



Executive Summary of MB Church Survey – Church Response to COVID-19

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In an effort to learn more about how the coronavirus crisis is impacting the US MB church family, MB Foundation conducted a survey from June 19 to June 30, 2020. Out of 216 churches in our family, 67 responded to the survey, including 15 that have loans with MB Foundation.

We are pleased to see that our churches were generally well-prepared for this crisis, though there are still many challenges in our church family. Following are some key takeaways from the survey results.

1. Finances

- 65% reported having cash reserves of 3 months or more prior to the crisis. Only 12% had no reserves going into the pandemic.
- Over half of churches surveyed (55%) reported no change or improved giving during the crisis. Meanwhile, 18% reported decreased giving of more than 20%. A national survey from The Unstuck Group reported 58% of churches showing a decline in giving, compared to 45% of US MB churches. Good news!

- Meanwhile, The Unstuck Group survey reported 89% of churches in America offering online or mobile giving before the crisis, while only 55% of US MB churches reported offering this feature prior to the crisis. Fortunately, we now report 76% will provide online giving options going forward. We still have 23% of US MB churches that provide no online giving platform.

2. Staffing

We are grateful that while The Unstuck Group reported 17% of churches initiating staff furloughs, layoffs, and/or reduced staff compensation, among US MB churches, 90% have made no changes to ministry or support staff compensation by any of these methods!

3. Weekend Service Engagement

We are so grateful to see that as of the date of the survey, 73% of US MB churches are starting to meet together for in person worship. And while 42% of churches did not have online service options prior to the crisis, 88% are offering online service options today! A great gain for the kingdom resulting from this crisis!

What do you feel is the greatest challenge facing the church/staff?

Some final good news, which is likely overshadowed by lots of bad news . . . the survey generated 66 responses to the question, “What do you feel is the greatest challenge now facing the church/staff?” The good news is that only 5 responses had to do with finances. The bad news is that it likely doesn’t indicate that finances are healthy, but rather accentuates the larger concerns which are facing our churches (concerns for health, unity, restarting ministry, despair, overcoming political and racial tensions, etc.).

Regardless of how your church responded (or would have responded) to the survey, or the circumstances you are facing related to these issues, let’s be encouraged with these words from the prophet Jeremiah, “blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in Him” (Jeremiah 17:7).