



REIMAGINE

TIMELESS MISSION. TIMELY MEANS.

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**THE “REIMAGINE” PROJECT SEEKS TO APPLY
NEW TESTAMENT PRINCIPLES TO PRESENT-
DAY MODES OF CHURCH PRACTICE. WHILE WE
MUST NOT SURRENDER THE CORE TEACHINGS
FOUND IN A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF THE
CHURCH, WE MUST LEARN HOW TO INNOVATE
OUR PRACTICES IN ORDER TO UPHOLD WHAT IS
TIMELESS IN A TIMELY WAY.**

WILL YOU DARE TO REIMAGINE
HOW YOUR CHURCH CAN CARRY
OUT THE MISSION OF GOD IN LIGHT
OF OUR CURRENT REALITY? WILL
YOU ALLOW GOD TO FILL YOU WITH
REFLECTION, CRITICAL THOUGHT,
INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY TO
IMPACT LOSTNESS THROUGH NEW
DISCIPLE-MAKING MEANS?

REIMAGINE CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

TODAY'S REALITY

COVID-19 IMPACT

Children's ministry has been hit hard by COVID-19 restrictions. Do we meet? Should we meet? If so, how will we meet? These questions all drive the conversation. Lack of parent participation, Zoom fatigue and fear that impactful discipleship has disappeared from the lives of many of our children consumes the hearts of children's ministry leaders. How do we offer discipleship that will engage the hearts and minds of families online? How can we effectively partner with parents during this season as they navigate remote learning? What steps can we take now to bridge the gap until children's ministry can gather again? Finally, what can we reimagine for the future of our children's ministries?

POST-PANDEMIC CHALLENGES

Several challenges await children's ministry beyond COVID-19. An overarching challenge is who is willing to return, and when will that be? Volunteers may be hesitant to return due to health concerns or stricter protocols for safe environments. Parents who have grown accustomed to church at home may not want to return to church and in-person meetings. They may have anxiety about steps churches will take to protect their children. Leaders may face concerns about reduced numbers willing to attend or reduced classroom capacities. How will we meet for discipleship ministries like mission education or Awana? How can we effectively meet online for the foreseeable future?

TIPS & TOOLS

One primary goal of regathering children's ministry is regaining the trust of parents and volunteers and reassuring them that they will be safe in our teaching environments. ["Preparing Your Children's Ministry for Post COVID-19"](#) is a resource designed to help your church navigate steps it can take now and protocols that can be put in place for the future to protect children and regain the trust of volunteers and parents. The resource addresses facility concerns and policies for health checks, sanitation, traffic and more.

TOMORROW'S POSSIBILITIES

REIMAGINE

"What if?" These two small words hold a world of potential to reimagine your ministry. Reimagine a ministry where parents fully engage with disciple-making at home. Reimagine your role shifting to be a support and partner for that parental leadership. Reimagine children who are excited to be at church every week and who come seeking to encounter God while they spend time with you and your leadership team. What possibilities can you imagine for children who are fully devoted followers of Christ? Take time to reimagine the future of your children's ministry.

TIPS & TOOLS

[4 Helpful Lists: Custom assessment for children's ministry](#)

RESOURCES

[6 questions to reframe your ministry vision after COVID-19](#)

[9 ways to prepare families and churches to worship with children](#)

REIMAGINE CHURCH PLANTING

TODAY'S REALITY

COVID-19 IMPACT

The common practices of planting a new church have been shaken by the impact of COVID-19. Almost immediately, everything that planters and churches normally do in their infancy stages was challenged or changed. How do you engage with your target community when the government requires you to shelter-in-place? Will your giving partners and participating churches continue to give although finances are shaky?

Many new church planters and their core teams entered 2020 believing that by the time the year came to a close that they would have launched their new church. That was before COVID-19 brought everything to a halt. The mission of impacting lostness through disciple-making hasn't changed, but it's possible that the methods we use might have to change. What steps can new and potential church plants take that will get them out of a holding pattern and on to what's next?

POST-PANDEMIC CHALLENGES

COVID-19 has brought many challenges to new and potential church planters. For example, one of the keys to planting a new church is through the creation of new connections and relationships. Building new relationships when people are wary of meeting together can prove to be difficult. Another pandemic-related challenge for mobile church plants is securing a location in which to meet because schools and community buildings may hesitate to allow outsiders in their spaces outside of normal hours. When people are reluctant to venture into unfamiliar spaces, holding vision meetings and launching services will be more of a challenge.

TIPS & TOOLS

Now and in the future, many planters and new churches will have to rely on online and virtual means to connect with their new congregations, making digital solutions a higher priority at a younger phase of their existence.

TOMORROW'S POSSIBILITIES

REIMAGINE

“What if?” These two small words hold a world of potential to reimagine your ministry. COVID-19 has given us the opportunity to reimagine. What if reproducing and multiplying become a core behavior of the local church? What if churches would begin to understand that God wants churches to plant other churches? What if your small groups could be central to the way the church functions? What if all of the ministry of the church took place through the small group structure, bringing prayer, discipleship, fellowship, care and ministry into one, reproducible place? Take time to reimagine what the future could be and should be like. This is your moment.

