

NWIM & AK Synods  
November 5th, 2020

Tech Talk #3  
**What's next for  
worship?**

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# GRACE AND GIGABYTES

BEING CHURCH  
IN A  
TECH-SHAPED  
CULTURE

RYAN M. PANZER



September 10th:

Online Worship  
& Community

September 24th:

Virtual Faith  
Formation

Remember, Remember

The 5th of  
November

Next-Level  
Online Worship

## TechTalk series

Learning goals

- Pause to reevaluate how you are doing church online
- Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of streaming and recording, synchronous and asynchronous church
- Consider how best to reinvent faith formation for online learners
- Implement next-level tactics for doing church online
- Develop a long-term framework for online worship



## My background

- Career in tech industry, including Google
- Author of *Grace and Gigabytes: Being Church in a Tech-Shaped Culture*, coming out this December from Fortress Press
- Researcher, speaker, and consultant on digital ministry, church leadership, and faith formation
- Based in Madison, WI



## Today's Agenda

- **Review: 3 Mindsets for Digital Age Ministry**
- **4 Ingredients for Online Worship**
- **Moving towards a hybrid worship experience**
- **Breakout discussion**

# **Review: 3 Mindsets**

**For Successful Digital Age Ministry**

"The noblest and greatest work and the most important service we can perform for God on earth is bringing other people, and **especially those who are entrusted to us**, to the knowledge of God by the holy Gospel."

-Martin Luther

(WA, 53, 415)

Mindset #1:

## Culture over Tech

**Search  
Engines**



**Search**  
“Everythings”

**Tech**



**Culture**

Mindset #2:

## Engage Digital Values

**Proclamation**



**Questions**

**Hierarchy**



**Collaboration**

**In-Person**



**Hybrid Connection**

**Passivity**



**Creativity**





Mindset #3:

## Digital Minimalism:

If you think you can't keep up with the pace of technological change, you're probably right.

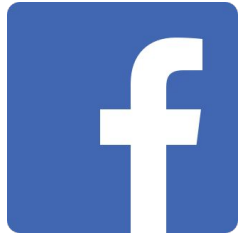
Start by considering your mission in the context of tech-shaped culture

Prioritize technologies that align with your vision and the broader culture of the digital age

# Worship Online

**4 Ingredients Every Church Leader  
Should Focus On**

# Platforms: Facebook, YouTube, and Zoom



Most opportunity for social engagement

Widespread usage as church communications platform

Broadcast worship by "Going Live" on church page

**Example:** Good Shepherd Lutheran in Madison, WI; Our Saviour's Lutheran in Appleton, WI



Best control over broadcast quality

Easy to share with those not on social media/Facebook

Broadcast worship by broadcasting live on church page

**Example:** Episcopal National Cathedral



Most built-in interactivity

Widespread adoption as a business communications tool, free/easy access

Broadcast worship by starting a Zoom call, sharing URL

**Example:** Upper Dublin Lutheran in Ambler, PA

# Distribution: Livestream or Recording

	Benefits	Technology
Livestream	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Affords real-time involvement</li><li>● Spirit of togetherness</li><li>● No editing necessary</li><li>● “Forgiveness” on content quality</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Facebook, Zoom, or YouTube</li><li>● Internet-connected device</li><li>● Optional software: Switcher Studio, Vimeo Livestream</li><li>● Optional hardware: MeVo Camera</li></ul>
Recording	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● “Stitch together” community contributions</li><li>● Ease of access for busy families</li><li>● More polish</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● YouTube or Facebook Premieres, YouTube channels</li><li>● Basic video editing software: QuickTime, iMovie, Camtasia</li></ul>

# Software: An ecosystem of vendors

## **“Secular”**

Vimeo Livestream

vMix

DaCast

Box Cast

Open Broadcaster  
Software (OBS)

## **Church-Specific**

Truth Cast

Christian World Media

StreamingChurch.TV

# Software: Vendor evaluation

1. Integration with existing worship platform (YouTube, Zoom, Facebook)
2. Features to move beyond existing worship content
3. Feasibility of use given your context's technical requirements
4. Feasibility of use given your community's digital expertise
5. Quality of tech support, availability of tech support during worship broadcast
6. Cost

# Hardware: Tools for high quality streaming



## Tripods

- Phone, Tablet, or Camera
- Adjustability



## Microphones

- Lapel, hand-held, or USB
- Most important investment



## Cameras

- Built for recording or for streaming (MeVo)
- Invest in multiple

# Build the Bridge

**Moving Towards a Hybrid Worship  
Experience**





## Three likely scenarios:

Stopping “online” church

Continuing to livestream worship as an “alternative”

Building a bridge between offline and online

# Stopping “online” church

## Scenario likely for:

- Small congregations
- Churches with limited staff
- Churches who saw a marked dip in “attendance” in last 3 months

## Advantages:

- Staff/leaders narrow focus
- Potentially cost-effective
- Emphasizes importance of togetherness

## Drawbacks:

- Squandered missional opportunity
- Lost learning
- Second wave

# Livestream “alternative”

## Scenario likely for:

- Most churches using livestream during quarantine
- Congregations with medium-sized staff
- Churches using social media

