

ZOOM: HOW TO SET IT UP FOR WORSHIP

Shared by Rev. Jack Risk, Parish of Lakelands, NS

1. ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING



- a. I have a Pro account which I have used for several years to conduct courses. We use it in the parish for our study group.
- b. Zoom is much more stable than Skype or the google videoing app (which I have used and discarded). It also has much more functionality.
- c. There are free accounts with which you can have up to 100 participants. But you are limited to meetings of 40 minutes.
- d. I use a “meeting” as opposed to a “webinar.” A meeting allows everyone to be seen and heard.
- e. The setting for screen sharing should be set to host only. This would help keep out hackers.
- f. I have scheduled a recurring meeting of two hours duration starting at 9:30. I have it set to allow them to join the meeting before I start it. Some log on at 9:30 and go and have coffee.
- g. I post the link on our parish website as a live button. If this isn’t an option, then you could send them an email or text with the link every Sunday morning.
- h. Signing in is quite easy but there will inevitably be people whose equipment, connection or technical skills present problems.
- i. When people sign in they are prompted to type their name. This shows up under their feed.
- j. Equipment: Their experience will be best if they have a decent desktop or laptop. Tablets work fine. A smartphone will work. Any up-to-date device will be able to handle the video.
- k. Any of these requires a good internet connection but fibre op isn’t a necessity.

2. POWERPOINT

- a. All the texts and lyrics for the service are presented on Powerpoint slides. Last Sunday took 25 slides.
- b. Cut and paste from the usual sites: BAS, BAS Lectionary, prayer cycles etc. It’s not much different from what you need for a full bulletin. Lyrics for hymns will cost you some work if you haven’t already got a database. Lyrics to most hymns can be found online but you need to check the wording against Common Praise.

- c. Powerpoint skills can be built up. You could, of course, use other programs. Open Office and Libre Office have presentation programs that are free. If you work in Word or another word processor you will have a job managing size, scrolling etc.
- d. With Zoom you can share the screen so everyone is looking at the same thing.
- e. To preach etc. I stop the screen sharing so they can see me or whoever.

3. MUSIC

- a. I have a high quality peripheral microphone and a peripheral HD camera.
- b. However, playing live guitar causes the microphone to distort. The option I have taken is to prerecord the music. I have it all queued up as a playlist on my computer.
- c. Zoom lets you play computer music while you share the screen. This means the lyrics are displayed and the recording is played at the same time.
- d. We have two musicians. I play guitar and we have an accordionist/keyboardist. I make recordings of me singing and playing. Piper will record a different set of hymns some of which can be played while people are congregating online. This means Piper and I can sing along with the recording too—more voices.
- e. You could use other recorded music, of course, but my taste is to play for them what we sing together on a regular basis.
- f. Internet lag means the singing will always be off—can't be avoided no matter what you do. But this is okay. Everyone gets to sing along with the group to music that our congregation is familiar with and loves. The overall effect isn't too bad. People said they enjoyed it.

4. MANAGING THE EXPERIENCE

- a. There is a job in getting people to sign on ahead of the start time. This results in starting the service behind the time.
- b. We gather in “gallery view” for a few minutes to check in and catch up. Then I ring a gong for a few moments of “putting ourselves in the presence of God.”
- c. Some people are being left out because of inadequate internet service and/or lack of devices. Everyone feels this but the alternative is not to have worship and keep some sense of living community. Relations with those who can't take part will have to be kept up by other means. In the past we have encouraged people to go to each other's houses but the landscape has changed.

d. As the “owner” I have the administrative controls of the meeting. This doesn’t mean too much, however. They can mute their own mics if the dog starts barking etc.

e. I had a photo of the interior of the church on the first slide. If I’m able to shop, I will look for a green piece of cloth and set up a virtual background on Zoom.

f. We chat after the service—a virtual coffee hour. The problem here is cutting them off and closing the online meeting.

NEED HELP?

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