TIPS & TOOLS

Things look a bit different now for church planters. Be flexible and adapt. Assess where you are, and focus on building relationships and being the church. Focus on developing as a leader and developing your leadership team.

RESOURCES

[How Can Planters and Teams Optimize the Moment?](#)

REIMAGINE COLLEGIATE MINISTRY

TODAY'S REALITY

COVID-19 IMPACT

Recent college and university closures have left North Carolina's 1 million college students in limbo. Many students had to leave their dorms within the first few weeks of returning for the fall semester, and they either scrambled to look for local housing or headed home. Those who may still be learning in person are waiting for their campus to close. Many other students chose to attend school online from the beginning. Because of these changes, a demographic that thrives in community is scattered and isolated. Churches that typically only host college students home on break now have at least a whole semester with them. Everyone is asking, “Now what?”

POST-PANDEMIC CHALLENGES

As churches seek to reach and disciple college students in a post-pandemic world, they must navigate an entirely new world compared with previous years. Students have become more stressed and confused. There are, and will be, many differences in comfort levels for gathering with others. Many students may even disagree on when we are in a “post-pandemic” time. Not knowing what the next semester or semesters will look like can make it difficult for churches to plan for students as a group. Churches that are used to sending their students away to other churches during the school year may now be responsible for their discipleship. Clearly, there is no shortage of challenges to reaching college students. Using this time to disciple college students well is crucial and requires a great deal of creativity, flexibility and wisdom.

TIPS & TOOLS

Gather college students separately from high school students during this season. Even though they may have grown up together in the church, these two groups are in very different seasons of life. Many college students (especially this year's freshmen) feel like they're missing out on a significant transition in their lives. They miss their campus, their friends and their church community at college. Allow them to grieve this loss. Gathering college students together as a group — separately from high school students — will give them a sense of community identity and help them feel like your church has a place for them. Use regular and predictable rhythms that will give students a sense of stability during an unstable semester. This may be Bible study and game nights every Thursday or a meal at a church member's house every Tuesday. Be creative, and listen to what your students say they need.

TOMORROW'S POSSIBILITIES

REIMAGINE

Many systems for discipling students — like campus-based ministry — aren't possible right now. As we reimagine what our college ministries might look like, what should we do differently? Instead of only focusing on the college campus as the mission field, what if we reimagined college ministry to focus on the college student? What if leaders began to see the college student (and future college students) as missionaries? If we reimagine ministry in this way, it doesn't matter whether students are doing in-person classes, virtual learning, or some hybrid model. A missionary is a missionary. Take a moment and reimagine your church's college ministry where students are discipled and sent out as missionaries.

TIPS & TOOLS

Ask the following assessment questions of your church's ministry to college students:

- What are the names of college students (or future students) in your church community or your circle of influence?
- How might you develop deeper relationships with these students?
- How might you create a culture of discipleship among them?
- How might you empower them to become missionaries for Jesus wherever or whenever they are in school?
- What's one step you could take today?

RESOURCES

[Why now is the time to reach out to college students](#)

[3 ways to serve those with mental health needs](#)

[Two Months for Ministry: Empowering Student Leaders](#)

REIMAGINE EVANGELISM

TODAY'S REALITY

COVID-19 IMPACT

COVID-19 has affected evangelism significantly in two primary ways. First, it's driven people online, leading to more misinformation and loneliness than possibly ever before. Second, it's done away with the illusion that large-group gatherings alone are sufficient to inspire, train and mobilize disciple-makers.

At a basic level, evangelism is the announcement of good news. More particularly, it's good news that concerns the life, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. This good news has implications for the whole world, for all time. Though the world has changed drastically in recent months, those implications have not.

POST-PANDEMIC CHALLENGES

As the world eventually re-emerges from COVID-19, things will not go back to the way things were. Two challenges that the post-pandemic church will face are recapturing trust in their communities and telling compelling stories creatively. The coronavirus, along with political, social and racial issues, has caused many people to become disillusioned with the church and desirous of real hope.

Evangelism cannot mimic political pandering, consumer advertising or illogical reasoning. To recapture trust, evangelism must coincide with a community of faith demonstrating a counter-cultural way to live that includes suffering well, doing good and having a reasoned faith. Those characteristics should, in turn, produce real hope that makes sense of the world we are experiencing and offer something far better than all other alternatives.

TIPS & TOOLS

Training and modeling are important. More than teaching people an evangelistic script, it is critical that churches train their people in worldview, theology, logic, conversation and the ministry of prayer. This sort of equipping requires accountability, love, patience and wonder so that evangelism becomes less presentational and more incarnational. It becomes less about "let's get them saved" and more about "taste and see that the Lord is good." This approach must be consistently practiced by, and modeled for, disciples. A pilot group is a great place to explore and live out these things.

