

St Kea Church Guide to On-line Meetings

Please Keep Meeting

We are encouraging Small Groups to keep meeting by meeting online this week. We know for some people this will feel strange or new. Just like joining any new group it takes time to work out the new group dynamics and what is helpful and unhelpful. It may seem a little strange at first, but it will soon feel very normal and natural!

Some times quite a bit of the first meeting is spent being frustrated at the technology, trying to get it working for everyone. This can cause some people to give up. We need to encourage one another to persevere. It can often be helpful to phone the person who is having trouble and guide them through the process as they try to sort things out. Our separation could last a while and some time spent at the beginning learning a new system will pay dividends. The second time using the system is usually much simpler.

Finally, we are here to help - give me a call and I can offer advice. I am not an expert by any means, but if I can't help, I might know someone who can.

I hope you have some really great small group meetings this week.

Paul Salaman

What you will need:

A smartphone, tablet, laptop (with inbuilt webcam and microphone and speakers [most have these]) or a desktop computer with a plugin or inbuilt webcam and a headphone/microphone headset and a good internet connection.

Which system to use:

Some in your group will already have used some systems before and have accounts set up for that in which case it may be easiest to use what people are already used to. Below is a summary of some of the options and their pros and cons.

System	Pros	Cons
Skype	A lot of people already have accounts	Limited in terms of functions and not so easy to setup new accounts
Whatsapp	Lots of people already have accounts	Can only be used on phones – not on computers
Zoom	Can be used on any device, some nice features	Unless the host has paid for an account (£15 a month) you are limited to just 40 mins a session.
Google hangouts	Lots of features and most people have google accounts	Requires the host to have a G suite account which is not free
Facebook Messenger group video chat	Most people already have accounts and contacts	Can only be used for up to 6 people

Setting up a session

The leader of the group will need to:

Decide which system you will use. Ensure each person in the group has downloaded the appropriate app/software. Ensure they have the contact details of everyone in the group. Schedule a time to meet and send invitations to the group members either through the system or by email.

Etiquette for on-line meetings

As with any group the leader needs to chair the session, directing the conversation and trying to ensure that every voice gets heard.

Try to avoid stray noise entering your microphone –if using a phone or tablet try to mute any notifications (you can also mute your microphone when you are not speaking). You may get feedback noise from your speaker into your microphone in which case having a headset will help or keeping your microphone on mute.

Take turns to speak and try to speak clearly when you do – work out where the microphone is on your device and speak toward it.

Safeguarding concerns

Children (under 18) should only engage in conversations or be seen if a parent is present and has sanctioned it. Accounts should not be set up on devices belonging to or openly available to children without restrictions – it would not be appropriate if a child were able to videocall a church member directly (or completely inappropriately the other way around).