



How Your Church Can Gather and Worship

A church's "status quo" defines normal operations. But, what happens when a church's status quo faces restrictions that prevent "normal." Church worship services, small groups and other activities often meet in the same location and follow the same pattern. Such repetition can be helpful. Familiarity has value. Yet, when those options vanish, churches still have options, thanks to technology. Some technology is easily available, some takes a little work. Thankfully, every option connects God's people for His glory.

In-Person Meeting

everyone can see, hear and interact • free

The standard meeting style for churches is meeting in person. Large groups are for worship and some lecture-style Bible studies. Attendees can interact with each other. Speakers, teachers and leaders receive visual feedback from the audience. During singing, everyone hears everyone. Complexity is low.

Audio Conference Meeting

everyone can hear and interact • free

Telephones offer an approach to meeting without needing the internet, smartphones or apps. It is land-line and flip-phone friendly. Free services allow up to 1,000 phone-in participants to meet for up to six hours. Setup requires internet and a browser. Participants call an assigned phone number and enter a code to listen and talk. Interaction is possible. Visit freeconference.com or freeconferencecalling.com. Complexity is low.

Video Recording Meeting

everyone can see • no interaction • free

Computers, phones and tablets offer technology that can record nonprofessional videos with adequate audio. Services like YouTube, Vimeo, Facebook, etc., allow users to upload or post videos. Individuals and small groups can access and play them at convenient times. No interaction with presenter. Complexity is moderate.

Video Conference Meeting (One-Way)

everyone can see and hear • some interaction • free

Facebook Live and similar services have brought live video streaming to almost everyone. The easiest approach is to use a phone or laptop as the streaming source. The platforms offer some interaction. Some systems allow screen sharing along with live camera video. Complexity is moderate to high.

Video Conference Meeting (Interactive)

everyone can see, hear and interact • free and cost

Fully interactive video conference systems offer robust options that accommodate multiple cameras, multiple audio sources and additional media options. Systems can allow everyone to interact, a few people to interact, or only a presenter. Zoom, Webex, GotoMeetings, Google Hangouts (currently free), etc., offer such features. Complexity is high to very high.

Sharing music via a live electronic system usually requires a proper streaming license.