

Using Zoom to Build God's Church: Now and in the Future



“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Hebrews 10:23-25

God's people have always known the importance of meeting together. Whether it was the people of Israel singing the Psalms of Ascent as they journeyed to Jerusalem or the early Christians gathering in the Temple forecourts and breaking bread in each others' homes. God knows how much we are spurred on and encouraged by each other. Self-isolation does not come naturally to us.

Zoom is an online video-conferencing service which allows hundreds of people to interact with each other over the internet. You can access it using your computer, tablet or smartphone - or using your landline (though this means you will only be able to hear what people are saying). There are other video-conferencing services and much of this guide will assist in using these effectively.

Video conferencing offers a different experience to streaming. Both have their benefits. It is possible to pre-record 'live-streams' and the finished product tends to be more polished. Streaming can reach larger groups. Zoom is different - it is more intimate and usually a little messier. However, we have seen that video-conferencing allows the church family to remain connected with one another. Let's pray that, whatever our choices, by God's grace we will share in the experience of one vicar I spoke to this week, who's reflection on the past week or so was, "The congregation have become closer than they ever have before."

This guide is based on the questions and experiences of hundreds of individuals who have joined Gafcon UK's online training sessions - both here in the UK and throughout the world. It is not designed to answer every question you have but instead it is designed to help you think about what Zoom (and other on-line services) might offer the Church at this time (and in the future) and to give you and your church family the confidence to connect in this way.

It is designed so that individual sections can be sent to Church members as a "Starter" or "Reminder," to enable individuals to encourage one another in these difficult times.

Please share it, if you find it useful,

Susie Leafe

Director of Operations, Gafcon UK

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1. Joining a Meeting



*So, you've been invited to join a Zoom Meeting
but you are not sure what to do.*

*This guide offers step by step instructions for joining a Zoom meeting
using various different devices.*

The ONE piece of information that you will need is the Meeting ID.

This is the equivalent of the address of the house where the meeting is taking place or the telephone number of the friend you want to call. For example:

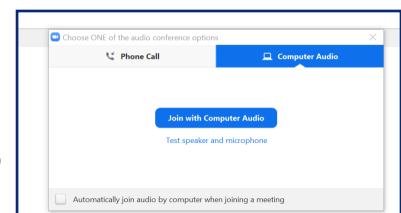
Meeting ID 123-456-789

<https://zoom.us/j/123456789>.

1. If using a non-Apple laptop, tablet or PC

Just click the link that you have been sent (eg: <https://zoom.us/j/123456789>) and you will be magically transported to the right place.

A window will pop-up on your screen asking whether you would like to "Join with Computer Audio" - make sure you click on this button.



2. If you are using a mobile phone (Android or iPhone), i-Pad or Macbook or other Apple product you will need to download the Zoom Cloud Meetings app.

When you tap on the app and click on join meeting it will ask you for the Meeting ID number - just type it in and you will be magically transported to the right place.

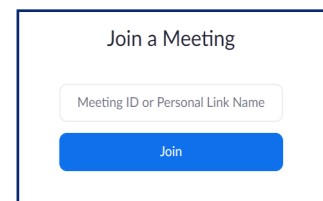
A window will pop-up on your screen asking whether you would like to "Join with Computer Audio" - make sure you click on this.

3. If you have a problem with either of these methods

Go to <https://zoom.us/> and click on "join a meeting" at the top of the page.

Type the meeting ID into the white box and click on the blue button which says 'Join' and you will be magically transported to the right place.

A window will pop-up on your screen asking whether you would like to "Join with Computer Audio" - make sure you click on this button.



4. You can use a **landline telephone** if you do not have access to a computer, tablet or smartphone.



In the UK dial 0203 481 5237 (or the number given to you by the meeting convenor) you will hear a recorded message asking you to enter your Meeting ID followed by #. You will then be connected to the meeting - you won't be able to see what is happening but you should be able to hear everyone.

This is a local number - please check the charge of calling with your telephone provider.

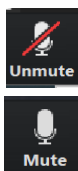
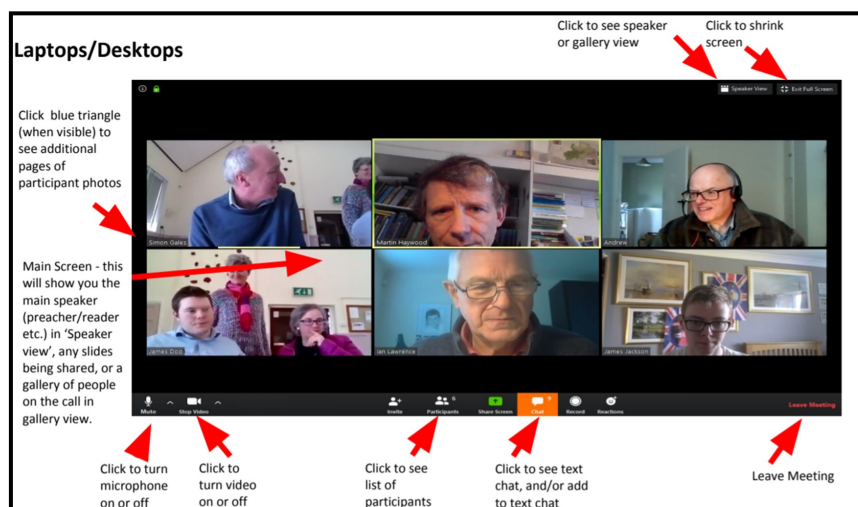
2. Taking Part in the Meeting

Taking part in a Zoom meeting is simple - there are just a few things to learn
Here are a few tips for making the experience as pain-free as possible.

