

Announcer:

Welcome to The Carey Nieuwhof Leadership Podcast, a podcast all about leadership, change and personal growth. The goal? To help you lead like never before in your church or in your business. And now, your host, Carey Nieuwhof.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, hey everybody, and welcome to episode 369 of the podcast. My name is Carey Nieuwhof, and I hope our time together today helps you lead like never before. Well, I am so glad to have Greg Atkinson back on the podcast and want to welcome all of you who are new to the show as well. Today's episode is brought to you by Pro Media Fire. Book your free digital strategy session today at promediafire.com/churchgrowth and by The Ascent Leader. If you're a new lead pastor who is leading a church after a recent senior leader transition, you can apply to attend a cohort with The Ascent Leader by going to theascentleader.org. Well, I'm so glad to be with you guys today. I don't know whether you can tell that there is a difference in my voice, but I have never been kicked in the throat, but yesterday I was loading a really heavy stone into my car and for whatever reason just moved wrong and hit the roof of my car right under my Adam's apple.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So let me just say it's painful, man. And I can tell my voice isn't quite what it normally is, but anyway, hopefully this gets better. I was Googling last night like, "What do you do when you get kicked in the throat," even though I wasn't kicked in the throat. Anyway, hope that never happens to you, but whatever doesn't kill you makes you stronger, right? So I'm so glad to have Greg Atkinson back. We are talking a lot about getting online viewers of your church, or if you're in business of your website, to engage. And, Greg's been on before, and we've talked about new guests and what happens when they arrive in person. But today, we bring him back and we talk a lot about, well, how do you engage people online? What about the new reality? What does that look like?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Greg is the Founder of the Worship Impressions and First Impressions Conference. He's an author, a leadership coach consultant and member of the Forbes Coaching Council. And he works with churches of all stages and sizes, including some of the largest churches in the country. So good to have Greg back on. And we talk about all things, church growth and what's so different now that COVID's hit, and what are we going to do about a hybrid church moving forward? I've also got, if my voice lasts that long, a What I'm Thinking About segment, and I want to talk to you about vanity metrics and why we should stop focusing on attendance. And listen, I'm somebody who really focuses on attendance. Okay? So, we'll get there. Anyway hey, this is a very unique season that's offering one of the most challenging environments to lead in that, well, most of us have ever lived through.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And you may find that you're inheriting a prior leader's staff, culture, elders and much more. I know we have a lot of young leaders listening, and a lot of you are now taking over from Gen X and Baby Boomer leaders. So, if you're that person, and you're the lead pastor who's leading a church that was vacated by a senior leader transition, you need to check out The Ascent Leader cohorts. In these cohorts, you'll get to learn from many of the best transition leaders in the church. You'll be connected with like-minded A level peers, and you'll have access to a coach who's got an experience with dozens, even hundreds of church leadership transitions. I participated in these before. You should really check it out. You can

apply today at theascentleader.org. And, also, if you are facing any of these challenges, raise your hand, okay. Your digital team is like maxed out, your social media team can't keep up with the need for content, your creative team's a little bit overwhelmed and you're cautious about spending money because who knows about 2021?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, you need to check out Pro Media Fire. You can hire an entire creative team of professionals for less than the cost of a staff hire. And the best part is, the plans are month to month. So if you want help with professional graphics, videos and content to make an impact while navigating this season of digital expansion, you can book a free strategy session today at promediafire.com/churchgrowth. That's promediafire.com/churchgrowth. Thanks to our partners. They bring you all of this, including transcripts, show notes, the team that produces this so that you get it for free. And man, well, without further ado, let's jump into today's conversation with Greg Atkinson. Greg, welcome back to the podcast.

Greg Atkinson:

Hey, thanks for having me. I'm honored.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, it's a three-peat for you because there's going to be one episode. I think this is over like three or four years, right? But it just got so good we're like, well, we have to have you back. And then I don't think we quite finished, and then the world blew up. So now that the world is blown up, we're going to have a slightly different conversation. But it's a real specialty of yours to build into the guest experience. And obviously we have a ton of church leaders listening, and that's your expertise, but the same is true for business leaders as well, right? If you own a restaurant, if you own a store, those first impressions, those opening moments. And we will link in the show notes to those previous episodes so guests can go and listeners can go back and listen to it, but the experience and the impression starts so much earlier than, "Hey, I just walked in the door," right?

Greg Atkinson:

Right. Yeah. I'm known kind of as the church secret shopper but I also secret shop businesses. I secret shop banks, restaurants, hotels, air lines.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Why would you secret shop a bank? I got to ask that. I mean, other than casing out the joint, why would you do that, Greg?

Greg Atkinson:

I've done it all. I've opened up accounts I don't need. I have extra bank accounts that I don't need just to have gone through their process. But there's a lot of hotels that I will secret shop and go spend the night at and restaurants where I've gone and ate and evaluated everything. But it's something used across all industries.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow. Okay, this isn't on the sheet on the questions but what are some of the similarities? What are some of the universals, whether it's a bank or a restaurant, a hotel or a church that you're just like, "You violate these, and it's over?"

Greg Atkinson:

Well, I would call it book ending. They want to know that you are acknowledged and seen and spoken to when you walk in and you're acknowledged and seen and spoken to when you walk out. If you walk in and nobody says, "Hi, welcome, glad you're here." Or if you just stand waiting and waiting and waiting and there's no hostess to say, "Hi, welcome how many do you have in your party?" or whatever. In the same way when you're walking out of the restaurant after you've already paid and you're walking past that hostess stand, they should say, "Goodbye. Thanks for dining with us." Just that. And it's the same thing in church. I always say the greeters shouldn't just welcome you as you're walking up, they should be at the door saying, "Thanks for coming. See you next week. Have a great week." There should be a book ending experience at the church location, as well.

Carey Nieuwhof:

No, that's good to know. And we did talk a lot about that I think in the first interview about how much is too much, how much is not enough. Everybody wants to be greeted differently if I remember correctly. So before COVID and the crazy 2020 that we're all in, you had said long before that happened that your website is really your first front door. It's the new front door. It's not the parking lot anymore. It's not the front door. That's not the first impression. And suddenly it was the only door, right? For almost everybody, for restaurants, for businesses, for churches. How do you begin welcoming people online? How does that work? Because nobody's really going back. Even as in-person experiences open up, we're all going to have better websites, better online presences. So how does that really begin?

