



MOPS

Dear Pastor and Pastoral Team,

We've all heard it. During the spring of 2020 more than ever. *Unprecedented.*

This word doesn't roll off the tongue; it's easy to misspell, and it has nearly as many syllables as required feet for safe social distancing. COVID-19 has proven that, up until now, all previous uses of the word "unprecedented" have been severe exaggerations. Between the stay-at-home orders, quarantine mandates, qualifications for "essential" versus "non-essential," and face-mask requirements, no one has experienced anything quite like this before, and nothing is unscathed from its effects.

But you already know this.

What's interesting, and inextricably linked to these unprecedented safety restrictions, is the response of different institutions around the world: governments, brands, businesses, and particularly the local church. Now, we've all heard the proverbial "capital-C church" described as a people, not a place. This is true. But what happens when, at a moment's notice, church can no longer take place in a building?

Over the last two months, we have witnessed Sunday mornings become entirely virtual, alas settling into its two-dimensional groove. The thing is, the ministry that happens in the six days between Sabbaths is equally important to the hour spent together each Sunday. But you already know this, too.

So, here is the new and necessary normal: youth group, young adult ministry, worship and prayer nights, home groups, and small group ministry have largely been placed into the category of *canceled until further notice*. Unlike Sunday morning services, mid-week ministries have often not found an online alternative for gathering (undoubtedly due to the excessive resources it takes to pull off such a thing). It appeared MOPS meetings fell into the *canceled until further notice* category as well, at least for the time being.

Or so we thought. But almost immediately, something incredible started happening.

As soon as stay-at-home orders began to sweep across nations, MOPS leaders were the first to spring into action. Within a matter of days, MOPS meetings were transformed into online gatherings via Zoom, Google hangouts, and other video call platforms. MOPS groups celebrated birthdays, childbirths, sobriety milestones, graduations, and overall life *To the Full* with drive-by celebrations, front porch deliveries, and virtual dance parties. This was not a couple hundred women – we're talking tens of thousands of moms and their families. More importantly, we have witnessed the Gospel shared and darkness defeated "... *by the blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony.*" (Who knew Zoom calls would be the third component to this equation in Revelation 12:11.)

All of this was ... in a word? Unprecedented.

The speed and mastery with which MOPS leaders made this shift was astounding – but it shouldn't have been. Women have organized, gathered and helped hold together the church's patchwork of community for centuries, especially during crisis. Now is no exception.

Here's the thing about the church though. The church has plenty endured unprecedented circumstances in its 2,000 year history. This is because it is the people who make up a church, not the building, not the financial statement, not even the basic freedom to meet. Unprecedented moments in history have a way of revealing unshakeable truths. Here's one: Pandemic or prosperity, an institution will always rise to the level of its volunteers. As an organization, we couldn't be more proud of ours.



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So we decided to follow the lead of our MOPS leaders for pivoting during a crisis, leaning in to the unknown, and trusting God with the rest. Here is what that looked like for MOPS International HQ:

**As an organization, we began hosting a weekly MOPS gathering on Facebook Live in April and May.** The turnout was outrageous, with around 50,000 moms tuning in each week. (You can view those here: [April 7](#), [April 14](#), [April 21](#), [April 28](#), [May 5](#), [May 12](#).)

**Two words: Zoom training. One of the first things we shared in March was a simple video on the basics of hosting a zoom meeting.** Thousands of MOPS leaders viewed this tutorial that set them up to finish the MOPS year virtually.

**In the middle of April, we sent a print magazine to our members.** It's called, *The MOPS Magazine*, and we sent it to over 80,000 moms who were stuck at home, plus a special edition for MOPS leaders with training resources. This quarterly magazine hit mailboxes right when moms needed it most, and addressed exactly what they were feeling.

**April 1, we launched our annual theme and theme video.** This is the concept we rally around as a community, where we set the intention for the year ahead. This year, we addressed COVID-19 head-on, with 135,000 views later, we believe it struck a chord.

**Starting in April, we began monthly webinars to train our MOPS leaders.** The focus: leading through uncertainty and cultivating community when it looks entirely different. The topics are timely, and the responses are overwhelmingly positive.

**Since the end of March, we've been on a mission to get on the news with good news.** TV and radio stations are pointing moms to MOPS around the country because we are knocking on local media's doors, and they find our resources worth sharing.

Even though meeting in person is still not yet possible, our doors are wide open; our labor is on mission; and our God is not surprised, even in the unprecedented.

Go to [mops.org/covid-response](https://mops.org/covid-response) to get more details on how MOPS International is navigating this new reality. In addition, receive weekly updates and resources to help equip you to build community as you navigate the coming months.

Warmly,  
MOPS

P.S. If you are unfamiliar with MOPS, but like the idea of building community, please send us a message to [reachyoungfamilies@mops.org](mailto:reachyoungfamilies@mops.org).

MOPS

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