



HOLDING A DRIVE-IN WORSHIP SERVICE

According to Scripture, followers of Jesus Christ are instructed to gather regularly for teaching, worship, and fellowship (Hebrews 10:25). Scripture also tells Christians to be subject to the governing authorities (Romans 13:1). Can we do both under the current guidelines for social distancing in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic? Yes, we can abide by reasonable and temporary restrictions that comport with religious liberty legal protections while still pursuing the mission of the church.

Family Research Council is encouraging churches to be creative in their worship and their ministry opportunities while abiding by appropriate government restrictions and current [CDC guidelines](#) for public gatherings. In addition to utilizing live-streaming and online technologies, many churches have found Drive-in Worship services to be very successful in ministering to their congregations and the broader community.

Below are the ABCs of conducting a Drive-in service.

ANNOUNCE the service. Include clear guidelines for the Drive-in service:

1. One family per car
2. Participants must remain in their vehicles at all times, preferably with windows up. The horn can substitute for a verbal "amen," and the vehicle's emergency flashers can replace raised hands.

ADAPT a parking area. A large parking lot works very well, especially if it is already marked with parking spots. It's best to keep a parking space between cars. An open field also works, but you will need to lay out the parking spaces, providing at least six feet between cars.

ARRANGE for traffic. Depending upon the size of your Drive-in service, getting cars in and out of the meeting space in an orderly and safe fashion will be one of the biggest challenges. We recommend that you:

1. Utilize a trained parking crew, in visible safety vests, who will direct cars from entry onto the property all the way to a parking space;
2. Notify local law enforcement. In some jurisdictions, law enforcement can assist with traffic flow on to and off of the public roadway.

BROADCAST possibilities. Several Christian radio stations have partnered with churches for these Drive-in services. Another option is a low power FM transmitter, which can be purchased for under \$200.00. If Wi-Fi coverage is sufficient in the parking area, the message can be streamed on a social media platform such as Facebook or the church website.

BE VISIBLE to your congregation. Depending upon the size of your Drive-in service, a flatbed truck or trailer may be sufficient for those who will be leading the service. Be mindful of the social distancing guidelines for those on the platform. Worship should be as simple as possible, using as few people as necessary. If you need to be seen over a larger parking area, other options include lifts or even a bucket truck to elevate the speaker.

CHURCH building. There will be no access to a church building during the service; this means no restroom or childcare facilities will be available, so be mindful of this reality when considering the length of the service.

COLLECT an offering. A drive-in service still allows people who do not use electronic giving to make their contributions to the church. Buckets or other containers can be used for people to drop their offerings in as they leave. The buckets should be sanitized between uses, and those counting the money should wear protective gear.

COMMUNION – you can still take it. Participating in corporate communion is a little more complicated but can be done. Individual, pre-packaged elements should be used and distributed by church staff adequately equipped with masks and gloves.

Drive-in services conducted as outlined here meet the current CDC guidelines, and should be permitted under any reasonable government restrictions (that do not violate legal protections for religious liberty) currently in place. However, some jurisdictions have attempted to prohibit Drive-in services. Most of these prohibitions have been challenged as unconstitutional and unlawful because of their selective application to churches and for other reasons that may violate religious liberty. If you encounter difficulty with any government officials in this regard, please contact Family Research Council at stories@frc.org.