

# Transcript of Oral History Interview with Josh

**Interviewee:** Josh

**Interviewer:** Speaker 1

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**Abstract:** Josh discusses their faith and how it has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. They also discuss changes to their religious community and its involvement in community service to help those in need during COVID-19. Additionally, they are youth pastor and provide insight on how their teachings and activities have shifted to accommodate for changes to life due to COVID-19.

**Speaker 1** 00:00

The first question is, how has COVID-19 affected your faith or your beliefs?

**Josh** 00:06

Um, it hasn't really challenged my faith or my beliefs. I think it's helped me lean on them more. It's definitely stretched it a little bit, but in the sense of, you know, refocusing my faith in Jesus, and just in this season allowing sometimes the difficult moments just to refocus us and put our focus on what we believe. So it hasn't really changed it, in the bad sense. It's actually strengthened it, I believe. And that's why I believe that, you know, have peace, because I'm focused on on not what I can control, but the one who controls it. So yeah, that's for me personally.

**Speaker 1** 00:53

Alright. And is your religious community still gathering?

**Josh** 00:58

We have gone strictly to online services. So we just meet on Sundays and Wednesdays, over the internet, we, we stream through Facebook, and we also stream through YouTube as well. So that's the way we've gathered. And then we've also had gatherings over zoom, different Connect groups have gotten together to talk and have community through zoom.

**Speaker 1** 00:23

And what are these Connect groups that you just mentioned?

**Josh** 01:27

So specifically for, I'm the youth pastor at our church, so I oversee the youth. So we typically have something on Sunday nights at 5pm on YouTube. And then directly after that, our Connect groups, they are kind of like our life groups, where regularly we would meet on Wednesday nights but, now since we switched over because of COVID-19, we meet on Sunday nights, right after the teaching is at 5:30. And gather together we discuss the different topics that were discussed on in the teaching, and then just

kind of help each other out, support each other, pray for each other. And that's what ultimately is it's broken up in age groups. And then also guys and girls are broken up. So we just have discussions and conversations as well.

**Speaker 1** 2:12

All right, and how has COVID-19 affected your participation in the religious community.

**Josh** 02:18

Um, it's definitely changed it in the sense of we had to strategize and try some different things that we've done before. Obviously, we were used to just coming together and being in person. So we definitely had to come up with some things that were not what we were currently doing, mainly streaming through YouTube, putting more content out on Instagram videos, connecting with students where they were, specifically on the different social media platforms.

**Speaker 1** 02:48

Alright, and lastly, is your religious community supplying or engaging any kind of community service in an attempt to help alleviate issues caused by the pandemic? And if so, what are those effects efforts?

**Josh** 03:02

So we have different people from the congregation who are coming together and doing different things. We have a food box distribution at our church that allows people who are low income or need help with that, so if it's a \$5 fee, but if people are not able to pay that for the food boxes, then we just give it to them for free. But it's a way that we ultimately help out the community. And also, we are actually starting a Facebook, like a private Facebook group for our people that congregate our church. And on there, we're gonna put like people who have needs and then also people who can help out so we can come together and help each other as an as a community. Um, and then also, as a church, we've, we've definitely kept going and help people focus on God in the season, strengthen our faith and hope and love and just really providing different resources for families, with the youth and then we're also, also with the kids, giving them different teachings at their levels to help them out.

**Speaker 1** 04:09

All right, thank you so much, Josh, for being part of this interview. Appreciate it.

**Josh** 04:13

No problem. Thanks, man.