Get to know your screen!

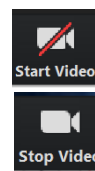
Frustratingly, the 'controls' for Zoom are in slightly different places depending on whether you are using a computer, tablet or mobile phone. Find the guide that is right for you on the next few pages.

If the controls are not visible on your screen hovering over the area with your mouse or tapping the screen should reveal them. On a laptop you can press the Alt key and the controls will remain visible all the time.



To speak you need to be unmuted

Find the microphone icon on your screen - if it has a red line on it you will need to click on it to unmute yourself.



To be seen you need to start video

Find the camera icon on your screen - if it has a red line on it you will need to click on it to start your camera.

Meeting Etiquette:

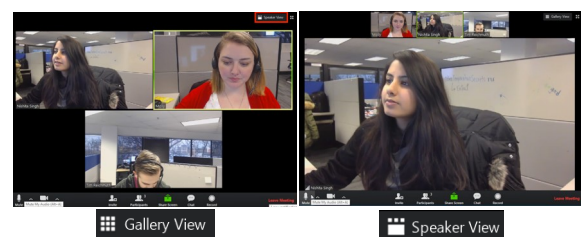
In groups of more than 2 or 3 it is best to keep your microphone on mute, unless you are speaking - this reduces feedback and background noise : dogs barking, clocks chiming, children laughing, or kettles boiling can all be quite distracting!

Leaving the meeting

The words '**Leave Meeting**' or '**Leave**' can be found on your screen - clicking on this is the equivalent of walking out of the 'room' - you will no longer be able to be seen or heard. Make sure you click on it at the end of the meeting.

Customising your 'view'

There are two options: Gallery View and Speaker View. On a computer or tablet you need to click on the relevant button to swap between the two. On a phone just swipe left or right.



Everyone is the same size
The speaker is outlined

The speaker fills most of the screen: scroll through the rest of the people at the top or bottom of your screen.

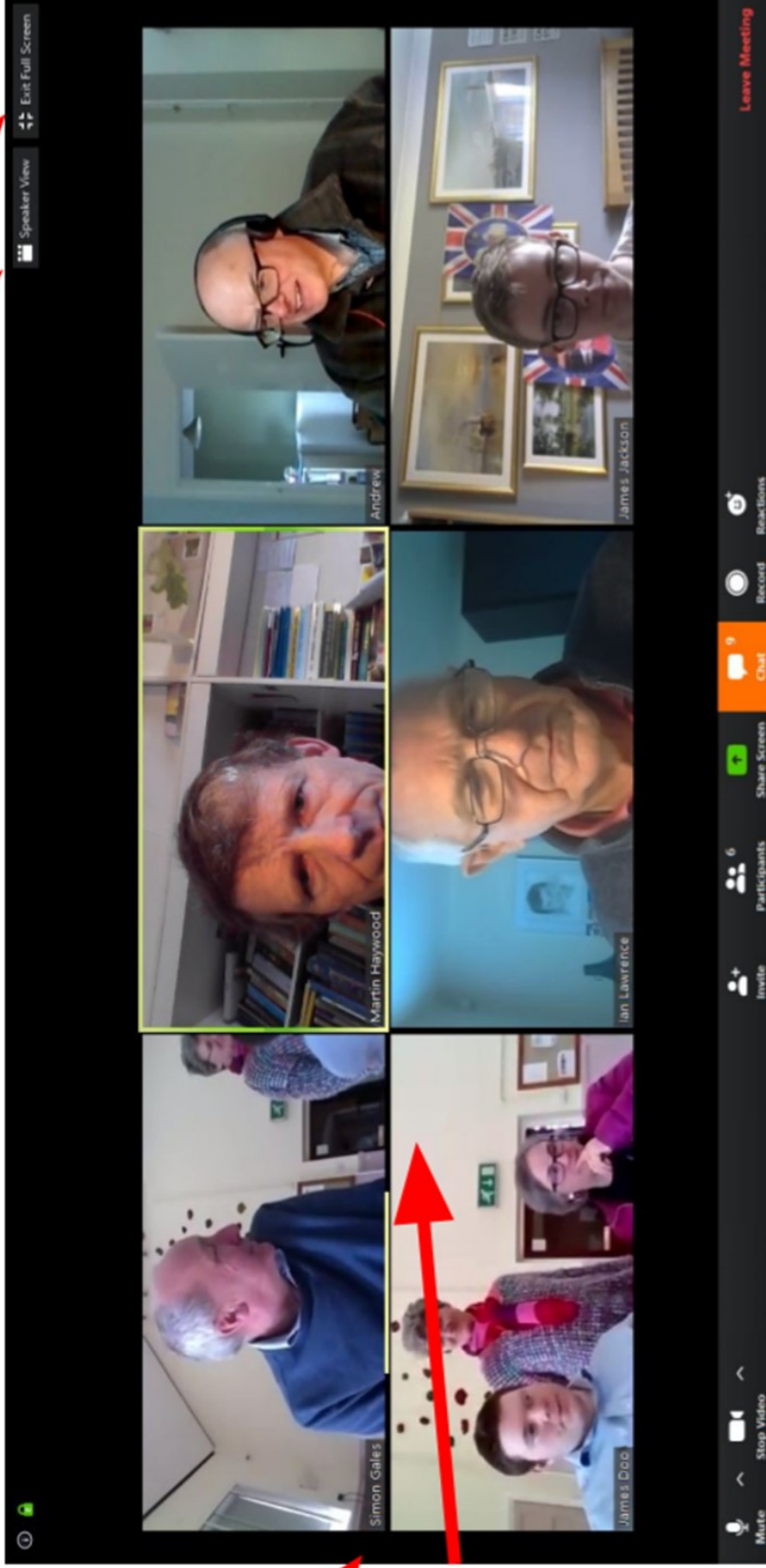
Laptops/Desktops

Click blue triangle (when visible) to see additional pages of participant photos

Main Screen - this will show you the main speaker (preacher/reader etc.) in 'Speaker view', any slides being shared, or a gallery of people on the call in gallery view.