TOMORROW'S POSSIBILITIES

REIMAGINE

How can we reimagine evangelism? Consider developing an assessment to be used in interviews with each member of your church. ([A basic example is available here.](#)) By analyzing responses to these assessments, the church can identify common themes and develop plans for training, modeling, participation and ongoing follow-up to enable growth in both holiness and mission in decentralized communities.

TIPS & TOOLS

Another tool is the [“Gap” tool](#), which assesses people’s willingness to share their faith and their confidence in sharing their faith. The assessment helps discover why “gaps” exist between desire and confidence.

RESOURCES

[Gospel Conversations videos](#)

REIMAGINE FAMILY MINISTRY

TODAY’S REALITY

COVID-19 IMPACT

Life as we know it has been disrupted by the global coronavirus pandemic. Our homes, churches, schools and businesses have been hit hard with restrictions, quarantines and closures. Unquestionably, these are difficult days. As a result, numerous families have decided to press pause on their church attendance during this crisis. For most parents, this has not been an easy decision. In these times, church leaders are asking questions like, “Since parents are not coming to church, are they continuing to disciple their children? How can we partner with parents remotely to help them confidently disciple their children?”

POST-PANDEMIC CHALLENGES

Many trials and challenges await the church and family ministry beyond COVID-19. Questions include, which families will be willing to lead the return to in-person gatherings, and when will that be? Parents have grown accustomed to church at home. Therefore, they may be slow to make their way back to church. They may have fears and concerns about the safety of meeting indoors. Families could lack confidence in the church’s ability to maintain adequate protocols to protect their children. They may also worry about other members respecting CDC guidelines. In the end, many leaders have to wonder, how can we get these families back to church and re-engaged in discipling their children?

TIPS & TOOLS

We all long for the day when we can say COVID-19 is a thing of the past. Until then, church leaders can encourage and challenge families to use discipleship resources while they are still at home. The [“Faith Talk Devotions”](#) resource was designed to give parents access to 24 fun, easy-to-use devotions as they sit at home, go down the road, lie down and get up. The devotions are based on rhythms listed in Deuteronomy 6, and include activities that families do every day. This resource will give parents the opportunity to have meaningful, spiritual conversations about God’s timeless truths.

TOMORROW'S POSSIBILITIES

REIMAGINE

Today, could you reimagine your approach to family ministry? Reimagine a ministry where parents fully engage with disciple-making at home. Reimagine your role shifting to equipping and partnering with parents as they make discipleship in the home a priority. Reimagine parents and children who are excited and eager to be at church every week and fully engaged in your ministries. Take time to reimagine the future of your family ministry and see how the Lord would use you to train families to be about His timeless mission by using this timely means.

TIPS & TOOLS

[4 Helpful Lists: Custom assessment for family ministry](#)

RESOURCES

[15 keys to family worship time](#)

[Faith Talk Devotions](#)

[1-minute Family Devotions](#)

["Reading Your Bible with Confidence" training](#)

[Missional Families Parent Guide](#)

REIMAGINE GROUPS MINISTRY

TODAY'S REALITY

COVID-19 IMPACT

Who could have imagined at the start of 2020 that our Sunday School classes and small groups would have to pivot from in-person gatherings to meeting online? Only a few months ago, most of us would have never considered using a digital platform like Zoom to host a Bible study. Yet, here we are. We have learned how to use Zoom, met in socially distanced circles in backyards or church parking lots, or arranged chairs in large spaces at 6 feet apart just to meet with 10 people.

POST-PANDEMIC CHALLENGES

Even as gathering restrictions have eased, some people are not yet comfortable with returning to a face-to-face meeting. Group leaders and Sunday School teachers feel the tension of wanting to support church leaders' decisions about gathering while listening to and loving those group members who see things differently.

TIPS & TOOLS

One simple, yet powerful practice that will catapult your group ministry is to encourage your leaders. This sounds intuitive; however, many volunteer group leaders can feel overwhelmed with all the adjustments they are having to make to accommodate the different needs of their group members. (And, don't forget, these leaders have been impacted by COVID-19 as much as everyone else.) Set up a schedule for yourself to do the following: Pray for your leaders daily, text or call weekly, and meet face-to-face (at their comfort level) monthly.

TOMORROW'S POSSIBILITIES

REIMAGINE

“What if?” These two small words hold a world of potential to reimagine your ministry. COVID-19 has given us the opportunity to reimagine. What if these shifts in how we gather in groups can lead us to appreciate the value of community more? What if we understood this pandemic as an amplifier on the isolation and loneliness people are personally experiencing, and helped people see that groups provide much needed fellowship? What if we understood that discipleship happens best in community? What if sending our groups and classes to the neighborhood actually became the greatest outreach strategy your church has ever had? Seize this moment to return your groups to a focus on the Word of God, community with believers, and our mission to reach our neighbors. Take time to reimagine what the future could be and should be like. This is your moment!