Greg Atkinson:

Yeah. I've said for years that that front door experience, that very first impression, starts online. So in all of my secret shoppers over the last almost 15 years, I have done an online presence evaluation where I evaluate their website, their social media and all of their accounts and look at how they come across online before I ever stepped foot on campus. And so that's something I've always been passionate about. However, studies show from random polls to sophisticated things like Gloop and things that I look at in my own Facebook groups, even for those churches that have started back only about 30% of the people come back. And so you still have 70% watching at home. So that online experience is key. It's huge. And I think one of the simplest things I've said this before, it makes me think of the movie Avatar, where he said, "I see you, I see you." And it goes back to that hostess acknowledging you when you walk in.

Greg Atkinson:

When you tune into an online experience, there should be somebody that sees you and acknowledges you and thanks you for tuning in. Thanks you, welcomes you from wherever you may be tuning in from. And so now we have this global audience, this global audience, where you have people in your own city and people in other countries that are watching and tuning in. And so, to have a host or hostess or an emcee kind of welcome you and acknowledge you and encourage you to get involved in participating and in the chat and letting them know where you're from and that kind of interactive component which we can talk about more in a little bit, but I think I would start with just acknowledging them.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So, can you tell me from them or from others that you've watched, let's start with best practices. So how do you do that? Let's drill down on that a little bit. What is the online host sometimes at a big church, like Life Church or Elevation, obviously they have staff and this is like your job, right? But let's imagine even with like volunteers who are doing that or someone who's a student pastor but also is a Sunday morning host or how do you do that well? What are the best practices?

Greg Atkinson:

Yeah, there's a lot of people that have said to me or in my Facebook group, "What do we do with our greeters now that we're not meeting? What do we do with our first impressions guest services team?" I said, "We'll put them into chat. Let's make them host. Let's invite them to interact with guests and to welcome people." And so, I think having the opportunity to participate still, whether it be weekly or semi-weekly as a volunteer, is important. And so getting them involved in the online chat experience. A lot of churches, I think I heard Craig Groeschel say this past week that 27,000 churches were using the Church Online platform from Life Church, which is a free platform, anybody can go download it and use it for free. They give away everything.

Greg Atkinson:

And so if you're thinking, "Hey, we would love to take it up a notch. We would love to incorporate chat and in a smoother online giving experience, in prayer for people that are making decisions and online prayer and things like that," check out Church Online. It's free. The Church Online platform are chopped, a lot of people call it. But 27,000 churches are using it and they're just giving it away. It cost them a ton of money, but it costs us as the consumer nothing. And so you can have, like you said, a staff member, whether it be Chad at Elevation or Allen at Life Church or some of these others. But the other day I was watching Red Rocks Church in Colorado, and they just had their young adults pastor. It was just kind of like rotating through different staff. Some weeks church will use their youth pastor. And I was watching JD Greear's church, The Summit Church in the Raleigh-Durham area. And JD Greear is the President of the Southern Baptist Convention. And they just made a big decision, but I was watching them online about a month or two ago.

Greg Atkinson:

And throughout the entire experience because they're a multi-site church, they used almost all of their campus pastors in some way throughout the morning experience. And so they would get a welcome from one campus pastor and announcements from another campus pastor and next steps from another campus pastor. And so, one of the things that I like to see when you talk about best practices is a variety of faces on camera. So it's not the lead pastor the whole time. That we see male, female, black, white, Asian, Hispanic, there's a lot of faces coming on the screen welcoming you because you don't know where people are tuning in from. So, I like variety.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So, a variety of voices on camera. What about in the chat, whether that chat is YouTube, Facebook or a streaming service that you're using? I mean, a lot of it and I don't surf nearly as widely as you do, but it's like, "Hey, hey, hey." And I'm the guy who hangs in the back. I'm the guy who does not self-identify, that's sort of my personality. It also is kind of weird when you're the founding guy to like, "Hey, I'm at church today." Well, of course you're at church. But I just kind of lurk in the background. So I'm a reader

more than a participator. Tell me what some of the good practices are to draw people in in the chat. And then what are some definite "do not do this" moments?

Greg Atkinson:

Some good practices are you can log in as your name, like Greg Atkinson or Carey Nieuwhof or you can log in as Grace Church hosts where it's like this kind of a church assigned name, where it looks like then you have to really watch what you say because they associate you with staff and speaking on behalf of the church. And so, that's one thing whereas I could log in as Greg Atkinson and they not know that I'm associated with the church staff and they think it's just my voice or my opinion. And so, I like a variety of that. I think that's a way to use greeters and ushers in this time period where so many are meeting online, that they can log in as themselves and welcome people. They may not have to be church staff, but as far as I know, no, I would say let's not start talking about politics. A friend of mine, Hayley, who's going to be speaking at our First Impressions Conference from Bayside talks about don't feed the trolls.

Greg Atkinson:

So don't encourage people to argue. There's going to be people in a global experience. So whether you speak on behalf of the church as online campus pastor or you're a greeter named Bob Smith, who logs in and says, "Hey, good morning, welcome. We're so glad you're here." And you just kind of keep the energy up. But don't feed the trolls and so don't start... There's sometimes and I've seen this for years, I mean, well, over a decade I've been watching and tuning in, sometimes people had to be muted, blocked, kicked out.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I was going to say, how do you avoid the trolls? Because they show up everywhere you are online.

Greg Atkinson:

Some of it is based in repetition. If you are hogging all of the chat, just constantly no answer suffices you, nothing will shut you up. It's like you have not stopped poking and poking and poking and poking. And we keep trying to say, "Yes, but now let's focus on worship. Yes, but now let's listen to the messages. Yes, but we'll talk about that. And let me send you a link to this resource." If they just won't stop, and you can tell that they're trying to disrupt and to take attention away from God and what God is doing in the experience then sometimes we have to block them and kick them out. And I've seen people handling that very well, very graciously when I've just observed other churches from around the world that I wasn't a part of just watching how they handle it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

How do you do that, Greg? I appreciate the line and I think you're right, disruptive and repetitive. So if I'm like, I studied a lot of Calvin in my day so it's like, "Well, John Calvin would never agree with that." And you're like, "Well, that's not such a big deal." And I'm like, "Yeah, but Calvin said in the Institutes of Christian Religion volume one, page 17." It's like, wait a minute, this guy has got his own agenda, right? And so you mute me or you block me, how do you do that? What happens to the chat then? Do you follow up individually with someone or you just kind of like block them or how would you recommend handling that?