Click to see speaker or gallery view

Click to shrink screen



Click to turn microphone on or off

Click to see list of participants

Click to see text chat, and/or add to text chat

Leave Meeting

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Leave Meeting

Use front/back camera

Click to see speaker or gallery view

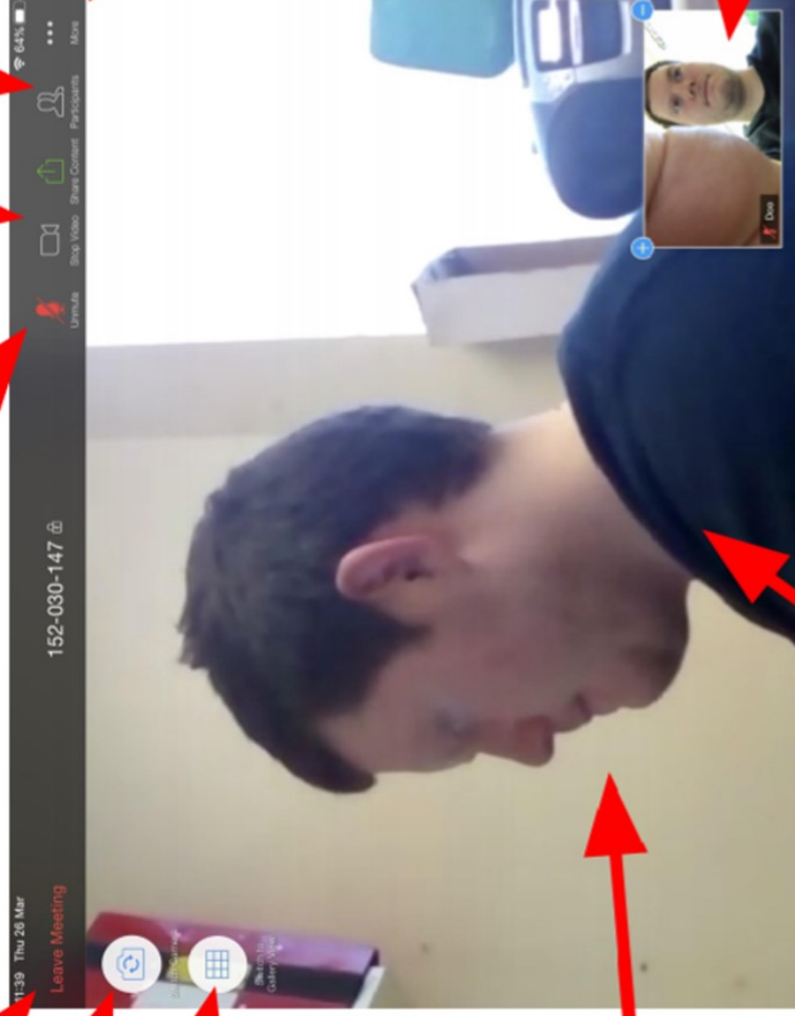
iPad (and likely other tablets)

Main Screen - this will show you the main speaker (preacher/reader etc.) in 'Speaker view', any slides being shared, or a gallery of people on the call in gallery view.

Click to turn microphone on or off

Click to turn video on or off

Click to see who's on the call, and to text chat with everyone/privately



Click for more options:

- Clap/Thumbs up
- Meeting Settings
- Virtual Background
- Raise Hand
- Disconnect Audio

Only visible if you're in Speaker View

Press the blue plus to see other people on the call, press the minus to hide yourself (from yourself!)

Tap the middle of the screen to show/hide the other controls

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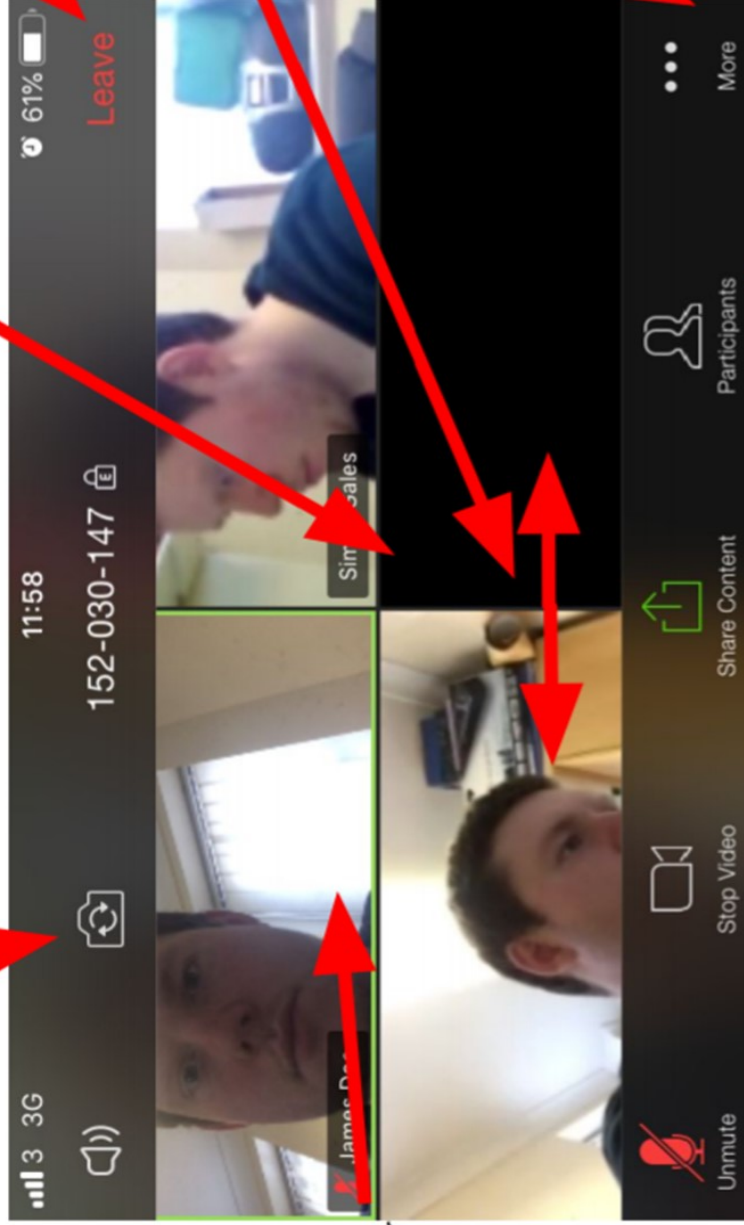
Gafcon UK is a registered charity (1187303). www.gafconuk.org

