Drive-In Worship – A Simple Guide

By Revs. Meghan and Wes Kelley

I. Is “drive-in” worship a good fit for your context?
   a. Do you have an open space, such as a grass lot or large open parking lot with line of sight?
   b. Do you have sound equipment you can use or borrow?
   c. Can you get a few volunteers who will respect the health precautions?
   d. Would your people participate?

II. Technology:
   a. You can do this with a simple set up of speakers, etc.
   b. Radio: Work with a local radio station to determine how you can broadcast through their station into the cars. Will probably require buying a time slot. You will have to plan your service time around available time slots.
   c. Barix Box: sends your system’s audio to the local radio station over the internet in a format that the station can use to broadcast during a time slot, which your people can then tune into thru their cars. Barix Box can be purchased at https://scmsinc.com/ for about $500. Make sure this is what your radio station needs before you buy it.
   d. Can your equipment be protected in event of rain?

III. Set up plan:
   a. Need some sort of stage or focus area
   b. Parking design
   c. Traffic flow
   d. Flag potholes, posts, and other places of caution
   e. Block off any roads that are nearby that may be problematic whether due to traffic flow problems, or unexpected loud sounds, such as logging trucks or big rigs coming through. You may need police permission or assistance.

IV. Volunteers needed:
   a. Sound volunteers
   b. Set up volunteers
   c. Parking volunteers
   d. Music leader

V. Health Precautions:
   a. Over communicate that people are not permitted to get out of car. Have a plan to enforce this at the site of worship. We had a registered nurse, who works in disaster response, serve as our “hammer” and tell them to get back in their cars.
b. Have latex or nitrile gloves on hand for volunteers.
c. Have volunteers wear a vest or a volunteer shirt to distinguish them, so that others can see there is a reason that these volunteers are permitted to be out of car.
d. Do not make bathrooms available.
e. Overcommunicate health rules to all volunteers. You risk having your service shut down by officials if you do not adhere to the mandated health orders, which are subject to change daily.
f. We recommend consulting with health professionals in your community. Enlist their help. Ask them to brainstorm with you the potential risks in how you intend to offer this service.

VI. Legal Precautions:
   a. You may want to communicate with local law enforcement to be sure they know you intend to offer this service. Cooperate with them in whatever ways they request.
   b. You may want to consult with local legal experts (judges, attorney, etc.) as to the legality of offering the service the way you intend. Government health orders are subject to change daily. You need to be sure you are in compliance.
   c. Secure any necessary noise permits or outside gathering permits.

VII. Things to consider as you order your worship:
   a. Keep the entire service brief. There are no bathrooms and the weather may get hot.
   b. Remind them not to get out of cars.
   c. Encourage them to greet one another by waving or texting.
   d. Keep the music simple. If possible, digitally share the words before the worship so that people can sing in cars.
   e. Consider the number of microphones you have and therefore the number of people who can speak/sing. Do not share microphones.
   f. Offering can be collected in stationary locations with no touching. We had buckets that people could drop gifts into on the way out. Because all cars were funneled out one by one in the same direction, everyone had a chance to drop in the bucket. Online giving was encouraged. Be sure that whoever handles the money does so with gloves and washes their hands before and after. The buckets used to collect money need to be disinfected as well.
   g. It’s tempting to think of lots of ways to enhance the service, such as projecting the words on a screen, etc. But keep in mind, the more you do, then the more volunteers and equipment you require. The risk of exposure goes up when there are more people helping and more surfaces that can be touched. Keep it all as simple as possible.
   h. We invited kids to honk horns at the end, which was a big hit!