



Hello Family and Friends:

During this COVID-19 Pandemic it's been exciting to be able to stay connected on-line through FB, YouTube, ZOOM, and Instagram to just name a few. We have been able to live stream all our services, continue with youth, Grief-share, men, women, meetings on ZOOM, and it's been great!

Digital technology is amazing because of:

1. The speed, imagine in real time you can experience a service through FB Live. Do you realize you have access to what you want, when you want it, as quickly as your fingers can type and scroll.

2. The choices are amazing! We have access to endless options when it comes to just about anything. All at your fingertips.

3. Convenience! I can shop, interact with friends, be in a meeting, experience a church service, from my house, my car, and I don't have to fight crowds, fight for parking spaces, or even shower or do my hair to enjoy from home. And we can watch it when we want. But as great as digital technology is, it does not replace human experience or just seeing, talking, and interacting with people.

Our society has seen a downside to digital technology.

Because of the speed with which we can access information we have become impatient; and because of so many choices it has made us consumers and not participants, and the convenience of digital technology has made us shallow and isolated.

Seeing pictures of Yosemite, for example, simply cannot capture the wonder of being there.

Watching a fireplace on TV may be wonderful, because you can hear the crackling of the fire, but in person you feel the warmth and enjoy the smells of a wonderful fire. Basically, what I'm saying is watching a screen will never replace the power and impact and experience of being in person, worshipping, doing life and opening God's word together.

Examples:

1. Praise and Worship means God's church gathers and sings, prays, and listens together. When praising and worshipping takes place digitally it's all in your head, not your whole body. Seeing others sing or preach isn't the same as being in the room where it's happening. An observer isn't a participant. True transformation comes when we participant in the praise and worship of God with other believers.

2. We may speak of “online communities,” but true faith communities must commune, (koinonia) not just communicate. In others words we do life together. The Bible calls it body life. All the “one another’s the bible talks about, like love one another, pray for one another, encourage one another, bless one another, help one another, etc, can’t be done through a screen. You can’t eat and drink or take communion together online.

The gospel didn’t come to us as a movie played on the screen of heaven, it came as Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, who gathered around himself a community called His “body.” Digital technology cannot do this. It cannot reproduce the reality of real-life community.

Given the circumstances of the current pandemic, we have had to use “virtual services” as a concession to short-term realities.

Pandemic aside, though, the long-term reality is that the Church should not neglect the assembling of each other, as the bible instruction in Hebrews 12.

Facebook, FaceTime, Zoom, Instagram, etc may supplement a church’s communication capabilities, especially in a crisis, but they cannot substitute for face-to-face experience. If we Christians fail to remember this, we will lose what it means to be the church.

If you are not ready to return to church at this time, we understand, but know that you are missed. Also, if you are sick with the flu, or other illnesses we ask that you please stay home until you are well.

We are committed to following CDC guidelines and pray you would do the same. No one will be turned away, because our mission is to “Connect people to God, each other.....” See you back on June 14th at 8:30 & 10 a.m.

If you have any questions, please contact the church office.

Your Friend in Life’s Journey,

Pastor Vic

Senior Pastor