iPhone (and likely other smartphones)

Use front/back camera

Tap the middle of the screen to show/hide the other controls

Leave Meeting



Swipe right or left to move between speaker and gallery view

Click for more options:

- Clap/Thumbs up
- Meeting Settings
- Virtual Background
- Raise Hand
- Disconnect Audio

Click to turn microphone on or off

Click to turn video on or off

Click to see who's on the call, and to text chat with everyone/privately

Main Screen - this will show you the main speaker (preacher/reader etc.) in 'Speaker view', any slides being shared, or a gallery of people on the call in gallery view.

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3. Extra Tricks to Liven Things Up



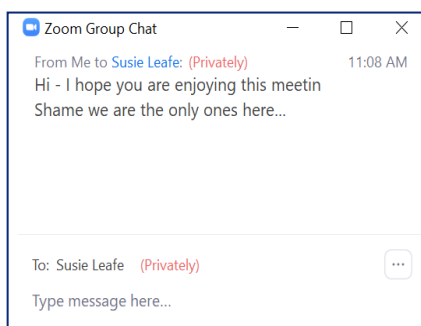
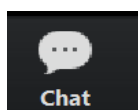
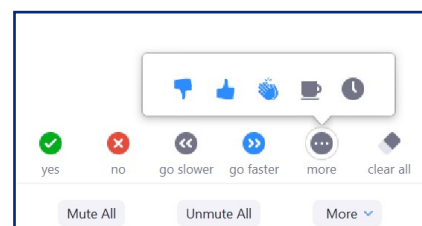
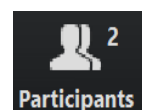
Once you've mastered the basics of being able to hear and see other people and speak and be seen yourself - then there is a world of fun to be had with Zoom.

Participation

Participants can communicate with the host in a variety of ways.

When you click on the Participants button - a list of the people involved in the meeting appears on the screen and at the bottom of the list there is a set of actions. Clicking on any one of these actions will alert the host (but no one else) of your feelings.

Raising Hand is obvious (try and remember to lower it after your question has been answered) - yes/no allows for straw polls to be taken - go slower/faster is a way of sharing how you are feeling about the pace of the presentation and the cup of tea (under more) gives the host a hint that you could do with a break.



Chat Function

The 'chat' function allows you to write messages to 'everyone' or privately to individuals in the meeting. You will find the chat button at the bottom of your screen on your computer or if you are on a phone or tablet click on the participants button.

A pop-up appears with a record of your 'chat' conversations. If there is an un-read message then the chat button will turn yellow.

Your host might turn off the chat function to avoid distraction!

Virtual Backgrounds

You may see that some people in the meeting appear to be in space, or relaxing on a beach. These 'virtual backgrounds' can allow you to 'hide' the reality of where you are; the untidy study or the fact you are hiding in the cupboard under the stairs!

Not all computers have the processing power necessary to use them. If you click on the up arrow next to the camera - you may be given the option to 'Choose a Virtual Background'. Zoom provides various options but you can upload your own photograph. Unless you happen to be in a professional studio you won't have a green screen - so make sure this box is unticked otherwise you'll keep disappearing!



4. Sharing Your Screen

Share Screen is one of the useful features of Zoom.

It means that you can share anything that appears on your screen with everyone else.

Documents - Videos - Photographs - PowerPoint presentations:

If you can see it on your screen you can share it with others.

