I want to thank the Ferguson family for their part in making this all happen. Not only did Christian and Mekenna continue to play in the band but Caleb has turned into a great camera operator, as well as Honza and Elijah Pohlman. Again, Thanks to Auston Rush for working with me and bringing many great ideas and willingness to do whatever is needed to make it work. Rochelle for pioneering the idea of online children's ministry. You did an awesome job! And Jeff Murray for stepping in when I was out quarantined. This has been a group effort from the beginning with each and every person is an important part of the machine. We couldn't have done this without you all.

There is still much to do. I would like to continually improve our online ministry. It is my prayer that God will continue to bless this ministry and reach out to those that are far and near and those that cannot join us in-person.

Associate Pastor, Jeff Pohlman