## Advantages:

- Easy to continue what we’re already doing
- Requires little change to church as we once knew it

## Drawbacks:

- “Second-tier” worship experience
- Passive/shallow faith formation
- Lack of integration into church community

# Online/Offline Integration

## Scenario likely for:

- Churches who start planning now for upcoming transition
- Leaders who remain thoughtful about use of technology

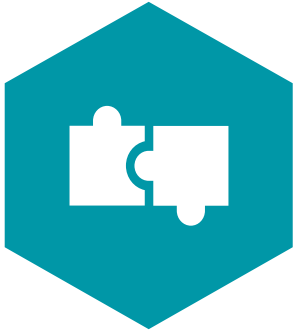
## Advantages:

- Builds community across “hybrid” experience of church
- Alignment to broader cultural expectations and experiences

## Drawbacks:

- Requires creativity and inventiveness
- Few best practices documented

## Some ideas:



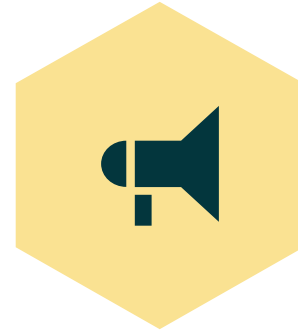
### **Inclusive language**

Speaking to and praying for those gathered physically and virtually



### **Virtual Pews**

Creativity with liturgy and screen use



### **Virtual Pulpits**

Using virtual lectors, cantors, prayers, and preachers for in-person assembly

# A week in the digitally integrated church

Friday

## **Prepare**

With online platforms, introduce themes and invite participation in the liturgy

Sunday

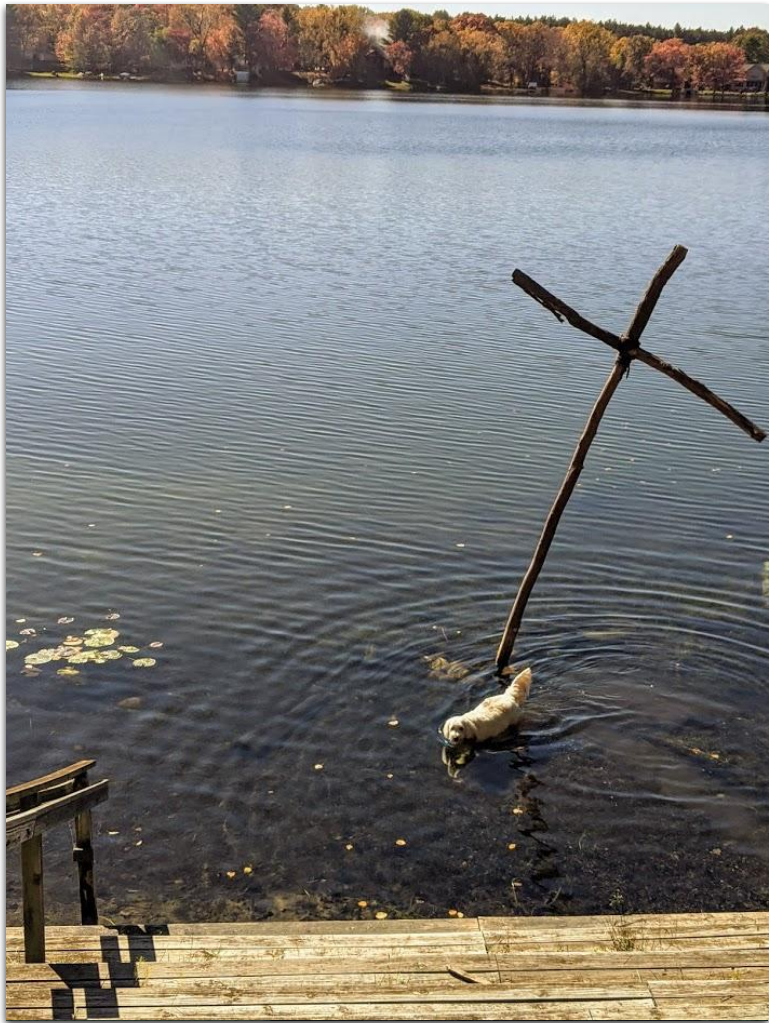
## **Gather**

Digitally-integrated Word and Sacrament

Monday-Thursday

## **Send**

Support topically-relevant spiritual practice and lived discipleship with online experiences



## Worship Breakouts

- What platforms, distribution, and software are you using?
- What trends are you noticing with engagement and worship attendance?
- How are you thinking ahead to worship in an eventual new normal?

# Getting Ahead: Our Eventual Normal

1. Will online worship be streamed or recorded in the eventual new normal?
2. What hardware and software do we need to invest in?
3. What changes do we need to make to staff/volunteer structures?
4. What training/enablement will our staff need? Our congregation?
5. What changes must we make to the layout and design of our sanctuary?
6. What do we need to let go of?



**NWIM & AK Synods  
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**30% pre-order discount!**

**Fortress Press Store:**

<https://www.fortresspress.com/store/productgroup/1899/Grace-and-Gigabytes>

**Code:** PANZER30

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**Ministry in a Digital Age  
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