TIPS & TOOLS

[5 Steps for Effective Groups](#)

RESOURCES

[Virtual 'Life Together'](#)

[Phasing in Sunday School and Small Groups Webinar](#)

[Phasing in Sunday School with Ken Braddy](#)

REIMAGINE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

TODAY'S REALITY

COVID-19 IMPACT

Church leaders have felt enormous pressure due to issues brought about by COVID-19 that have impacted both the church and the community. Questions about how to do ministry has become the consuming concern of both leaders and members. Adding to the pressure are the effects of financial setbacks, social and racial unrest, political factions, substance and physical abuse, mental disorders, unemployment, fatigue, depression, relational breakups and more. Where do you begin, and how do you minister to a hurting world?

Leaders are expected to make quick and critical decisions in times of crisis. Yet the constant need to find a solution and demands of the ministry amid an ongoing pandemic have taken a toll on their emotional, physical, mental and spiritual health. Is there help available for those experiencing fatigue, burnout, loneliness, depression and setbacks? Can leaders see how the spiritual and emotional deficit is impacting their lives?

POST-PANDEMIC CHALLENGES

The pandemic is not the main reason for problems in the church today, but it did reveal the health and ability of the church and its leaders to respond to the crisis. One challenge is a leader's ability to lead through the pandemic and beyond. Some leaders have been proactive during this time, while others have watched and waited for what should come next. Others are ready to give up, and some may even leave the ministry. Another

challenge is a leader's willingness to assess their capacity to lead. Is it possible to be an unhealthy leader and not even know it? Where do you find the will, passion and strength to keep on going? Are you able to recognize your limitations, spend more time with God and rely on Him? Can you develop other disciples and leaders who can do the work of the Lord with you?

TIPS & TOOLS

Here are some steps you can take to be a healthy leader during this pandemic and beyond:

1. Be willing to admit that you need some help, and allow the Lord to work in you and through others to help you.
2. Take an assessment to see how healthy you are as a leader. Peter Scazzero, author of ["The Emotionally Healthy Leader,"](#) says, "You can't be spiritually healthy while remaining emotionally unhealthy." (A link to an assessment is included in the resources listed below.)
3. Have a physical exam if you have not had one recently.
4. Take time to observe a regular Sabbath.
5. Take the time to care for your family.

TOMORROW'S POSSIBILITIES

REIMAGINE

What if you could lead your church in creating a healthy vision and culture, reinvigorate the church leadership, and learn new skills and practices to develop a sustainable ministry? Reimagine that you and your church leaders are emotionally and spiritually healthy to engage in ministry by holding each other accountable in having a meaningful devotional and family life, reaching and discipling others, and developing other leaders to share in the work of the Lord. What if you discover a renewed strength in the Lord that brings hope and life to the church? What if your family sees you as a leader who has the joy of the Lord and is able to love his wife and family as Christ loved the church?

TIPS & TOOLS

[4 Helpful Lists: Custom assessment for leadership development](#)

RESOURCES

[How Healthy Is Your Leadership?](#)

[The emotionally healthy leader](#)

[5 ways pastors should respond to setbacks in ministry](#)

REIMAGINE MISSIONS

TODAY'S REALITY

COVID-19 IMPACT

At the outset of 2020, churches were preparing for different types of missions activities. Summer mission trips. “[Who’s Your One?](#)” evangelism initiatives. Students were fundraising to serve through [GenSend](#) or [IMB Students](#). Missions committees were planning for communitywide Vacation Bible Schools, block parties and other missional events in underserved neighborhoods. Missionaries were preparing to deploy overseas. Church planters were launching their first public gatherings.

As COVID-19 began to spread to our part of the world, all these missional activities came to a screeching halt as travel bans, regulations on gatherings, and stay-at-home orders were established throughout the world. What do we do now? The mission has not changed, though our circumstances have. How are we to go and make disciples of all nations in this environment? How do we lead decentralized churches to minister the gospel to their neighbors and the nations?

POST-PANDEMIC CHALLENGES

We will face a number of challenges in missions in the days ahead. We may have a proclivity toward self-preservation rather than selfless sacrifice for the sake of the nations, posturing to shore up the home front rather than spending our time, talent and treasure for those who have not yet had an opportunity to hear and respond to the gospel. We may also be inclined to return to overly programmatic and pragmatic approaches to missions in a post-pandemic environment, seeking to make up for ground we perceive to have lost in the down time.

TIPS & TOOLS

Whether we succumb to fear and focus inward or seek to overcompensate in our own strength for the perceived slowing of missionary advance, we must return and trust our sovereign Lord who has promised a “people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation” around the throne of the Lamb (Revelation 5:9). During this season, we need a mindshift when it comes to missions. We need to pivot away from overly programmatic and pragmatic approaches to missions and begin to see the people of God as the primary means through which God has determined to see His glory spread throughout the whole earth, by preparing and equipping the people of God as ministers of the gospel.