Greg Atkinson:

I think a lot of churches handle it differently. I don't know how many actually follow up with people or how many just block them and never talk to him again. But I've had to block a ton of people on my social media. And as you have probably seen when you're running ads for things on social media and on Facebook, there's a lot of people that just want to say negative stuff and start bashing.

Carey Nieuwhof:

They have a fun time taking you on, don't they?

Greg Atkinson:

Yeah. And so I have been posting ads for the First Impressions Conference and we have a marketing team that has been posting ads and I'll watch people just start. They're atheists that have an issue with Christianity or they have an issue with one of the speakers or they want to just start spamming the account. And we have to just say, ban user, ban user, ban user and delete their stuff.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And you're like, that's okay.

Greg Atkinson:

Yeah. It's unfortunate but in a chat experience, I think there are some people that maybe they're the EGRs, extra grace required and maybe somebody has a little bit more patience and is a little bit sweeter and they say, "Bob, could we go over here in this private chat and talk offline? And I'll answer any question you may have." And so there may be some people that have the patience to that.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And that makes sense to have more than one host, because it can get totally overwhelming at that point.

Greg Atkinson:

Absolutely.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay. That's a really good practice. What if it's someone from your church? What if it's not troll seven, eight, nine from wherever? What if it's Greg Atkinson or Carey Nieuwhof and you're like, "Wow, those guys are not having a good day. How would you handle that?" I think your offline thing is a good idea. Are there any other suggestions?

Greg Atkinson:

I would take them offline definitely. If it was somebody who I knew was a part of our church, I would call them, text them, email them, I would message them on Facebook, I would say, "Hey, let's talk in private. Let us not get into this and disrupt people from experiencing the online experience. Let's talk offline, or can I take you to coffee this week?"

Carey Nieuwhof:

No, I like that idea too because it is pastoral care. And I think your idea of having multiple people who are on and a great way to use your volunteers because I talk to a lot of church leaders who aren't able to meet yet or are significantly reduced, which is pretty much everybody. It's like, "We don't even know what happened to all of our volunteers," but that's a way to keep your first impressions guest services team engaged. Okay. So let me just try this out on you.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I think I've written about this a little bit on my blog, but I find that a lot of chat either is trivial or divisive. In other words it's like, "Hey, what's your favorite food? What's your favorite pizza toppings," right? Or, "Hey, how are you doing? Where are you from?" Like, it's just kind of superficial chit chat, which I'm not big into. And then it can get divisive like, "I disagree, or I disagree with you, or I disagree with you." What is healthy dialogue online and how do you cultivate that in the chat? Because again, remember, you don't know if you've got 30 people watching, 300 or 30,000 people watching. You don't know who those people are. And for a lot of people, it's probably their first experience of your church or your organization. So, how do you move toward meaningful dialogue?

Greg Atkinson:

Yeah. You said something in passing that is key as a first impressions person who is passionate about that guest experience, I am very aware that somebody is tuning in for the first time. We always say every Sunday is somebody's first Sunday, somebody is tuning in for the first time. And so they're going to take priority and precedence. They're going to be the ones that I think, "Let's make sure that they hear what the message's today, let's make sure that they can worship and that they can hear from God and they can experience what God is doing in the service and in the experience." And so I think we want to be driven by the mission of our church, by the vision of our church, that we want to stay with things as thematically. "Today we're talking all about grace or we're talking all about unfailing love. How have you experienced," and you keep it thematic so it's not just, "What's the weather like or what are you eating for lunch?" Or like you said, the trivial kind of, "What's your favorite color?"

Greg Atkinson:

If it's, "How have you experienced amazing grace in your own life this week? How have you been shown grace? How have you been shown unfailing love," to keep tying it back to the message and to the theme of the day, what they're talking about. We all have and my friend Jeff Freed talks about this phygital experience, physical and digital. We are going forward from here on out. Even when we start back meeting in-person, we are always physical and digital from here on out.

Greg Atkinson:

For the past five months, we have leaned so heavily on the online church experience because we couldn't gather in person, but that has built an audience and that has built a following and that has opened our eyes to how God can use technology and to use online platforms. And so going forward, we want to always be phygital, physical and digital. And so when we are meeting back in-person, whether 30% come out or you get all the way up to 50%, we need to be aware that there are people watching online even if there are people in the room. And in both cases, every Sunday is somebody's first Sunday.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So you said something interesting, it's the quality of the questions. And I think you're right. The quality of the questions determines the quality of the answers or responses or at least the interaction. I'm just

asking this because I don't know, is there a list or do you have a list or could we compose a list of like great questions to ask in the chat? Do you know if one exists? I think that'd be brilliant.

Greg Atkinson:

I know people that could create those. There's some friends of mine that they're actually speaking at the First Impressions Conference but they have some documents like that. And if they don't already, they would create that because that's their specialty.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, if we find or create some by the time this airs, there'll be in the show notes. So watch for them there. Okay. One of the big conversations that's happened over the last few months and again I'll just accentuate the fact that everything's changed and nothing has changed since the last time we talked, we talked about online being the front door. It was the front door. It has been for years to everything. It's just people ignored it, but now one of the big buzz things, and this'll be true when we go back to there's a vaccine and the masks aren't needed anymore and you can just pack them in like sardines, still your front door is going to be the online church.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And the question is, well, how do we know what to even count? Let's start here, do you have any thoughts on how to measure your online audience? Because I've talked to Kenny Jahng about that and some others, it's a fascinating conversation because the three second view isn't quite what you think it is. How to measure it and then how to get viewers to become engagers. I'd love to pick your brain on that.

Greg Atkinson:

There is a thing of I don't remember if it was you I read that talked about vanity metrics or metrics that-

Carey Nieuwhof:

I'm not the only one, but there's a lot of vanity metrics. It's all about our ego, right?