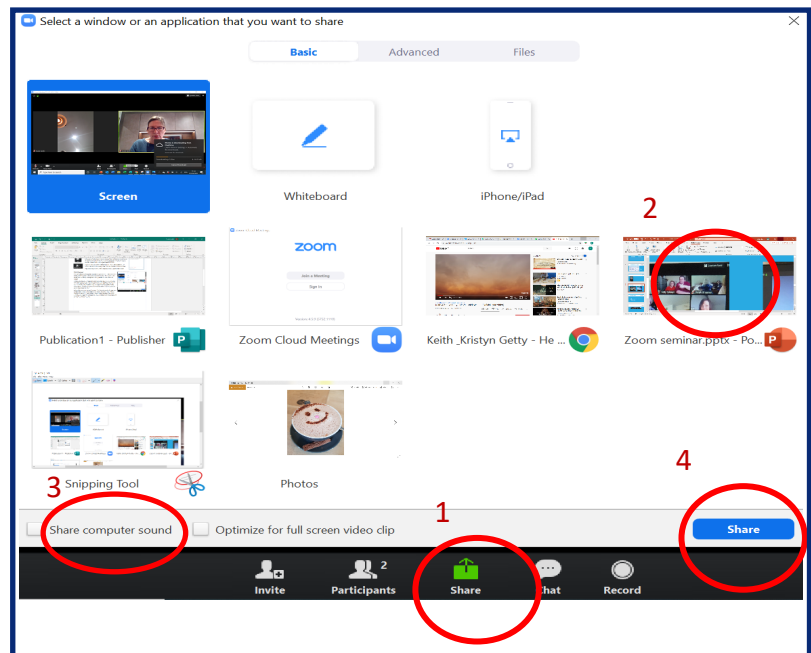
It is easier to do when you are using a computer but is possible from a phone or tablet.

How to share your screen

1. Clicking on the green 'Share' button will open up a pop-up window. This will show all your open windows. If you are likely to share your screen during a meeting it is wise to close down any confidential documents/ emails etc before the meeting starts - just in case you share the wrong screen!

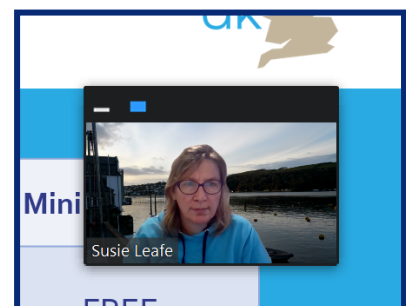
2. Select the screen you want to share.
3. If it includes audio (a song or a video) make sure you tick the box at the bottom that says, 'Share Computer Sound' - this means that instead of the sound reverberating round your room and re-entering your computer via the microphone, it travels directly from your computer to the person you are sharing it with.

4. Then click on blue 'share' button and all the participants (apart from those who have dialled in on the phone) will be able to see your screen.



Seeing participants while you share your screen

A pop up of the speaker will appear over the 'shared screen' - by clicking the rectangles above their video you may be able to access a gallery view. Or if you are viewing someone else's screen next to the green strip which tells you whose screen you are viewing you will see some viewing options - this may allow you to click on "side by side" - which allows you to see the participants in half the screen and the shared screen in the other half.



How to stop sharing your screen

If you have shared your screen - there will be a red button to 'stop share'. Just clicking this will return you to the usual gallery view.

5. Setting up a Meeting: Part 1



To set up a Zoom meeting you need to create an account. This is simple and if you don't mind meetings stopping every 40 minutes it is free.

Go to <https://zoom.us/> and click on SIGN UP IT'S FREE.

Once you have set up your account, just sign in, go to your account and click on 'schedule a meeting'.

Meeting Options

Zoom gives you lots of options, which can be quite overwhelming but you can personalise the default settings in your Personal Settings. We will go through the main features here.

Day/ Time

The time/date that you put here will be used if you use the 'send invitation' function or people are expecting to link the meeting to their online calendar.

It is not directly linked to the Meeting ID, which will work both before and after the meeting time.

It is worth noting that the default setting is GMT - so change to BST in the summer.

04/01/2020 5:00
1 hr 0 min
(GMT+0:00) Greenwich Mean Time

Recurring meeting
Recurrence: No Fixed Time (dropdown menu)
Generate Automatically (radio button)
Meeting ID 631-822-3186

Recurring Meeting

This is a useful feature. It allows you to use the same Meeting ID every week or every time you want to meet with the same group of people.

If you click on 'No Fixed Time' then you will create a Meeting ID that can be used again and again for a particular purpose - Staff Team or Youth Leaders for example could always use the same Meeting ID whenever they meet.

Personal Meeting Room v Automatic ID

Meeting ID Generate Automatically Personal Meeting ID 631-822-3186

You could use your personal meeting room for all your meetings - but we would suggest generating new IDs for any meeting where you will be sharing the ID with a wider group of people.

Using a variety of Meeting IDs is one way of reducing the risk of Zoom-bombing - a rather unpleasant 'craze' where uninvited people enter the meeting and use the share screen option to shock the participants. - as is not sharing your Zoom meeting ID on-line.

Passwords

Obviously using a password increases security - but it is also an extra step for those you are inviting to cope with.

5. Setting up a Meeting: Part 2



Other Meeting Options:

There is a question mark over the wisdom of enabling people to enter before host - it can allow people to practice before the event, but it also make the toom less secure (see Section 6). This feature also allows other people to host your meetings without you (though they won't have access to 'host-only' features like breakout rooms.)

The Waiting Room feature is an extra level of security - in that you see the name of each person and decide whether to 'let them in' - but in a big meeting it can be an administrative nightmare.

Pre-assigning Breakout Rooms - sounds good but it requires people to register for the meeting which may be too formal for most church settings.

Meeting Options	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Enable join before host
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mute participants upon entry
<input type="checkbox"/>	Enable waiting room
<input type="checkbox"/>	Only authenticated users can join
<input type="checkbox"/>	Breakout Room pre-assign
<input type="checkbox"/>	Record the meeting automatically

The Next Step: Inviting People

Once you have finished scheduling the meeting press **SAVE**.

Zoom will then generate a Meeting ID for you which you will need to share with those you are inviting to the meeting. There is also a unique web address to share:

Meeting ID of 110-026-429 <https://zoom.us/j/110026429>

You can copy and paste this into any form of electronic media - an email, a WhatsApp message, a text or scribble it on a postcard or even give the Meeting ID to someone over the telephone.

