

Small Group Ministry During Covid-19

Your church's small groups or Sunday School classes may be unable to gather physically due to the COVID-19 virus, but that doesn't mean they can't minister! Small groups in the local church can play an active role in ministering to both the church and unchurched. Below are some simple steps church leaders, small group leaders, and group members can take to engage brokenness, minister to one another, and provide a spiritual connection that many people will need in the weeks ahead.

For churches...

1. Use existing social media or website platforms to offer online public worship services. Worship service gatherings are a decision for the local church. But many churches will consider online options for worship.
2. Small groups can meet online through free or inexpensive teleconferencing such as Zoom video. Video conferencing will generally work better for small groups because participants can interact directly through video and chat features. Video conferencing is excellent for conducting group Bible study because of the ability each person has to interact, read Scripture, pray, and share ministry.
3. Use apps such as GroupMe to maintain contact with group members each day. Groups can use this app to share prayer needs, ministry opportunities, and stay connected throughout the day without the need for scheduled meetings.

For Small Group Leaders

1. Utilize online Bible studies that support LifeWay's Explore the Bible and Bible Studies for Life curriculums. Oklahoma Baptists have had 15 minute online Bible previews available for six years (links below). Zoom Video Conferencing can be used for group interaction or for small group leaders that want to lead Bible studies with their group.
2. Establish a digital means to maintain contact with every person in your small group. Suggestions include both video conferencing like Zoom, and social media apps like GroupMe. Contact can also be maintained through telephone and/or text. Your church leaders may have suggestions or preferences of which social media platforms they prefer you to use.
3. Be proactive to inform your group of how you will stay in contact with them. Establish the digital process first, then inform group members of how they can stay spiritually connected with the group.
4. Establish frequent contact with the group through the digital platform you have chosen. One contact a day should be a minimum.
5. Encourage your group to look for opportunities to invite unchurched or unsaved people into the ministry of your small group community.

Some suggested links

Zoom Video Conferencing – www.zoom.us

GroupMe App – Available in app stores on iPhone and Android

Oklahoma Baptist Video Bible Studies with Dr. Heath Thomas and Dr. Bobby Kelly

www.oklahomabaptists.org/sunday-school or www.facebook.com/reconnectss

For Small Group members

1. Maintain contact with your small group leader(s). If you are unable to leave your home and need ministry assistance, let your small group leader know. Your group leader cannot minister to needs of which he or she may be unaware.
2. Follow the directions of your church leaders. Do NOT meet physically as a group if your church leadership has requested for its groups not to gather physically, at the church or at home.
3. Pray! Pray to the Lord and ask that the impact of this virus be lessened. Pray for our senior citizens and those people most at risk to the virus. Pray for our nation's leaders to unite and for them to be open to spiritual wisdom from the Lord.
4. Look for opportunities to engage brokenness and have gospel conversations with whom you come in contact.

"And all who believed *were together* and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need." Acts 2:44-45

Oklahoma Baptists are together as we engage brokenness and care for our people.

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