TOMORROW'S POSSIBILITIES

REIMAGINE

The clear biblical pattern and expectation is for every disciple of Jesus to reproduce through the making of disciples. Similarly, the clear biblical pattern and expectation is for every church to reproduce themselves. Disciples make disciples; churches plant churches. Reimagine a church that recognizes that their salvation

is not for themselves, but that they have been blessed to be a blessing. Reimagine a church whose missions strategy is its people, where every ordinary follower of Christ is actively ministering the gospel among their friends, family, neighbors and the nations.

TIPS & TOOLS

[4 Helpful Lists: Custom assessment for missions](#)

RESOURCES

[Mission: God's and Ours According to the Scriptures](#)

[Patterns of Mission from Acts and the Gospels](#)

[Bible Exercise: Extent and Means of God's Mission through the Whole Bible](#)

[Biblical Mission](#) (pgs 156-166), from "12 Traits: Embracing God's Design for the Church" by David Platt ([and associated sermon](#)).

[Six Components of the Missionary Task](#) by the International Mission Board

REIMAGINE PASTORAL MINISTRY

TODAY'S REALITY

COVID-19 IMPACT

Just as society at large has been overwhelmed by COVID-19, so has the church. However, since the church is not an institution of brick and mortar, but a living, breathing body, we can't fix current problems with the wrong tools. These problems need good spiritual leadership. And for that, God has called leaders and pastors, charging them with the responsibility of leading the local body of believers forward.

COVID-19 has presented pastors with challenges they've never faced before. Questions include: Can we hold public services? Do we wear masks? Do we require people to socially distance? How do we express love without hugging or shaking hands? Such questions were not even on anyone's radar prior to COVID-19. Now they are staring pastors in the face.

POST-PANDEMIC CHALLENGES

The ministry of the post-COVID church will look much different. However, for a local congregation to remain focused and effective in the future will depend greatly upon their response in this vital moment. It is paramount that pastors lead their congregations to develop a plan to move forward into this new normal.

For this to take place, the right questions must be asked. The first looming challenge we will face in the post-pandemic church is what do our gatherings look like? The pastor and congregation cannot just wait for things to return to normal. Gatherings for worship, discipleship and prayer all require decisions to be made, and leadership to be provided. The challenge for the pastor and congregation is what must we do to make everyone feel safe and respected in our gatherings?

TIPS & TOOLS

A simple step needed in each local church is an open and honest conversation concerning the new reality we are facing. Our gatherings and ministries will never be the same. The wise pastor will take responsibility to help lead his congregation in establishing a plan to move forward into this new ministry environment. [“Tips for Reopening Your Church”](#) is a helpful guide that includes several items leaders need to consider.

TOMORROW'S POSSIBILITIES

REIMAGINE

2020 will be a year always remembered in the life of each North Carolina Baptist church. What is not obvious at this point is will it be a time of longing for the past and the way things were, or will it be a new day of exciting ministry? We believe God is granting us time to evaluate our ministries and reimagine a much more effective future.

TIPS & TOOLS

There are many good tips and assessment tools on the internet related to reopening the church after COVID-19. (See resources below.) Also, at the request of the pastor, a consultant from the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina can assist churches with these conversations. This is a great time in the life of a local congregation to reimagine a new model of ministry.

RESOURCES

[Reimagine Ministry: A Conversation Guide for Church Ministry in a Post-Pandemic World](#)

[Tips for Reopening Your Church](#)

[Essential Guide To Reopening Your Church, Post - COVID-19 – Part 1](#)

REIMAGINE PREACHING

TODAY'S REALITY

COVID-19 IMPACT

The church has a timeless message that cannot be compromised, and God uses proclamation of that gospel message to impact lostness through disciple-making. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected how the message is delivered to the hearts of people who are at a loss and suffering in these uncertain times. Pastors face new challenges as many of them are preaching to a computer screen or camera rather than to people. Many pastors wonder who is actually listening to their sermons.

The absence of a visible audience adds to the frustration since they cannot gauge engagement by seeing nodding heads or smiling faces of the congregants. Even when there are a handful of people in the building, engagement is still lacking due to faces being covered with masks. Lack of affirmation from the audience can become a source of discouragement to pastors. Due to COVID-19, terms like online, prerecording and livestreaming are now part of church lexicon. Transmission of the message has received more attention than whether the message is transformational.

POST-PANDEMIC CHALLENGES

The pastor's emotional health is a major challenge. Lack of interaction and affirmation from the audience may cause isolation and frustration. A question facing the preaching ministry is how to continue gospel proclamation without weekly affirmation from congregants. Pastors need a consistent reminder of their calling from God and camaraderie with other pastors to share openly about experiences and struggles.