Greg Atkinson:

You hear, "Well, we had five times as much as we've ever had on a Sunday." Or, "We had 10 times as many in attendance." And I don't know how much of that carries weight, but I do think there's a lot of legitimacy of it's more than it used to be in person. And so, you're getting more eyeballs listening to the... I get frustrated when I hear people say, "Well, people are trying to silence the church." Or, "We're being persecuted." Or, "They're not letting us meet." And I am like, "The gospel has never been proclaimed so largely, so broadly, so loudly as in the past five, six months of this COVID experience." I remember hearing Craig Groeschel say that and forgive me if the numbers aren't exactly right, but I think it's pretty close, on a typical weekend, their church online experience would see about 5,000 salvations. The first week they had to go completely online, completely digital and they couldn't meet in-person, they had 15,000 salvations, three times as many of these. So that's not vanity metrics. That's, "Hey, there's more people tuning in."

Greg Atkinson:

It's one of those 9/11 moments where everybody's like, "Oh my gosh, let's get back to God. Is the world ending? Let's seek out our soul and our heart and find out what is going on in life." And so, it just seems like I'm in the Carolinas and we just had a hurricane and an earthquake in the same week. And so people were taking out Revelation and they're reading it like never before. And so, we're experiencing a lot of people saying, "Are these the end times? Let's really read and think about it." And I have different thoughts about that, but there are more people tuning in definitely than have ever tuned in before. There's going to be some people that may tune in for seconds and tune back out. I get that. There's going to be people that log in and log out, but there's a lot of people that'll stay on the entire service, and they're actually getting plugged in for the first time.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Are there metrics you would pay attention to like more 10 second views or one minute views or X percentage through the message? One of the things I've used is just benchmarking. It's like, whatever metric you pick, you just see, are we growing? Are we losing momentum? Now, I know for a lot of churches that's only months old but when I look at the blog or podcast or even online church, when you have year over year metrics and seasonal trends, you can then get a good sense of it. But I'm wondering whether there are particular metrics you would encourage people to pay more attention to than others?

Greg Atkinson:

Yeah. I like the one minute and up. I think it's probably similar to running a podcast like you do. That how you look at how long did they listen in?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. You can tell. Apple gives you that information.

Greg Atkinson:

Yeah. And so somebody started the podcast and stopped it immediately, then I'm not going out bragging about that or too excited that somebody heard the intro whereas if somebody listened for 30 minutes, then like, "Well, okay, we've got a listener and somebody maybe took away something." And so, I think there's some benchmarks that you could try to set up metrics going forward and keep tracking from here on out and then pull out the Google spreadsheet a year from now and look and compare, "How have we been growing?" But this is just going to get more and more common, more and more ambiguous. It's just going to be everywhere where phygital, online, physical digital is everywhere we look.

Greg Atkinson:

And so when I spoke at the Church Online Summit, I said, When that great day comes and we're so excited to gather back in-person and I miss hugging people and fist bumping and high five and I miss singing in the congregation, I haven't been to church since March 7th and 8th in-person, but I miss all of that, but when that happens and that pastor stands up to speak and they say, 'Man, it's so good to see all of you guys.' Then you have to say and for all of you tuning in online, we are so glad you are joining us, as well." Never forget that camera in the back going forward.

Greg Atkinson:

There are always people watching. People that may not feel ready to come yet. People that are checking you out, people that are curious, spiritually curious, people that are seeking, people that are scared. And maybe there's not a vaccine yet or they are immune compromised. Two of my three kids have compromised immune systems, and so they can't be out around it. My mom has breast cancer, just finished chemo and radiation, her immune system is just torn apart. She can't be out around it. Is she any less committed? No, she's been a core member of her church for decades. I saw somebody recently in my Facebook group say something about, "Well, the core is there." And I said, "No, I disagree. I think a lot of your core are watching at home." Don't say those 30% that showed up are the core and the 70% that are at home are any less faithful or any less committed just because they're not ready to come out in public yet.

Greg Atkinson:

They're also not going to football games and they're not going to basketball games and they're not eating in restaurants. And so they're not any less committed, but going forward in this phygital world, we want to always acknowledge the camera and always make eye contact from time to time. I listened to your podcast you did with JP where you were talking about those YouTube tricks and then acknowledging the camera and always being aware of that online audience as you speak. And so, that's just something that pastors hopefully they'll start teaching into the seminary. But this is something they're going to have to acknowledge going forward. It's a whole new style of communication.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It is a totally different style of communication. I appreciate it. By the way, if you're wondering, that's JP Pokluda that you're referring to who is on. Well, we'll link to it in the show notes. Anyway, what about turning viewers into engagers? I mean, in the same way we've been through this on previous episodes, when a first time guest comes, you need to follow up, et cetera, et cetera. But how do you do that? How do you turn a guy who's just watching or a woman who's just watching into somebody who starts to interact or take a step? Any thoughts on that, Greg?

Greg Atkinson:

Yeah, a couple of thoughts. One I mentioned earlier, the Avatar concept, "I see you," to acknowledge them. Two, for years and years and years, well, over a decade, I've known Leonard Sweet for a long time and he used to write about EPIC: Experiential, participatory, image-driven, connective. And he talked about EPIC preaching. And I as a worship pastor back in the worship days would talk about creating EPIC experiences. And so as we are looking at engaging people online and moving them from a viewer to an engager, how do we create something that is experiential, that is participatory, that is interactive and image-driven, that is connective, that has a community feel to it? And a lot of it happens through the way pastors preach and communicate, what the host says or does and then pastors themselves.

Greg Atkinson:

Ever since this happened in March, I have watched every single week and I've watched tons of churches. I keep up with a lot of churches and I have a list of churches that I could tell people to check out. I keep up with churches because I want to see... This is pioneering times. This is new ground we're breaking into such an exciting time in church history, but I watch Elevation Church every week. And I watch what Steven Furtick is doing. And something that they do very well is they have a prompt screen in the back that he can see the chat happening in real time. And so when he asks a question, he sees the answer in

front of him on a giant monitor in the back and he talks back to them and he says, "Tell me this, and say this, and where's this, and where are you from here? And type faith in the chat."

Greg Atkinson:

And then he just sees it flying and scrolling and sometimes he'll say, "Slow it down, slow it down." because the responses are coming in so quickly, but he's interacting with a real, he'll call out real names of people that he sees in the chat because they simply connected a prompt screen in the back of a monitor of what was happening in the chat. And so sometimes he'll pull out his phone and he'll look down at his phone and say, "Bob in Topeka, Kansas, I see you and I'm praying for you. Cheryl in Kentucky, we're so glad you tuned in." And he is talking to real people in real time. And so they did not teach that when Steven Furtick... Because he's close to my age, when we were back in Bible college in seminary, we're both from South Carolina, they did not teach that back then.

