**Church Finances during COVID-19**

*by Beth Yoder, WDC Business Manager, 3/24/2020*

COVID-19 is what is on our minds. How can it not be? We are trying to find our way hour by hour, day by day. Churches are finding new ways to be church in every aspect. I want to highlight a few points regarding the financial aspect from the article  article [“**10 Ideas for Church Financial Leaders Amid the COVID-19 Crisis”**](https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/articles/10-ideas-for-church-financial-leaders-amid-the-covid-19-crisis)     by Ken Sloane, that was linked in last week’s Sprouts.  
  
**DIGITAL GIVING**  
If your congregation is not already set up for online giving here are a few options. WDC uses Vanco and has for a number of years. Some others, which I do not have experience with, that appear on a number of top-rated lists seen online are: Tithe.ly, EasyTithe, PayPal, and PushPay.

**ENCOURAGE MEMBERS TO LOOK INTO BILLPAY**  
If members use online banking, “Bill Pay” is often offered at no cost and payments can be set up to be sent regularly.  
  
**SCHEDULE GIVING REMINDERS FOR SUNDAY DELIVERY**  
Consider setting up a scheduled email, perhaps Saturday evening or Sunday morning, to remind your congregation that giving and support are still needed even if worship and activities have been cancelled.  
  
**BE CONSCIOUS OF THE INCOME IMPACT ON MEMBERS**  
The present Coronavirus crisis will affect everyone differently, make sure your church is conveying sensitivity in all its communications.  
  
**CONSIDER A CORONAVIRUS ASSISTANCE FUND**  
Consider giving your congregation the opportunity to provide a designated gift to a Coronavirus Assistance Fund to help assist other members and/or those in the community.  
  
**SEND MESSAGES OF HOPE, ENCOURAGEMENT, AND IMPACT**  
Be a voice of hope and encouragement during this time. The church continues to make an impact, communicate and continue to celebrate that with your congregations.  
  
I’m sure many congregations are already thinking about how they can help their members as well as those in their communities. I hope that as a conference we can support each other during this time financially, spiritually and otherwise.  
  
Another financial assistance resource available is Everence. They have increased the amount of their sharing fund this year. For more information about this, visit their website [here](https://www.everence.com/everence-articles/everence-corporate/everence-news/everence-offers-assistance-and-relief-options-during-covid-19-outbreak).    .  
  
As our conference ministers reach out to WDC congregations, there have already been positive stories shared of what churches are doing to stay connected during this difficult time of uncertainty. I know at Alexanderwohl, where I worship, meeting with our Sunday school class and then with others in the congregation over Zoom this past Sunday was positive. Seeing each other even if it was over a screen gave a sense of connection and hope. I hope to continue to hear stories from other WDC congregations!  
  
As WDC staff members work to provide support and resources for congregations and leaders in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, we invite you to continue to support us through prayer and ongoing contributions as you are able. You can donate online [here](https://www.eservicepayments.com/cgi-bin/Vanco_ver3.vps?appver3=Dc8dzPGn4-LCajFevTkh9NgNt9Eh9DdVWbI4-3JXDjhN5yIL6FPWjj71nu5i47pQpnQMr3FtmeKLjmbYMkY-Q7o7zqy-JU_UuLu19bUbJx3tZHqjE2K6j8dQW8yZv0d9k0PpduXvnt8gXUeZjQYbnw-ZEHl7ApR0IdZH5umnmf4=&ver=3) or mail contributions to Western District Conference, PO Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117.  
  
May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13