Snow Leads to Innovative and Meaningful Worship

Typically, snow on Sunday in Virginia means that churches close, worshipers stay at home, and pastors get a rare Sunday off. However, one wintry Sunday, after the tremendous snowfall, several churches found unique ways to connect with one another.

Dan Carlton, pastor of Culpeper Baptist Church, used Periscope, a live-streaming platform, to preach his sermon from his home not once, but twice! “We had 70 ‘log ins’ to our 8:30 service and 24 at 11:00,” he said. They shared the broadcast on their Facebook page. The church has used Periscope for about six months, which has allowed for some unusual and incredible experiences including a Christmas Eve worshiper who was in a local hospital’s ICU and a funeral hosted for a man whose many friends in Scotland were able to “virtually attend” his memorial service.

In the Northern Neck, approximately 20 folks broke out their 4-wheelers to attend worship at Kilmarnock Baptist Church on Sunday. Pastor Matthew Tennant led worship in blue jeans and snow boots. Their services are typically on the radio, and they were able to successfully broadcast their service. They shared their sermon video using social media for snowbound members to watch, garnering a lot of positive feedback. Tennant described it as an “intimate and very meaningful” service.

Lynn Marstin, pastor of Midway Baptist Church in Gretna, publicized on Facebook that he would venture over to the church and sing “Amazing Grace” at exactly 11:00 a.m., inviting folks to sing along with him from their homes. Six members showed up to join him physically at the church, so they had a short time of prayer, scripture reading, and a brief
devotional time. Marstin shared the scripture on Facebook, with the post very quickly reaching over 100 “likes.” Marstin said, “A number of people have contacted me and indicated that they sang at 11:00 a.m., read the scripture, and had a time of prayer.” Marstin said he got an indescribable feeling at 11:00 a.m., when the six of them started singing together, knowing that “though our members were scattered, our hearts were singing together.”

Across town, Tyler Daniels, pastor of Piney Fork Baptist Church, recorded a devotional video from his home. “No one was happy that we were missing our time of worship,” Daniels said. “By God’s grace, we had the equipment, and I was blessed with a message so we could reach our families and friends.” Over 300 people watched the video. Daniels said that “on a weekend that did not go as planned, it proved to be a surprising and refreshing fit,” with many both inside and outside of the church appreciating the video.