The 'Copy Invitation' feature gives you access to the appropriate phone numbers for people wishing to dial in but is generally too complicated to be useful as an 'invitation'.

Changing a Meeting:

Once you have set up a meeting it appears in your account under Upcoming Meetings - clicking on the meeting gives you the option to go back and alter any of the information in your schedule.

On the Day:

All you will need to do is click on the meeting and remember to press Start.

If you have set up the meeting so that people can join before the host then you may find 'Start' has become 'Join' because some early-birds have arrived before you. rooms.)


6. Hosting a Meeting: Simple Stuff



**Hosting a meeting gives you considerable power!
You can silence people and even make them disappear.
But it can be a distraction if you are presenting to a large group so
Here we discuss the benefits of co-hosts.**

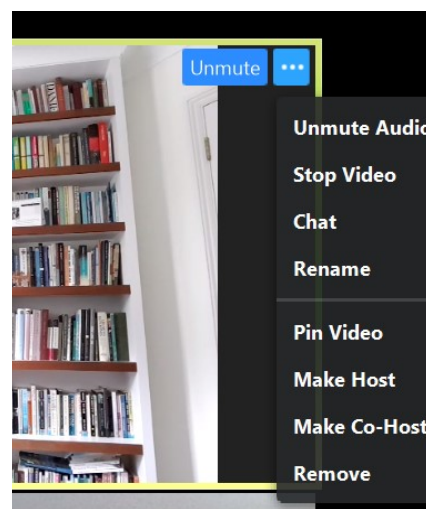
Managing Participants:

When you are the host it is probably best to have your screen in Gallery View so you can see everyone - if it is a big meeting then you may have to swipe, or click on arrows that appear on either side of the screen, in order to be able to see everyone.

You will notice that each person has this symbol  in the top right hand corner of their screen.


Clicking on this button reveals a number of actions that you can take:

- you can mute or unmute someone
- you can stop their video or request they turn on their video
- you can even remove someone from the meeting




You may never need to exclude someone from the meeting - unless they are struggling to find the 'Leave' button for themselves - but being able to mute background noise, which a participant may not even be aware of, or turn off a camera if something unexpected happens, is vital for reducing the level of distraction on a call.

The Value of a Co-Host:

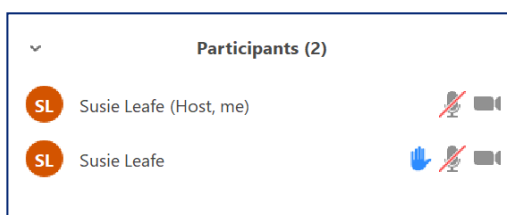
Hosting a meeting of 3-4 people is really easy - hosting a meeting of twenty or more screens can be a little more tricky. If you are the 'presenter' as well as the 'host' it is worth making at least one other person a co-host - this means that they can also mute and unmute people. You can only do this once the meeting has begun and they are in the room, as you need to click on the  and make them a Co-Host.

If you are happy to lose the ability to mute/unmute people or see when people are raising their hands then you can make them the Host – which will allow them to organise breakout groups while you are presenting material.

Monitoring Participants:

Whether you or a co-host are responsible, keeping an eye on the participants is important. If an individual raises their hand the  symbol appears in the top left hand corner of their video screen. It also appears alongside their name in the host's list of participants .

Other symbols, such as the "I need a break" symbol, also appear on this list. The host and co-hosts are able to mute and unmute people by clicking on the symbols next to the participant's name or lower people's hands if they have forgotten to do so themselves.



8. Breakout Rooms

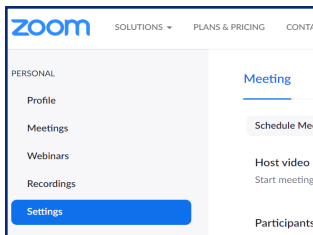


Breakout Rooms are another very useful feature of Zoom.

It allows a group to be divided into smaller groups for a short while; pairs to pray, groups to discuss a bible passage; or just allow people to chat informally after an online service.

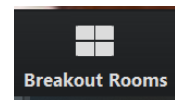
Pre-Assign v Random Allocation

It is possible to pre-assign break out groups but this requires people to register before the meeting and in my experience this is uncommon in church settings. However, randomly allocated groups can be set up in a matter of seconds and reorganised if necessary.



Enabling Breakout Groups

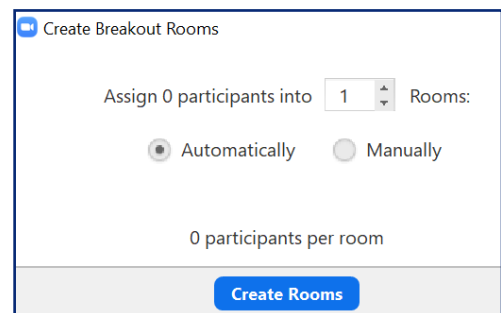
Breakout groups are not available by default; as the host you need to go into the Personal Settings section of their account, scroll down to the advanced meeting settings and move the toggle next to "Breakout Rooms." The breakout room symbol will then appear on the controls on your meeting screen.



Creating the Groups

The host (not co-host) clicks on the Breakout button at any time in the meeting. A pop-up screen appears which allows the host to determine the number of rooms they wish to divide the group into and whether they wish this to be done manually or automatically.

If you chose the 'automatic' approach, clicking on create rooms will cause a list of the participants, assigned to different rooms, will appear on the host's screen. Changes can be made.

