



Practical Checklist **ONLINE WORSHIP, ZOOM, & LIVE STREAMING**

Refresh and improve how you disciple people in your church using online worship, zoom groups, or live streaming.

Ideal if you are a local lay leader, volunteer, or Minister who co-ordinates online worship, Zoom groups, or live streaming.

This is not a comprehensive list but outlines key areas that Methodist Churches often struggle with, and signposts resources to help.

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www.yorkshirenemethodist.org/digital-resources



DO YOU KNOW YOUR ONLINE CONGREGATION?

Whether your church offers online worship, midweek Zoom groups, or live streams your Sunday service, it's important to consider those who join online as a real "congregation" – not second class to those who attend on-site. And therefore, they are more than just numbers, or an unknown person behind a screen – we must discover who are our online congregation?

In many cases the recommendations, and tips for improving, will depend on your local context and the make up of your online congregation. Beyond viewing numbers, you should try to gather data on the make up of those who watch your online worship, attend your zoom meetings, or tune in to your live streams:

- **Age range or demographics**
- **Geographical location**
- **Why your congregation join online?**
- **What your congregation most value about joining online?**

There are many other things you could gather, but ultimately, it's about understanding how your offering is providing value, and discipling, those joining at home. Are they watching online worship because they can't make it at 10.30 on a Sunday, have a disability, or housebound? Do they watch the live stream because they are anxious to meet with others in groups, or because they have moved away from the area and want to keep up with their home church? Do they attend a Zoom group because it more easily fits into a busy schedule, because saving fuel is good for the environment, or because travelling on winter evenings can be worrying?

To make any changes, we must first understand our online congregation.

ARE YOU ADAPTING TRADITIONAL WORSHIP TO BE EFFECTIVE ONLINE?



In many cases a church live stream solely provides a window into what your worship or Sunday service looks like in the building – there are ways to acknowledge and engage with your online congregation during a live stream, but mostly these are minor adjustments. However, for Zoom and Online Worship, it is highly recommended that these are not just replicating what you do in the building, and instead are adapted for an online medium.

Think about how books are adapted for film or TV. They are rarely done word for word, and instead the script is normally completely re-written – the best adaptations often changing much of the original material whilst keeping faithful to the essence, feel, vision, or values of the source material. This is how it is with online worship.

To fully engage and disciple an online congregation, our methods must change, and we must adapt our traditional worship. It is a different experience online and worship is



engaged with differently. But even though it might look completely different, we will try to stay true to the essence of worship, vision of our church, and core of our faith.

What does all this mean in practice? Here's some suggestions:

- Break your video/meeting into segments (less blocks of speech or only one person talking)
- It doesn't all have to be done by the minister! Online services are a great opportunity to involve new people from your local community
- Use break-out rooms in Zoom to hold discussions
- Invite responses, comments, or live questions during worship
- Shorter in length (no more than 45mins, but maybe 15-20mins on social media)
- Not all worship / meetings have to include every element, and instead could just focus on 1 or 2 (i.e., prayers, reflections, discussions, music, readings, activities)
- Online, people are less likely to sing along to hymns. Maybe include less music in a 'service'
- Having a core rota of 3 or 4 'presenters' is helpful to build familiarity and consistency online

Find more resources, help, and guidance on Online Worship and Zoom [here](#)

ARE YOU USING THE CAMERA



IN ENGAGING WAYS?

Filming or talking to a camera is not the same as presenting to an audience in a church building. Many of us are self-taught over the last few years. Here are some tips for improving how we film videos (or use our webcam on Zoom), in terms of technology, presentation skills, and improving the quality of what we produce.

- Make sure to always film video in a landscape format. For phones and tablets this means turning them on their side.
- Have your camera at eye level. Try to avoid an off-putting angle that looks up at you from below (up the nose shot!) or down on you from above. This might mean propping your phone on a windowsill or placing a few books under your laptop (or having your camera on an adjustable tripod or music stand).
- Make sure you are well lit by finding somewhere with good natural light. Avoid the light being directly behind you or directly above you.
- Make sure to look directly at the camera lens. Avoid looking at your image on the screen. It's ok to check notes or a script but treat the camera like it's a live audience.

. Find more resources, help, and guidance on filming videos and using cameras [here](#)

ARE YOU COMPLYING WITH COPYRIGHT?



Copyright is complicated! These days it is very easy to 'copy' anything – from the words of a poem or a hymn, or the pages of a book, to film sequences or all-singing-all dancing video clips. But do you have the 'right' to use any of those things in online worship?

For district copyright guidance and FAQs [here](#)