

In this unprecedented situation we find ourselves in with COVID-19, it is more important than ever to remain *Connected In Community*, and to that end we would encourage you to consider meeting together using an online platform – in essence, one small group, many locations! 😊

How can you do this? There are a number of software options out there for you to consider – but one of the best (and free) that we are currently using as a Small Group Lead Team is called Zoom. It allows you to connect any group size up to 50 people via video chat and is quite easy to set up and use! If you are interested in looking at this option, here is a quick guide for getting started:

1. Sign up for Zoom on your computer/tablet/phone (<https://zoom.us/signup>) using your email address. Zoom will then send you an email link to that address – you must click it to complete the setup process.
2. Once you click on the **Activate Account** link in the email, it will ask you to enter your first and last name, and a password of your choosing.
3. Then it will ask you to **Invite Your Colleagues** – here is where you can enter the email addresses of each of your group members if you want. You don't have to – this just sends them an invite to create their own Zoom account, which they may want to do anyways to be able to connect with one another when you aren't setting it up. Check the **I am not a robot** box and press **Invite**.
4. Press the **Start Meeting Now** button.
5. If it automatically downloads, you will get an orange **Click Zoom** button on the bottom left of the screen, pointing to the download file you need to click. Click that now.  
If it doesn't download, you will need to click the **Download Here** in the middle of the screen.
6. Once it loads, you may get a prompt to **Join with Computer Audio** – click that if you have built-in speakers and a microphone on your computer. If you don't, you may need to do this through your laptop or tablet, or download the Zoom Cloud Meetings app on your phone.
7. Now look at the top of the box that opens – it should have a little blue video projector and then the words **Zoom Participant ID:** and **Meeting ID:** will be displayed. This **Meeting ID** is the number you can now text/email to your group members to find your specific meeting when they are on Zoom.

When your group members open Zoom, they will look for the **Join Meeting** option and when it comes up, they enter your **Meeting ID** and click the **Join** button.

8. If it works, you should begin seeing their shining faces on your screen! You can begin to experiment with various settings simply by clicking options you find on the screen (the first two you may want to try are **Gallery View** and **Manage Participants**).

9. To schedule future meetings, when you start Zoom again, go to the Home page and you will find options to create a **New Meeting, Schedule, Join** or **Share Screen**. Click on **Schedule**, and then fill in all the information relevant to the meeting you want to schedule.
  - Note that the free version of Zoom only allows 40-minute meetings – so you can schedule your first meeting for 45 minutes and then schedule another meeting for 45 minutes after the first one!
  - Make sure to select the **Personal Meeting ID** option in **Meeting ID** – that way you don't have to send out a new text/email with another ID# each time you meet.
10. Another great feature of Zoom is that you can start an instant meeting anytime – you don't have to schedule it! So if you are texting or on the phone with one of your group members and would prefer to chat face-to-face, you can open Zoom, select the **Meetings** option at the top (instead of **Home**), hit the **Start** button – and you are instantly live!

If you have any questions or experience difficulty getting things going, please don't hesitate to call or text Pastor Greg at 780-616-1055 ... he is more than happy to help you get rolling with Zoom!