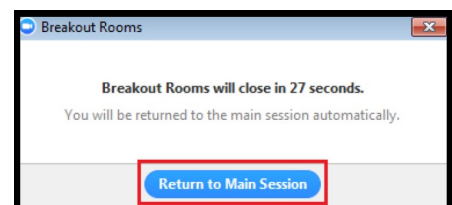
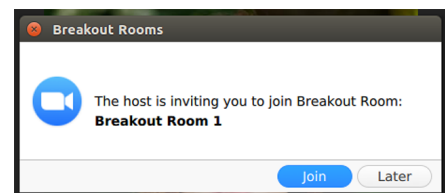


Managing the Groups

At the required time, the host can then open the breakout rooms and each participant is invited to join a breakout group or remain in the main meeting.

When the host wishes everyone to return to the main meeting they close the rooms and participants receive a request to return to the main meeting - by default everyone will be returned after 60 seconds. This time can be changed using the options presented when the breakout groups are created.

Individuals remain assigned to the same groups throughout a meeting unless the host reassigns them each time they breakout.



Breakout Groups for those Joining by Phone

Those who join by phone will not be assigned into a group - and will remain in the main meeting room - if using this feature regularly it may be worth asking different people to remain with the phone-users in the main meeting room so that they are able to connect with a wider variety of people.

9. Security

Security and Safeguarding are perhaps more important when working online. Churches need to consider how best to manage these environments

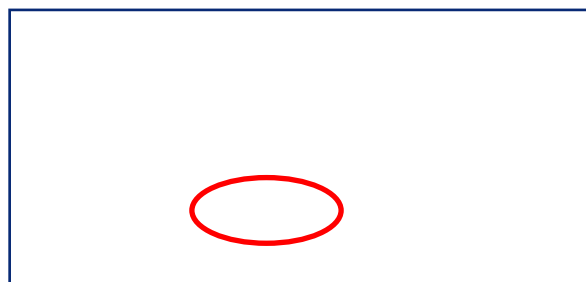
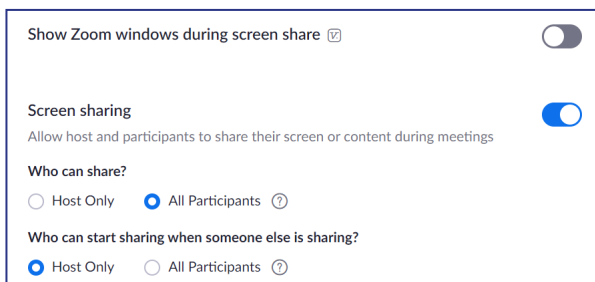
Zoom Bombers

Nothing online is 100% secure and most websites we visit harvest our data in a variety of ways.

There have been several reports in the media recently about zoom-bombers. These are people who enter a Zoom meeting uninvited and attempt to disrupt the meeting with foul language, sharing their screen with unpleasant images on it or seeking to find ways to take over your camera.

Here are a few ways to make your use of Zoom safer:

1. Don't put the Meeting ID in the public sphere either before or after the event. Instead, share the Meeting ID using emails, WhatsApp rather than Facebook or your website.
2. Beware of accidentally sharing the Meeting ID by using an image of the Zoom screen on social media. Boris Johnson found this out the hard way when he tweeted a screen shot of a cabinet meeting which included the Meeting ID. Warn participants of this concern.
3. Think about requiring the host to be present before the meeting begins - we are now doing this with all larger meetings so that any 'zoom-bomber' can be quickly ejected from the room. If you want to allow people to get used to the software - just set up a separate Meeting ID which can be accessed without the host.
4. If you set up bigger meetings so that participants cannot share their screen (using the personal settings) it can reduce the damage a Zoom-bomber can do (as well as avoid unintended sharing).
5. If the meeting is particularly confidential it is possible for the host to lock the meeting once all the participants have arrived - just click on 'Manage Participants' and the option appears in the 'More' section.
6. Use a password.
7. Think about what can be seen in the background of your shot. Is there anything that you don't want other participants (whether expected or unwanted) to see?



10. Safeguarding and GDPR



In recent years, we have all become more used to thinking about safeguarding vulnerable people and being careful how we store and share data that we hold about other people.

It is important that churches consider these issues in the virtual world.

Why is there a Safeguarding and GDPR issue when using Zoom?

Using Zoom, or any other on-line medium, has the potential to expose individuals to risk.

There may be individuals who do not wish their photograph associated with your church meeting; vulnerable children, victims of domestic abuse, those with particular public roles.

The on-line environment has been used by people to groom and exploit others.

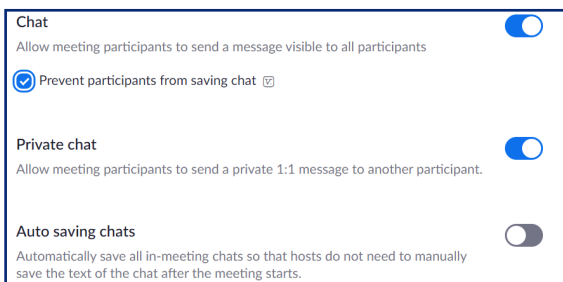
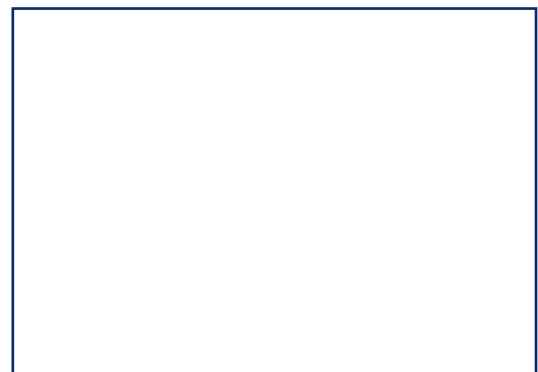
So, the way we use Zoom, and other on-line media, should prioritise protecting those in our care.

