

Technology

For the last several years our technology needs have not changed much. Updating the software and some hardware was pretty much the extent of it. We are still working with two computers in the office, networked to share the church database software and the copier/printer. Our sound system is still “sound”. Thanks to Dave Hunkins who put that all together several years ago with his knowledge of electronics and trained us in pulling wires and installing the system.

Now, in the advent of COVID, we are taking advantage of a subscription to ZOOM. First used for session and PNC meetings and then for worship services with Marti. With our g-mail account, we are able to access you-tube to post those services. The Easter Sunrise service was created right after Palm Sunday using an iPhone as a movie camera, downloading the clips into a laptop, then editing and stitching them together.

From Palm Sunday through Labor Day weekend, we continued to ZOOM to Marti in Watertown for the message and prayers and added in a choir recording from a previous worship service with varied photo and movie backgrounds. Convert this to a movie and post on you-tube and each Sunday’s service is there for you to enjoy.

The session realized that we needed to be able to have services in the sanctuary at sometime and would have to be able to live-stream those services for members and friends who were not yet comfortable to worship in person. A budget not to exceed \$2,000 was set. So we purchased a laptop, a video camera, a lot of fiber-optic cable, a network adapter to utilize the copper of the electric wiring in the building and some additional adapters. We moved the 72” TV to the choir loft and purchased a stand for it.

On September 13, we held our first hybrid service in the sanctuary and live-streamed on Facebook simultaneously. To make things a little easier to manage, we purchased a second laptop so we had one dedicated to the slide presentation and the other dedicated to the live-stream. The Christmas Eve service was prerecorded since we knew we would not be able to host in the sanctuary and keep COVID protocols. On December 29, at a called meeting, the session decided to close the sanctuary again and only live-stream services until further notice.

Beginning with the January 3, 2021 service we are live-streaming only and know that live-streaming will continue even after we re-open the sanctuary for those who are home-bound, snow-birds, and senior housing residents. The next step is finding the right software to allow us to stream both to Facebook and You-tube concurrently.

Those trained to use the equipment so far are: Patti Stephens, Dick Stephens, Jim Wilson, Drew Paluch and Mary Johnson. Another 3 or 4 “techs” would be great!

Unfortunately, all this technology is not able to create coffee hour after worship yet. You’ll have to do that on your own.

Dick Stephens