Carey Nieuwhof:

No, they didn't teach that.

Greg Atkinson:

They didn't teach that and you have to adapt and evolve and learn.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's a great best practice. And that's going to work for people who have larger churches or hundreds or thousands who are engaging with a service. But what about, I mean, we've all seen these on our scrolls, you got three people watching or 30 people watching, but they're all being quiet and the only people in there are your staff or volunteers. So definitely like engage the audience, I see you, better questions, any other tips? And then maybe take us down to how do you get people to take a step when digital church is like that step could be taking membership class, take starting point, take alpha, get involved, make a donation, anything about moving that person from just the person who watches to the person who engages? Any other thoughts in that area?

Greg Atkinson:

One thing that has changed since the first time I was on your podcast, like you said, three or four years ago, it's been a journey, but I was going to Elevation at the time being in the Charlotte area. Since then, I am helping out a buddy of mine who is an inner city church planter. And so, we have an inner city church plant of 50 to 60 people on a good day. And so I've got to see something be built from ground up and have some cool stories about that. But we are, when I'm watching online on a Sunday and I'm watching our service, I can see two or three viewers. So I'm experiencing what you're talking about. Two or three people watching Facebook Live at the same time and know exactly what that is like. My pastor of the small church plant as much as I have tried to encourage him and influence him, he didn't fully grasp the power of online church because it was a small church plant of 50 people gathered in a room.

Greg Atkinson:

And so, we had to stop meeting for a couple months and then they loosened everything in South Carolina right over the border from Charlotte. They loosened everything much quicker than a lot of states. And, so California and Texas and Georgia and South Carolina opened up. They've also now become hotspots center, people are shutting back down which is there's a lesson there, but they

opened back up. And I remember that my pastor called me and said, "Greg, we're going to have church this week. I know you're not going to come, but I just wanted to let you know we're going to meet." I said, "Okay, I'll be watching online." Well, the first week I tuned in and watched Facebook Live, the second week I tuned in and watched Facebook Live, the third week I tuned in and there was nothing there. And I texted the worship pastor and I said, "What's going on?" He said, well, he decided not to do Facebook Live today and had forgotten.

Greg Atkinson:

And this is what I talked about at the Church Online Summit, never forget your online audience. We're in that phygital world from here on out. There are always people watching at home. And so there were only 12 people in the room. When you do a church of 50 people and only 30% come back or 20%, there were 12 people in the room, but he decided to cut the camera off. And so I'm sitting at home not able to experience my home church and I thought, "What in the world is going on?" And then it gets worse. About a month ago, the pastor, his wife, his son and his cousin all got COVID and they had to shut down again. And his wife had to go to the ER twice and was very, very sick. So I've tried to talk to him.

Greg Atkinson:

We had different views and different political beliefs but I've tried to talk to him about, "Hey, stick with online for a season. There's no rush to get back. You're only talking to 12 people. They're not ready to come back yet. Let's stick online for a season." But the poor guy had to go through COVID which breaks my heart, but it really was like a slap in the face to me to turn on Facebook Live and nothing be there.

Greg Atkinson:

So there are a lot of churches, and we all know this. There are a ton of churches who have been online for years. And that's great. I've been talking about this since 2008. That's awesome. Then as we have all heard and seen, there were a ton of churches that had to scramble when March came across and started signing up for streaming accounts and signing up for Facebook live and signing up for church online platform. People were scrambling and saying, "Oh my gosh, what do we do?" And they went online for the first time. My encouragement to you is never go back. Always have the both and always offer physical and digital from here on out. Don't go back to cutting those cameras off.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, it's fascinating because you'll sometimes hear people say, "Oh, I'll be so excited when there's no more video calls." And I'm like, no, I don't think that day's coming. Like maybe a day where a 100% of your life isn't video calls, but video calling is here to stay, and the travel industry is going to be different, and culture is already different, and retail is going to be different, and church is going to be different moving forward. And I think you're right, you're naming it a lot and not just that pastor you named and I feel bad for him and his family, but there's so many church leaders who are just struggling right now with change. And they don't like it. They want to get back to normal. They want to get back to what they know. So let's talk about in-person services.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So again, please listen to the two previous episodes for some top tips on... And you know what we'll do? We'll get those transcribed too. I'm a big transcript guy. So I don't think we were transcribing episodes back then, but we'll just get those done and they'll be there for team study and that kind of thing. But long story short, I would love to get your idea. Most churches have some kind of restriction, and that will

not be forever but it's for now and it may be a long now. It could be months, a year, hopefully not longer, but you got to have physical distancing, perhaps masks, all these restrictions that seem to change every month. What are some practices, wisdom, tips that you would recommend or again, best case, worst case, things like, "Don't do this." All right. For churches that are worshiping with restrictions, I'd love to pick your brain on that.

Greg Atkinson:

Yeah. I've done a lot of webinars in the last three months about this because people want to hear about, "How do we reopen? How do we reopen safely?" And they see that a lot of this happens through a first impressions lens or a first impressions eyes for somebody like me that focuses on the guest experience. And so, I first want to say that we start biblically and theologically with let's love our neighbor. Let's show compassion. What can we do best to love our neighbor? I saw a quote yesterday on Facebook, Andy Stanley said, "During times of uncertainty lead with your humanity." And I thought, "Yes, that's it. That's it. How can I be the best human possible and love my neighbor during times of uncertainty? How can I be human, show my humanity and love my neighbor?" And so, I mentioned to you before we got started, I just came from the bank. I can't get into the bank unless I've put on a mask. There's a mask at the door, there's a security guard there and he won't let me in unless I wear a mask.

Greg Atkinson:

I go to the grocery store, I have to wear a mask. And it's a simple sign on the door when you walk in that says masks required. There are restaurants that have opened up here in the Carolinas and they came out with this Palmetto seal because South Carolina is the Palmetto state and they have this Palmetto seal of restaurants that practice social distancing, wear masks, their servers wear masks, they require you to wear masks until you sit down at your table and then you can take it off to eat. And they do QR codes for the menu, or they do paper menus and they throw them away. They don't do the normal menu. And so they've hit all these CDC guidelines. And for me personally, I love it. I say, "Thank you. Thank you for looking out for me. Thank you for trying to keep me safe and healthy."