Another challenge is a scattered audience. Pastors now have two different audiences in their churches — those who are in the building and those who are virtual. If they are all in Christ, they are the church whether they put on masks or wear pajamas. The challenge, however, is how to preach the message and minister to both audiences. How can pastors effectively communicate the timeless message in a timely manner? With ever-increasing polarization in the nation and around the globe, how can he preach the message of hope and harmony without compromising the gospel?

TIPS & TOOLS

Pastors should ask themselves a simple question: Why am I preaching? The answer will reveal whether the pastor is actually called by God for a time such as this. A pastor called by God will preach whether he sees only one-third of the pre-COVID congregation in front of him, whether he sees faces on Facebook or Zoom, and even if the cameras are turned off.

The “why” question should be asked consistently to check the pastor's true motivation for preaching. His motivation should be monitored by the biblical calling from God and renewed so that he is preaching not for affirmation from the audience but for their transformation. Then the “why” question will lead to a “how” question. The pastor should not only continue his ministry in the pulpit, but he should also revamp his methods of communication to share the timeless gospel to his audience effectively, whether it's live, online or offline.

TOMORROW'S POSSIBILITIES

REIMAGINE

The shift in the preaching ministry due to COVID-19 has provided unprecedented global missions opportunity to go beyond the church building and beyond the worship hour on Sundays. The online platform has provided opportunities to connect with people from all around the globe. With this new opportunity, three elements are needed in preaching: specificity, generality and practicality. Pastors must continue to preach to meet the specific needs of his local congregation because they are his primary audience. But he also has a general audience who watch online, so the message must be Christ-centered to meet the needs of those individuals. Finally, pastors must provide practical application in sermons so those listening will have the opportunity to immediately apply the message. This specific, general and practical sermon driven by the gospel will change the hearts of visible and virtual audiences.

TIPS & TOOLS

[4 Helpful Lists: Custom assessment for preaching ministry](#)

RESOURCES

[How to preach to an empty room](#)

REIMAGINE STUDENT MINISTRY

TODAY'S REALITY

COVID-19 IMPACT

During this season of COVID-19, youth ministry has shifted from meeting in person, playing silly games, and interacting and connecting as we've always done to something entirely different. Students who were already labeled as the most anxious generation to date are now more fearful about the future. Adult youth leaders have more responsibilities at home and at work. The challenges of constantly replanning youth activities has sent the youth minister into a low he or she has never experienced. Distant volunteers make for isolated planning with little creativity and Zoom burnout.

POST-PANDEMIC CHALLENGES

What effect will all this have on the future of youth ministry? Questions are numerous: Will students return, or will parents keep them home? Will youth leaders discover their joy of serving teenagers again? Will families desire the freedom to worship when and where as they want, clicking on different church services and ministries? Will the church be relevant in this new normal? Will students, youth leaders, parents and leadership be willing to evaluate what they did before and its relevance now? Does anyone have the mental capacity to be creative and shift to something never done before or consider less activity with bigger impact?

TIPS & TOOLS

Where do we start? Gather a small group of students, adult leaders and parents to form a new youth ministry vision team. Begin by assessing all the programs and ministry your youth group has done in the past. Rank them based on how God used them in the past. Be bold enough to evaluate if something was more business than productive ministry. Decide it's a new day. Nothing remains unless there is merit to life transformation. Take your time. This may not happen in just one meeting. Contact older young adults who were once involved. Ask how that ministry assisted them in staying involved in church and growing in Christ after graduation. Listen as they share what they wish they had known. Don't be afraid to evaluate.

TOMORROW'S POSSIBILITIES

REIMAGINE

We grow when Scripture leaves our mind and touches our heart. How we treat others from the sound guy to the student on the last pew makes ministry infectious. In the past, more energy has been placed on the praise team and the audience than meeting needs of the individual. This generation is hungry for relationships, to be heard and to be accepted. Real ministry breeds authentic volunteers. Be willing to ask what is happening in your ministry that can only be explained by the power of God.

TIPS & TOOLS

[4 Helpful Lists: Custom assessment for your youth ministry](#)

RESOURCES

[Planning your youth ministry on purpose](#)

[How to minister to youth in 'such a time as this'](#)

[Youth Ministry in a Unique Time: Anxiety, Depression and Disappointment](#)

[Points to Ponder in Reimagining Youth Ministry](#)

[Recommended Reading & Resource](#)

REIMAGINE VIRTUAL/HYBRID MINISTRY

TODAY'S REALITY

COVID-19 IMPACT

Could you imagine a day when a pastor's decisions would revolve around words like Facebook Live, Vimeo, YouTube and Zoom? Every North Carolina Baptist church has had to make a decision on shifting to online services. Some churches had never been online before and had to learn new technologies. Others were already livestreaming services and have learned to do it better. Still others have wrestled with moving their small groups or Sunday School classes to some kind of online format.

POST-PANDEMIC CHALLENGES

As churches begin to resume in-person activities, the questions become ones about what ministries can and should remain online, can we really engage people in disciple-making online, and how do we disciple people to steward their own social media presence for the sake of the gospel?