Think Carefully Before Sharing Images

- Warn people against sharing pictures of Zoom calls without the permission of ALL those who can be identified (or in the case of children, the permission of their parents or carers).
- Don't stream or record and share a Zoom meeting, unless active permission has been sought from all those who can be identified in the recording.

Make it hard to record the meeting

- Disable or restrict the record feature for the meeting in the Recording settings of the host's account.
- We recommend not allowing participants to record meetings without the permission of the host and ensuring that the automatic record function is switched off.



- Personal information might also be shared in the 'Chat' section.
- We recommend that the host uses their personal settings to prevent participants from saving the chat sessions. With permission, the host can extract useful information that has been shared during the meeting and share it with participants at a later date.

11. Children and Young People



Zoom offers a great way of allowing children and young people to continue to enjoy meeting together.

It is important that churches consider how this can be done safely.

Safeguarding Policy

Most churches have a policy about the use of online forums when young people are involved but it might be worth revisiting it to ensure that it covers the way meetings are now taking place.

As a rule of thumb, the same rules should apply in the virtual world as in the real world.

- Young people should not be alone with an adult.
- All adults involved in youth work should have passed the appropriate safeguarding checks. Arrangements have been made for to enable DBS checks to be made virtually - with proof of identity checked on-line rather than in person.

Youth leaders may want to think about:

- Ways of ensuring that two leaders are present before young people are able to join a meeting. The 'waiting room' feature could assist with this.
- Turning off the microphone and video settings on entry, so that the young person is in control of when they turn it on or off.
- How to manage breakout groups, if it is not possible to have two adults in each group. The ability of the host to visit meeting rooms might assist with this dilemma.
- Making sure invitations to online meetings are sent openly and with parental or carers knowledge.
- Encouraging children and young people to keep the door of the physical room they are in open.



Gafcon UK support thirtyone:eight's safeguarding pledge.

In this podcast, their CEO, Justin Humphreys, talks about creating safer places for young people online.

<https://www.youthscape.co.uk/podcast/justin-humphreys>

13. How can I use Zoom?



Here is just a taste of the way Zoom is being used to build God's Church. Some of these ideas are unlikely to continue once we are no longer locked down, others will become the new normal.

Church Services

Some churches are having their whole service by Zoom

- By preparing the service using a presentation package, like PowerPoint, all the liturgy, images, and songs can be available at the touch of the Share Screen button.
- This allows people to interact with each other throughout the service. Friends can be invited to join by sharing the Meeting ID but it does not allow for public observers.
- Breakout groups can be used before and after the service to allow people to catch up with each other. Some churches are just using Zoom for this aspect of their service - with a streamed service followed by a Zoom call.
- Some are recording and editing their service and sharing it for wider viewing.
- A few things to watch out for:
 - Congregational responses and singing needs to be done in 'mute' mode; otherwise the different time-lags caused by different internet speeds creates a cacophony. Having one unmuted responder, as well as the leader, can help those at home to 'join-in' with shared prayers or responses.
 - Beware of having more than one microphone unmuted at the same time in any one room: feedback and endless loops can be quite painful to listen too.
 - Beware too that, unless you are using a directional microphone, comments from other people in the room may be transmitted to.

Just a Few Other Ways of Building God's People

- Small Groups, Christianity Explored,
- Mum's and Toddlers (lovely to see the way little ones enjoy seeing each other on the screen)
- Drop-in sessions/ coffee mornings/
- PCC Meetings, staff meetings and other administrative tasks
- Camp planning meetings
- Prayer groups
- On-line training
- Including Mission Partners in the life of the church

12. Do I Have to Use Zoom?



In short, “No”.

Several platforms offer ways of interacting with each other online.

Some like <https://www.webex.com/> and <https://www.gotomeeting.com/>; are primarily conference platforms and work in a very similar way to Zoom and now offer similar packages; others like <https://hangouts.google.com/>, Skype and Facetime are designed for smaller meetings. WhatsApp and Instagram are great ways for small groups to keep in touch all the time.

Other platforms like Facebook Live are primarily presentation packages—but offer a limited opportunity for interaction with the ‘audience’ through a written chat function during the presentation.

	What do you need to access it?	Written Group Chat Max People	Video Call Max People	Do Participants need an account?
Zoom	Smartphone Landline Computer/ Tablet	100-1000 (depending on package)	100-1000 (depending on package)	NO
Webex	Smartphone Landline Computer/ Tablet	100-200 (depending on package)	100-200 (depending on package)	NO
WhatsApp	Smartphone	256	4	YES
Instagram	Smartphone	–	6	YES
Google Hangouts	Smartphone Computer/ Tablet	150	10-25	NO
Skype	Smartphone Computer/ Tablet	n/a	50	NO

If we choose Zoom—how much does it cost?

The basic package is free but meetings are limited to 40 minutes (though there is no reason why a group cannot reconvene immediately).

Zoom Pro gives a little more capability and meetings are basically unlimited in length. For bigger churches who may need more than 100 screens involved there is the option to extend the number of participants without taking on the Zoom business package.

	Number of Hosts	Maximum in Meeting	Time Limit	Minimum Cost
Zoom Basic	1	1-100	40 minutes	FREE
Zoom Pro	1	1-100 (> 500 = £51.99) (> 1000 = £83.99)	24 hours	£11.99 per month (+VAT)
Zoom Business	Minimum of 10	1-300	24 hours	£159.90 per month (+VAT) (£15.99 per host)