Greg Atkinson:

A lot of people know I had my own health issue last year. I had to go to the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota. I was spending Thanksgiving at the Mayo Clinic. No fun having tests after test, after test and surgery. And I can't get sick, I would be in a lot of trouble, my kids would be, my mom would be. And so when you say we're going to require our volunteers and staff to wear masks, I say, "Thank you. Thank you. Thank you." And so, most people see that as an act of kindness and love and generosity and compassion and hospitality. There are some people that are going to be the opposite and they're going to get upset. But I have said as I've coached people, it comes back to just basic leadership.

Greg Atkinson:

For years, I have written about leadership and talked about leadership. And I remember years ago telling a pastor at the Moody Bible Pastors Conference in Chicago, I was speaking at and I told him to do something hard. And he looked at me and said, "Man, that's going to be really hard." And I said, "Who told you leadership was easy?" Leadership is not easy. And so when it comes to, well, if we as a church require masks, you're going to say you have to wear a mask to come, what do we do if somebody comes in they don't want to wear a mask? What would you do if somebody walked in and lit up a cigarette and started smoking in the auditorium? You would say, "Sir, you have to leave. You can't smoke here." What would you do if somebody was loud and disruptive and drunk and causing a scene in the auditorium?

You would escort them out and say, "Sir, I'm sorry. You have to leave." It's that simple. And so I have walked into several places over the last month that just had a sign up.

Greg Atkinson:

I just saw one the other day in a window that said, no shoes, no shirt, no mask, no service. And I thought, "Well, they're just making it known. If you want to come in here, here are the rules." But so, social distancing is a thing as well, whether your chairs or pews, you have to space those out. And every state is different. So some have a 25% capacity, some have no more than 50 people, some have no more than 25 people. I heard at one point Canada was like, no more than 10 people.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Five actually. That's one of the reasons I was watching from home so much. It's like, "I'm not that important anymore." Five, five.

Greg Atkinson:

Five. Yeah. So no matter where you are in the country, a lot of people have really cracked down. They did it in the Northeast and New Jersey and Connecticut and New York. They were really struggling at first. And then they cracked down and turned everything around. And now they're doing a lot better in the South California.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Where 13 million people, we're down to 30 new cases today, which is crazy.

Greg Atkinson:

Right. Where I am in the South, we just opened everything back up and now it's struggling. My wife is a nurse, she tests people for COVID every single day. What's different is when she first started testing people for COVID, most people would come back negative. Now, most people come back positive. It's definitely growing, definitely changing. I want to say that I have a heart and I love people. I wouldn't be in guest services if I didn't love people. I'm a high I on the DISC profile. I'm a woo on the StrengthFinder. I love people and I miss being around people, but because of health reasons, I'm going to be one of those people watching online. So please don't forget about those of us that are home, but if somebody is brave enough to come back out in-person, guest services would tell us, we've talked about for years. And I talked about this on my first podcast with you, removing obstacles and barriers and anything in the way that would cause somebody to stumble and not experience the living God.

Greg Atkinson:

And so if people... I talked about church nurseries and children's ministry needing to be clean, safe, and secure so that they're not worried in the service. Well, if they're worried, this greeter just forced me to shake his hand or this guy I had to open the door to the auditorium and I can't find any hand sanitizer and I'm worried, I don't want to touch my face. And if they're worried about germs throughout the service, they're not listening to the message. And so what can we do to show compassion and to love our neighbor and like Andy Stanley said, lead with your humanity.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Anything else on the in-person experience while we are in this in-between stage of what was and what is to come?

Greg Atkinson:

Yeah. Well, I would say this goes with both experiences. Something that I have noticed since March is pastoral care has never been so important. I have heard of churches after churches, after churches that have had their staff divide up the database and go through and call people and check on them and just say, "Hey, I know we're not meeting. We just want to make sure you're okay. We just want to know you're okay." And so pastoral care has never been so important. And so, when I hear of churches that are taken to database and going through and checking on people, because a lot of people are depressed, a lot of people may have lost their job, a lot of people are struggling financially, let's be as pastoral as possible and check on them and say, "Hey, how are you doing? How's your family?" And that's what ministry is. Ministry is people. I forgot what we were talking about, but I had to say because-

Carey Nieuwhof:

No, that's all right. No, that's okay.

Greg Atkinson:

I want us to never lose. I think what I'm so fired up about these days is it was never all about a one hour experience once a week on a Sunday. It was never about that. And so if a church feels like they can't be a church because of missing a one hour service out of building, we were missing the point all along, ministering to people. And so, how can we still connect with people and minister to people? And as you've alluded to earlier, help them take their next steps, get them into a new members class, get them into a starting point, talk to them about giving and serving and getting plugged in because that day will come when we will be back in person and we will gather together again and there will be lots of opportunities for them to step up and serve, but I'm starting to develop and build those relationships now in that. I did a webinar with Jason Burns from Access Church in Florida.

Greg Atkinson:

And we were talking about there's that old saying, "Don't just work for your business, work on your business." And so we did a whole webinar talking about, "This is the time to work on your church. This is the time to work on your church. That signage that's you've been needing to put up, that painting that you've been needing to do in the hallway, the time to redo the carpet. This is the time to work on your church when the hallways are empty and nobody's there, let's work hard now."

Carey Nieuwhof:

We just repainted our entire auditorium in it record time because, well, it's only five years old, but there's nobody in there. A few rapid fires as we wrap up. In-person worship, when there's a vaccine, there's no more masks, assuming we can move into that reality at some point in the future, do you think in-person attendance will ever return to what it was before or you think it will be higher, lower, the same? What do you think?

Greg Atkinson:

I think it would be lower. I think a couple of things factor into that, and the reason I think that is because I don't think a lot of pastors unfortunately have learned the lesson that we're supposed to have learned

during this COVID season. And the changes that they made short term is innovative and as creative as they were, they went right back to the old way and just forgot everything that we did to evolve and adapt and to innovate and to create and to be like filmmakers. And like JP was saying, YouTubers, into all this stuff that we've been doing to make services shorter and creative and doing different things, where worship and music and film and video and all this stuff that we have done, we just abandon and go back to the old way of the way it always was. And so for most churches, I think they're just going to go right back to the way they always were and for that reason, I think attendance will go down.

