



*"From Where I Sit ..."*

## **What Covid has Wrought...**

As the country begins to move out of the clutches of this historic Pandemic by the lifting of mask requirement for the fully vaccinated, it is most interesting to note what we have learned (or have been forced to learn) over these past 15 months. In this article, two examples will be referenced.

One example is how active congregations have been forced to diversify the method their services have previously been shared by replacing their in-person services with online virtual services and/or sermonic messages using ZOOM, Webinars, YouTube, and others. Some have opted to have outside services that accommodated the "six-foot distancing" requirements. While others, unable to adjust as readily, have resorted to the older form of conference call-type messaging and expressions.



These newer online opportunities for messaging have also called for online giving such as Givelify, Cash App, PayPal, Zelle, etc., and surprisingly some congregations, Methodist, Baptist, and others have reported increased giving during these turbulent times.

As churches resume full in-person modes of worship, many will necessarily need to consider how to augment their previously traditional worship forms with the newer online virtual options if they are to continue reaching the masses in addition to funding their budgets.

The other example is the impact on meetings. Where meetings before were primarily measured by the number of persons in actual attendance, during this Covid period, meeting planners have placed a greater emphasis on the different modes of online virtual options to accomplish the same goal. As such, many meetings have experienced greater success utilizing these more modern forms of online virtual meeting modes. Using my upcoming annual conference for a possible example, attendees will have the advanced opportunity to register and pay fees online, contribute offerings and the conference tithe online, and subscribe to The Christian Index and the Missionary Messenger and pay the subscription fees online. Coupled with virtual meetings for all the sessions (except the election of delegates), conference attendees will save lodging fees and the Conference will have the opportunity for more persons to participate with the online option.

Numbers 23:23 ends with "... What has God wrought!" Perhaps as we examine these results of Covid-19, we may loosely paraphrase this passage by saying "What has God wrought for us through our experiences with Covid..." It seems clear to me that Covid has forced us into a newer, broader, and more dynamic form of worshipping in Word, Deed, and Gifts and that it will be more difficult, if not impossible, for us to succeed if we return to our older and more limited forms of worship modes. *Or at least that's the way it looks to me...*

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