TIPS & TOOLS

Church leaders need to be assessing the effectiveness of their online options not by the number of views their service gets on Facebook or YouTube, but by how many disciples have taken one more step toward Christ.

TOMORROW'S POSSIBILITIES

REIMAGINE

"What if?" These two small words hold a world of potential to reimagine your ministry. What if churches thought about their online presence not merely as a substitute for the gathering but as a supplement to the gatherings? What if churches would begin to understand the digital ecosystem as another unreached mission field? What if churches began to see their digital platforms as tools to impact lostness by drawing people into disciple-making relationships? What if all of the ministry of the church took place through the small group structure, bringing prayer, discipleship, fellowship, care and ministry into one, reproducible place? Take time to reimagine what the future could be and should be like. This is your moment.

Experts agree that most churches should continue to have an online presence even after gathering restrictions are lifted. But what if we learned how to leverage our digital platforms for engagement and discipleship instead of just using them as an alternative to the worship service? Most churches are only using their digital platforms to deliver content, but how can they use them as a funnel from content to community? And what parts of “doing church” can (or should) be done online?

TIPS & TOOLS

[Digital/Incarnational Assessment Tool](#)

RESOURCES

[How to Grow Your Online Influence](#)

[Reimagine Digital Disciple-Making webinar](#)

REIMAGINE WOMEN'S MINISTRY

TODAY'S REALITY

COVID-19 IMPACT

Local church women's ministry has been significantly affected by the impact of COVID-19. Women's ministry leaders have had to rethink Bible study, training, events and retreats that all women have grown accustomed to having face-to-face. By God's design, women are relational beings and the ability to have connections has been difficult. Additionally, many women are working from home, trying to teach their children via virtual settings, experiencing fatigue with online tools, and do not have the capacity to sit and listen.

POST-PANDEMIC CHALLENGES

Challenges for a post-COVID-19 women's ministry are vast in their differences. Some women are ready to meet in person and get back to “normal,” while others are reluctant to gather in person due to fears that include, but are not limited to, contracting the virus or protecting an elderly family member. Additionally, some women are not comfortable or familiar with Zoom. Challenges abound for women's ministries who are accustomed to having in-person Bible studies, women's gatherings and training opportunities.

TIPS & TOOLS

Every church is different, and every area of the state is varied. Often it is helpful to hear from other women's ministry leaders and how they are navigating and adjusting to the current church environment. [A conversation](#) that included seven women's ministry leaders of various sized churches and settings, and represented all regions of North Carolina, provides information from women's ministry leaders who address maintaining contact with ladies in their churches, virtual and on-site Bible study, and large events.

TOMORROW'S POSSIBILITIES

REIMAGINE

One of the questions women's ministry leaders have been asking is, "Why do we do ministry the way we do?" Women's ministry leaders have been reflective in asking if events should be the focus of women's ministry. As women's ministry leaders are grappling with when and how to regather in person, they are also trying to determine if their current ministry offerings are the best for equipping women to be disciple-makers. How have women been able to engage in gospel conversations and make disciples in their own neighborhoods and workplaces during the pandemic, and are they best equipped moving forward?

TIPS & TOOLS

[The SWOT analysis tool](#) allows women's ministry leaders to evaluate all of their ministry offerings in light of equipping and resourcing women for disciple-making. For each ministry offering, women's ministry leaders can determine the strengths (S), weaknesses (W), opportunities (O), and threats (T) in relationship to equipping women to be disciple-makers.

RESOURCES

[Women's Ministries Missional Living During & After the Pandemic webinar with Lori McDaniel](#)

[Disciple-making in the routines of life](#)

[Women's Ministry Disciple-Making Check-Up tool](#)

[Something worth passing down](#)

[Running the race with endurance](#)

REIMAGINE WORSHIP

TODAY'S REALITY

COVID-19 IMPACT

The way we lead in the worship ministry has drastically changed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Churches were scrambling at the beginning of the stay-at-home orders to get their services online and figure out what this new way of connecting with our people should look like. All of our efforts in creating times of meaningful worship had to shift to leading people who were not physically present. This reality presented a whole new type of challenge.

POST-PANDEMIC CHALLENGES

As some people begin regathering for worship, we continue to move into uncharted areas of leadership. How do we successfully help our people engage in transformational worship while wearing masks and socially distancing, all the while being concerned with the safety of congregational singing and choral programs? We also realize that probably fewer than half of people are returning to in-person worship, and many people we need to reach can only be reached through online platforms. Therefore, we need to have an equally strong emphasis on digital means of worship and discipleship. The church must find ways to engage our people in worship in-person and online.

TIPS & TOOLS

As we adjust to the new realities, we need to find ways to devote energies to two streams. The first stream is in-person worship. Gathered worship now has severe limitations, which impair the way things used to flow. We need to be creative in ways we can engage our congregations in worship with masks and distancing while finding ways to keep our small and large ensembles active in ministry amid challenging barriers.