Greg Atkinson:

For churches that have learned a lesson and have adapted and grown and evolved and come back as a 2.0 new and improved version, I think they'll thrive. And we have to change what we're counting because you can thrive in person and online and have a healthy online community. And so you may have less people in the seats but larger online and you just start tracking both of those. It's just uncharted territory of how do we assimilate these people into the body? However, if we are only counting those in the room, we're going to see it as a downer of where we used to have 500, now we have 400 but what about the 2,000 watching online? How can we engage with them? How can we get them plugged in? But-

Carey Nieuwhof:

I think that's a really good point.

Greg Atkinson:

I think church attendance will go down.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I've heard a few church leaders say, "We don't even think we'll have room for everybody when they come back." I think there's definitely some consolidation going on too with local churches closed. Anything else that you think will be different moving forward, Greg?

Greg Atkinson:

I think where we... Couple of thoughts, less emphasis on the one hour on Sunday, less emphasis on the building. No more building-centric as I heard Larry Osborne say. Glocal, like I'm talking about global and local and realizing that we have a phygital experience, physical and digital, that's going to be different. More emphasis on home groups and house churches, community outreach, digital environments. The old saying, "If your church closed down, would your community even care?" We are living that right now. We are living that right now. The church has closed down, does your community even care? So when I watch Elevation each week, they do this little segment every week called Here Comes Church and they show what they're doing out in the community because the church has never closed. And so every week they go, "Here comes church, here comes church, here comes church." And they're showing them actively on the streets doing stuff and feeding people and clothing people and doing clean ups in neighborhoods.

Greg Atkinson:

And they're showing that the church has never stopped and they're giving to partners and strategic and people like the YMCA that were watching children for parents when school was closed back in March

and April and May, they were watching doing childcare so that parents could work. And so they can wait and bless the YMCA. And they're just showing here comes church, we're being the church. And so I think an emphasis on that. Also now more than ever first impressions, guest services and hospitality matters. And what I mean by that is parking teams have to still park, greeters still have to greet and ushers still have to see people. It's never been so important. And so if I have gotten used to tuning in from my couch in my PJ's and I get up and get dressed and get out the door and it's hard for me to find a parking place at your church, I'm going to go back to my couch.

Greg Atkinson:

So first impressions has never been so important. If the greeters aren't friendly, I'm going to go back to my couch. If the ushers don't help me find a seat, and I'm struggling to find somewhere to sit down in a crowded auditorium, I'm going to go back to my couch. And so, guest services are going to be very, very important. I've been saying this for years, parking teams have to park, ushers have to see people. A lot of what's happening right now as churches are opening back up with the capacity issues is a lot of churches are doing registration and ticketing and only opening so many seats. And so the ushers actually have to take you to your seats. And in some cases where you may have auditorium of a thousand, but it can only hold 200 with the new laws and capacity and regulations and so you have roped off seats and the ushers are going to have to walk you there. There are positions that have never existed before like cleaning up in between services.

Greg Atkinson:

A lot of times back in the old days, we would clean the auditorium and the church building on Saturday, and we wouldn't think about it again until Sunday night or Monday after the services were over. Now, you have to clean in between every experience, sanitize, disinfect, not only that, you probably have to expand your time frames of the services. If you had a 9:00 and a 9:30 and 11:00, you probably need to do 9:00 and 11:00 or 9:30 and 11:30 to have enough time to clean up in between each experience, in between each service. And so, with holding less people, you're going to have to do more services with cleaning and sanitation and what Tim Kool calls cleaning protocols. Well, what you're going to have to do with cleaning protocols, you're going to have to have more time in between each services. So like I've seen some churches, you may have six experiences on a weekend. You may have five or six services on Sunday just to get everybody in safely.

Carey Nieuwhof:

No, these are such good points. Well, Greg, as we wrap up, anything else you want to share?

Greg Atkinson:

Yeah. Well, I want to give a shout out to a couple people that I have been keeping my eye on just to say, "Way to go, we're cheering you on, you're knocking it out of the park." I don't know if you've seen what Crossroads Church in Cincinnati has been doing with Crossroads anywhere, but Brian Tome-

Carey Nieuwhof:

He's great.

Greg Atkinson:

He's speaking at our First Impressions Conference this year. Tyler Samson, I interviewed this past week for the conference. He's doing church anywhere. He's killing it. D.J. Soto on VR Church. We mentioned Elevation. We mentioned Life Church and what they're doing, Churchome with Judah Smith, Hillsong East Coast with Carl Lentz, Summit Church and JD Greear just announced that they're going to have 2,400 micro-sites, 2,400 home churches. They're not going to meet again together in one location until 2021. North Point Ministries and Andy Stanley are not going to meet again until 2021, Crossroads and Brian Tome are not going to meet again until 2021. My friend, and I know you've got to interview him Myron Pierce with what he's doing with Digichurches and having all these digital-only campuses.

Greg Atkinson:

And lastly, I'll just share, Myron is also speaking at the First Impressions Conference and you are as well. And we're so glad to have you back. You spoke at our very first one and we're coming up on our fourth First Impressions Conference in November, the first week in November, as it's after the election here in the US. And so we wanted to get past that and be on the other side of it, the November 4-6 happening all over the world. We have 10 Canadian speakers. We have three speakers from Australia. Yeah, we did a graphic-

Carey Nieuwhof:

And if people want that, where can they register First Impressions?

Greg Atkinson:

Yeah, firstimpressionsconference.com. We did a graphic of just Canadian speakers to give them to promote because we love our friends up north. So we're going to be talking about and hearing from over 100 speakers all online, across three days, 100 plus speakers and we have New York Times bestselling authors, Rick Warren, Bob Goff, Mark Batterson, we have Nona Jones back, I mentioned Carey's back. And so we're so excited about this lineup and they're all talking about navigating this new season. None of us are COVID experts, none of us have been through a pandemic before, we're making this up as we go. I had big on my notes right here in front of my computer in case you asked something to stop me, it's okay to say I don't know. I have that written right here in front of me because we are blazing a new trail. We've never done this before. And so we're going to learn from a lot of practitioners and thinkers and people that are figuring this stuff out and leading well on these times.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, Greg, thank you so much. We so appreciate that. And thanks for helping us figure out which end is up in these crazy times. Appreciate you. Well, there were a lot of practical tips and we covered a lot. So you can go to the show notes. You can find all of that at careynieuwhof.com/episode369. And hey, I'm going to come back in just a minute with What I'm Thinking About segment talking about vanity metrics, attendance in online. How do you actually measure that stuff? But I want to tee up some fresh episodes for you. So who've we got coming up? Man, I'll tell you this lineup is just killer. I'm so excited.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So Pat Gelsinger and Scott Beck are going to be on the show. Pat was the first CTO of Intel Computers. He is the CEO of VMware, Scott Beck from Blockbuster Video, Boston Markets, Einstein Brothers Bagel, and Gloop. We're going to talk about tech in the church, in the future. So excited for that. And on the next episode, I've got Brad Lomenick. Brad returns to the podcast to talk about, well, his new podcast and how he curates content. It's fascinating. It's never boring with Brad. So give it a listen.

