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## LifeWay offers churches free digital giving plan, curriculum, low-cost books, discussion guides

by Aaron Earls and Joy Allmond, posted Friday, March 20, 2020 (one month ago)

NASHVILLE -- As the COVID-19 pandemic causes churches across the country to suspend in-person meeting, Generosity by LifeWay is opening its digital giving platform to congregations immediately for free, while B&H Publishing is offering low-cost books with free discussion guides.

"Giving is one of the most significant faith experiences we have as believers," said Todd McMichen, director of Generosity by LifeWay. "God is a generous God in so many ways to us, and our giving in response to His generosity has been part of our worship since the very first family."

Because of this, McMichen said LifeWay wanted to help as many churches as possible go digital with their giving during the coronavirus outbreak.

The "Special COVID-19 Digital Giving Plan," which can be accessed at [LifeWayGenerosity.com/coronavirus](http://LifeWayGenerosity.com/coronavirus), provides any church with a custom online giving page that can begin receiving gifts within 48 hours.

With the offer, churches will pay no set-up fees and no monthly subscription fees. The service does not require any technology or website experience.

After providing minimal information, Generosity by LifeWay creates and hosts the giving page, which the church only needs to promote to their people.

"Many small churches and church plants had not yet adopted digital giving as a practice when this global pandemic struck. And even those who have digital giving may only have a very small percentage of giving received through this means," said McMichen.

"Today, in our unprecedented situation, we need as much generosity flowing through the internet as possible. The work of the church and kingdom ministry is needed now more than ever."

After announcing the program on Wednesday (March 18), Generosity saw an overwhelming response from churches. McMichen said due to his team and others at LifeWay, Generosity has been able to meet the needs of every church requesting service.

Churches who already have a website but lack online giving can also get started with Generosity's full digital giving platform at no cost.

"Generosity by LifeWay has given us a great opportunity to encourage our people to be more generous," said Andy Brown, executive pastor of First Baptist Newnan, Ga. "We moved to Generosity because they are going above and beyond to serve churches beyond just offering a digital giving platform."

To sign up for the free digital giving plan or for more information, visit [LifeWayGenerosity.com/coronavirus](http://LifeWayGenerosity.com/coronavirus).

### Curriculum

LifeWay Christian Resources is also taking unprecedented steps in offering free digital curriculum for all ages from "The Gospel Project," "Bible Studies for Life" and "Explore the Bible."

Churches can access the free group curriculum and other resources at [ministrygrid.com/curriculum](http://ministrygrid.com/curriculum).

"This is a challenging season for the church when we must pause gathering together, but we must look for innovative ways to advance the Great Commission," said Ben Mandrell, president and CEO of LifeWay Christian Resources. "We pray these resources will enable churches to continue the work to which God has called them."



"LifeWay is here to serve the church," said Michael Kelley, senior vice president of church ministries, "and so we are looking for creative ways we can do that in light of the fact that churches cannot, and should not, be meeting in person right now."

Providing digital curriculum free to churches is a way LifeWay can help small groups continue to meet online even while they can't meet physically and help parents disciple their kids at home, Kelley said, adding that the new enhanced digital curriculum being provided is designed to make discipleship during social distancing easy and to help pastors focus on other pressing needs.

"We know churches are hurting, and we want to do what we can to take some worries off their plates," he said. "Most pastors and church staff members will be rightly concerned with caring for their people, so if we're able to take just one piece off their plates, then hopefully church leaders will have the capacity to serve people even more."

To use the digital curriculum, churches should follow these steps:

-- Set up your church's organization. To share this digital curriculum, churches will need to create a Ministry Grid organization that allows users to organize and share curriculum.

-- View and customize your sessions. The digital curriculum provided is customizable to fit a church's specific context. Group leaders can add additional teaching components, activities, discussion questions and downloadable items.

-- Share curriculum with families to access at home. Once the curriculum is ready, churches can send people an email from within the platform or share a link through their own communication channels. Individual users will receive the digital curriculum and be able to use it on any device.

Small group leaders can use the curriculum with online group video platforms or print and deliver to those who cannot access the material digitally.

LifeWay is also offering free help and training for those who have never led an online group through the resources at [MinistryGrid.com/coronavirus](https://www.ministrygrid.com/coronavirus).

In the end, Mandrell said this and other similar efforts to provide free digital resources from LifeWay are a means to help the church continue its mission. "We want to help the church carry on their ministry of making disciples despite these difficult circumstances."

For more information on the curriculum or other free resources provided by LifeWay during the COVID-19 crisis, visit [LifeWay.com/coronavirus](https://www.lifeway.com/coronavirus).

### **Discipleship resources**

B&H Publishing is providing a low-cost solution to ministry problems that result from COVID-19 social distancing and quarantines. Focusing on reading books as a way to stay connected, B&H launched an initiative: "Stay on the same page, by reading the same pages."

Through "Stay on the same page" B&H offers select titles for congregations and small groups to read together at a bulk price of \$5 each, along with free, online discussion guides.

These free discussion guides are ideal for groups of 10 or fewer as recommended by the U.S. government, groups that meet virtually, or even individuals for self-reflection.

"The inability to gather corporately is a major problem," said Devin Maddox, B&H trade book publisher. "We hope by offering our most affordable books designed for congregational and group reading -- as well as discounting an assortment of e-books for individuals -- we can get resources into the right hands."

Some of the select book are offered at \$5 per book with an order of 20 or more. Others are offered at the same discount price with bundles of 10 or more.

Once bulk orders are delivered to church property, church leaders are encouraged to distribute books using a safe social distance (such as a drive-through option) and share the free online resources that support group book consumption and discussion.

More than 30 titles are offered at a discount bulk price, including:

-- "Not Forsaken: Finding Freedom as Sons and Daughters of a Perfect Father," by Louis Giglio

-- "Sing! How Worship Transforms Your Life, Family, and Church," by Keith and Kristyn Getty

-- "I Am Going" by Daniel L. Akin and Bruce Riley Ashford

-- "Turning Everyday Conversations into Gospel Conversations," by Jimmy Scroggins and Steve Wright

-- "I am a Church Member: Discovering the Attitude that Makes the Difference," by Thom S. Rainer

"When 'I Am a Church Member' was first published the aim was to design a book to encourage church members to read together for the purpose of deeper discipleship," said Maddox.

"To date, literally over a million church members have continued discipleship by reading together in separate locations during the week. As COVID-19 keeps us away from our church campuses on the weekend, it seems right to us that we might maintain unity by deploying resources to aid in discipleship."

Thom Rainer, CEO of ministry coaching firm Church Answers, and former CEO of LifeWay Christian Resources, is hopeful about the prospect of many churches reading together.

"I have heard countless stories of pastors who effectively led change in their churches by reading 'I Am a Church Member' with their congregations," said Rainer.

"During this time of social isolation I think reading any book together would be an effective way for individuals, families and small groups to stay on the same page as the church."

In addition to the bulk congregational reading offer, B&H has also made available several e-book versions of some key titles at a discounted price.

"Books are like 'little missionaries,'" said Maddox. "Books can travel to places we could never go. Books can teach on the Amtrak train. Books can comfort a lonely night-shift worker. Books can be smuggled into the home of a teenager whose family is hostile to the Gospel, so they can safely hear the good news in communities where Christians would never be welcome.

"And because books can be deployed safely in places people can't, we see books as a strategic resource for those of us in social isolation from one another."

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