The second stream is online worship, which has unique needs to reach an at-home audience. Online worship ministry must focus on connecting with people in a much different environment. The article, [“Improving your online worship services.”](#) provides some helpful guidance to connect with online audiences.

TOMORROW’S POSSIBILITIES

REIMAGINE

What if our times of worship, both in-person and online, were powerful and transformational — each striving to reach the differing needs of the two audiences? What if we could get beyond a production mindset and really seek God’s heart for what our worship ministries need to look like to make disciples in this new time? What if we are willing to lay everything of the past on the altar, and discover the best ways for moving forward? Read [“Thinking about the new normal after COVID-19”](#) for more thoughts.

TIPS & TOOLS

Take some time to assess each part of your worship ministry prior to COVID-19. Look at the busy calendar you had. Take each part of that and ask: What is right with this ministry? What is wrong with this ministry? What is missing or could be improved? What is confused about the purpose or function of this ministry? Does this ministry need to be continued as it was, modified or deleted? Also, assess the online and gathered worship ministries according to the articles referenced above. What needs to be changed to be most effective?

RESOURCES

RenewingWorshipNC.org

REIMAGINE MICROSITES

TODAY'S REALITY

WHAT IS A MICROSITE/MICROCHURCH?

It's not a house church, but it could be. It's not a missional community, but again, it could be. It's not a multisite, but yet again, it could be one of these as well. Ask 10 people to define microsite and you may get 10 different answers. Simply defined, a microsite is a community of believers who are connected to a local church but meet in a location separate from the church. Though many microsites meet in homes, they may meet in a public space like a park, a coffeehouse or any other gathering space. Many microsites share in the life of the sponsor church on Sundays by utilizing video or a livestream for teaching and worship with a conversational small group feel to them.

COVID-19 IMPACT

When the coronavirus practically shut the world down, most had no idea that it would impact us for so long. The inability to physically gather together caused most churches to hurriedly transition and jump into online digital ministry. And while many quickly made the adjustment to sharing an online worship service, creating online community proved to be a bit more difficult. While many churches have gone back to some sort of physical gathering, social distancing requirements still make larger gatherings difficult.

Now and in the future, many churches may have to rely on online and virtual means to connect with their congregations, making digital solutions a higher priority than they have been in the past. How might a microsite assist in helping your church engage at a deeper level?

TOMORROW'S POSSIBILITIES

A SOLUTION-FILLED MICROCOSM?

A microsite location of your church is another way to approach the mission of God to make more disciples through gospel-centered worship, community, service and eventual reproduction. Think of a microsite as a microcosm church that can be done by anyone, anywhere at any time. A microsite can be developed by training spiritually mature leaders in the competency of how to shepherd and care for a group of people. The microsite participants are encouraged to think of their gathering as "their church." Because the gatherings normally have some sort of centralized structure, leaders can focus on the relational and discipling side of ministry.

DECENTRALIZING MISSION

Microsites often engage mission together by owning a shared mission. While a microsite may choose a local mission to partner with — for example a local food ministry, public school, pregnancy center, homeless shelter or addiction ministry — the microsite also owns the mission of their chosen neighborhood. This means caring for the lost, having gospel conversations with the people in their world, and viewing the microsite church as a home by which new believers can be grown into the family.

REPRODUCING THROUGH THE MICROSITE

Where a reproducing church takes abundant resources (people and financial), all it takes to reproduce a microsite is a plan, training leaders and a mission field. Microsites can be wonderful leadership development incubators that lend themselves to giving leaders the opportunity to follow God's leadership and to branch out to a people or a place God may be leading.

REIMAGINE CHURCH IN A DIFFERENT WAY

If a believers' weekly gathering didn't revolve around going to a centralized building, but rather, a smaller gathering that centered around care, disciple-making, accountability and mission, what would happen if gathering restrictions reappear? Because the microsite is developed to be a smaller, decentralized form of church, is it possible that microsite is a COVID-proof solution?

Because of the smaller gatherings that are built around deeper accountability relationships, it is possible that the move of a microsite to a digital platform (e.g., Zoom, Facebook Live or Google Meet) would be more effective if gathering restrictions were to reappear. By taking a proactive approach toward training and decentralizing a portion of your church and leadership, you may find your church in a better position to rebound in the midst of gathering restrictions.

WHO WOULD LEAD A MICROSITE?

A microsite leader would be a leader that has come from your ministry and has shown an observed spiritual authority and maturity among your congregation. Their track record of serving and mission alignment (very important) would be affirmed prior to training.

Another important part of the microsite is establishing that every microsite also has a host-type of leader. Whereas the spiritual leader will oversee the training and spiritual leadership of the group, the host leader has a desire to gather people and create hospitable environments that people enjoy being part of.

RESOURCES

[Microsite Overview with Brett Eastman](#)
[Reimagine Decentralized Disciple-Making webinar](#)