Brad Lomenick:

Are we getting to the place where we trust that brand or we trust that leader? Do we trust that person, and what you're talking about access behind the scenes, unedited? That's all signs and breadcrumbs of man, take us back to the trust factor because we're so enamored or just enveloped in a world where we don't trust anything anymore. I mean, we're fighting against all the things that are moving away from trust. And so I think that's a big part of it is once we find something that feels trustworthy then we're going to lean in. We will follow that movement or that organization or that church.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So that's the next time on the podcast. I also got a couple of episodes with Andy Stanley scheduled Rich Villodas, Jon Gordon, Thom Rainer, Lysa TerKeurst, let's see Beth Moore, Bob Westfall, Kayla Stoecklein, Patrick Lencioni's coming back. It's crazy. So subscribers, you get that all for free. Thank you for those of you who leave ratings and reviews. You really... I read every one of them. I'm so grateful. And if this episode has meant something to you, please share it. And now it's time for What I'm Thinking About. And if my voice holds out, we're going to go there. This action brought to you by Pro Media Fire. You can book your free digital strategy session today at promediafire.com/churchgrowth and by The Ascent Leader. If you're a new lead pastor, who's leading a church after a recent senior leader transition get into The Ascent Leader cohort by going to theascentleader.org.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So now it's time for What I'm Thinking About. And I'm thinking about how do you even measure online attendance and what is the use of vanity metrics? So let's be honest. I was having a conversation with a leader yesterday about the return to church and why we all want to go back to church. And as you heard on this podcast, is it really all about just because we got so much money sunk into our buildings and this leader said to me, he said, "Carey, I think it's about ego. We just like full rooms." And you know what? Busted. I get it. I love it when stuff is up into the right. I love it when the podcast is setting records. I love it when people are reading my blog, I love it when people show up when I speak. And you know what? That's not a great way to build the future.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And what happens when you have church online is that you can look at it and go, "Wow, we are up 100% or 50%," or whatever, but how do you know that those numbers are actually real? So, in the spring when COVID hit, churches are like, "We're growing crazy." And sometimes when you dig underneath that growth you can see that there were a whole bunch of three second Facebook views or 10 second YouTube views underneath that. And what I would encourage you to do is really to drill down on your metrics. So, you can go into Instagram, you can go YouTube Studio, if you have that. And you can start to realize that, "Oh my goodness, people only watch the first 30 seconds of that video." Is that really a view? Because if people just kind of walk through your lobby on a Sunday morning and stuck their head in the auditorium, would you count that as attendance?

Carey Nieuwhof:

It's a great question. Some pastors would, I would not. You know what the golden rule is going to be moving forward when it comes to even figuring out how to measure online church attendance? I think it's going to be engagement. I think it's going to be things like minutes watched. I think it's going to be like average view time. I think it's going to be commenting, liking, sharing, opting in. And I would encourage you to build a dashboard for that. And the question of course is how do you get online

viewers to become online engagers? Well, there's a few strategies. And by the way, if you haven't yet signed up for The Online Church Engagement Summit that I am hosting with the creators of YouVersion and Life Church's Church Online Bobby Gruenewald with Facebook's Nona Jones and Fresh Life Church's Levi Lusko, you can do so absolutely for free today.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It's happening October 8th, you can go to onlinechurchengagementsummit.com to register today. That's onlinechurchengagementsummit.com, where you can register today. In that summit, it's just 90 minutes just four speakers value packed. We're going to share a brand new solution as well for how you can engage people. You can actually meet the people by name who are watching your church online. But I want give you a few strategies before we get there. Okay. One is you've got to ask better questions. You just got to ask better questions in the chat. So one of the bonuses we want to make available to you is a list of better questions that you can ask in chat. So that will be at the Online Church Engagement Summit. For average watch times, one thing you can do is try to make your content a little more engaging rather than doing a long like, "Hey, I'm so glad you're watching this video," and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

30 seconds on video is a long time. So I would say, start with your point, get people hooked and tell them what the promise of the video is. Like even, "Hey in this video, I'm going to show you how to grow closer to God, in this video, I'm going to show you how to deepen your prayer life in less than three minutes a day." Or something like that. I mean, that sounds like a bit of a false promise, but you know what I'm saying? And people are like, there's some incentive to watch to the end. And that's true even with short videos because you make them shorter, shorter, shorter, shorter, but I'll tell you if I'm not hooked in the first 15 to 30 seconds, I'm not going to listen to even your two minute video. Another thing you could do is just be a little more personal and a little less produced. Yes, have some good production, absolutely have some good production, but let people see your heart because people really resonate with emotionally engaging content.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And if they can tell that you're not trying to sell them something, you're just being honest and real, I think that's going to go a lot further. Now, we've got a lot of practical strategies to deepen online church engagement. I think that engagement is the new church attendance and if you can get the people who are online to engage and you can meet them, well, I think great things are ahead for your church and for your ministry. So if you haven't yet signed up at onlinechurchengagement.com, do that. Just go to onlinechurchengagement.com and we would love to welcome you and your team for free into that 90-minute summit on October 8th. There are two live show times, one at 1:30, one in the evening. So just pick your favorite watch time and join us for the summit live online. Thanks so much for listening. Remember, protect your throat. It kind of hurts. And I did not get kicked in the throat, but man, it feels like it. And I hope our time together today has helped you lead like never before.

Announcer:

You've been listening to The Carey Nieuwhof Leadership Podcast. Join us next time for more insights on leadership, change and personal growth to help you lead like never before.