

Some Tips on Watching Church Services via LiveStream

This is a new experience for most of us - watching church on TV or a computer rather than being there. It can be a difficult transition to make. So here are some tips on how to make it easier:

(1.) Treat the service as if you were at church. Dress like you would dress for church, stand at the proper times, sing along with the hymns, etc. This might feel funny or awkward at first, but you'll get used to it. (Hopefully you won't have to get used to it! But you might . . .) And even though you can watch the service later since it will remain on YouTube after the live stream is completed, try to be there "live" with us. Maintain this routine and this time together with your fellow Athanasians.

(2.) Limit distractions. At home, there are MORE distractions than when you are at church. Try to gather for church in a room where other distractions are limited. Turn off your phones and other electronics. Maybe even use less comfortable chairs to help keep focused on the service.

(3.) Be ready! Don't wait until the service begins to try to find the service order on our web site. Get it ready or download it ahead of time. It's rather long, since I include everything you need in case you do not have a hymnal at home, so I'm not sure I'd recommend printing it out. But you can! Perhaps you can have the service order and the live stream open at the same time in different windows on your computer. Or perhaps show the service on your TV if you are able, and follow along with the service on another device. If you're not sure how to do any of this, we have some tech people in the congregation who could help you.

(4.) Talk about it. After church we usually gather together for conversation. Why not do so now, too? After the service is over, call or video chat with a friend or a fellow Athanasian. Talk about the service, the readings, the hymns, the sermon, or anything else going on in your life. Right now, it is very easy to feel isolated and cut off from the people we care about. So work to overcome that as best you can!

(5.) Tell others about our LiveStream! OK, this one is not about how to watch, but not every church is able to live stream services, and not everyone goes to church. Perhaps this is a golden opportunity to invite someone to "church" who is afraid or intimidated to walk in our front door. This could introduce them to our church and God's Word in a very unintimidating way. They don't even have to be local! I told an older lady in Pennsylvania and some friends in Southwest Virginia. Spread the Word!

(6.) Look forward to when we will all be together again! Because we will! It will be sooner or later (more likely), but there will come the day when we can all gather together again. Maybe you'll be surprised how much you missed our fellowship. Or maybe that person you didn't get along with too well . . . that disagreement won't matter much anymore. Look forward to how **God will bring good** out of this difficult time and situation - because He will! He promised (Romans 8:28). So even though this seems anything but good right now, God will bless us through it.

God bless you all! And remember, if you need *anything* or need any help - of *whatever* kind! - please let me know! We will do everything we can to help you through this time.

Pastor Douthwaite