ZOOM Essentials for the Church
AKA Getting the most out of our ZOOM subscription

Zoom is now a noun courtesy of a worldwide pandemic that caused us to look for ways to connect with one another without being in close proximity. If we cannot be together, many have found the next best thing is to at least be able to see one another. There are a variety of ways to do that, but the winning software for larger group meetings right now seems to be Zoom.

The Zoom online meeting software has been a blessing (and a curse) for some. This quick overview is intended to show how your church can utilize your subscription to the full and embrace it as a blessing.

> By the way, this is written by a church administrator who has learned much about the software and saw the need to share.
>
> Zoom is not connected with this document in any way. In fact, their tutorial videos would probably serve you better. Consider this a Cliff Notes version...

We will cover:

- Optimizing your settings
- How to use Zoom as a reservable "room"
- Valuable tips

TIP #1

Use the **zoom.us** website on your computer to do all your meeting scheduling and edits.

It has been my experience that the desktop app and the website do not act alike. And I have found it less frustrating doing all the scheduling and meeting edits on the website. So, go to your favorite browser - type in zoom.us - log into your account - and schedule your meetings there. Copying the meetings link to paste into an email also gives all the information your recipient may need.

OPTIMIZE YOUR SETTINGS

Before you schedule any meetings, you should spend a few quality moments with the settings. There are a bunch of settings you need to check and decide if they are right for you. When you log in at the zoom.us website you will be on the profile page. On the left, find and click on "settings." You will have to scroll through to find these settings, but they are listed in the order you will find them as you move down the page.

Under the MEETING tab:

- **Default meeting settings.** There are some settings that if you choose to enable those features in the settings area, they will automatically be enabled when you go to create a meeting. Those features include the "waiting room," "passcode," "host video/participant video," and "audio."
  - Note: You have to have at least one of the security features - the waiting room or the passcode - turned on. I recommend disabling the waiting room and enabling the passcode setting as your default. You can always turn on the waiting room for that specific meeting that needs it.
- **Co-host. ENABLE**. This feature allows you to give all the host permissions to a meeting participant. The co-host can help mute/un-mute people, let people in if you have the waiting room turned on, rename participants, etc. This is especially helpful if your meeting would benefit from a "technical host" - someone who will watch participants, chat, and help mute/unmute as needed while the host focuses on the speaker(s).
- **Polling. ENABLE.** This feature allows you meeting host to create questions that can be asked of all the participants during a meeting. You may never need it, but it's a fun tool to have just in case.
- **Screen sharing. ENABLE.** This feature allows you to share a window on your computer. Recommend making it HOST ONLY though, so a participant doesn't accidently share their screen and chaos ensue. If you identify someone that needs to share their screen during a meeting - make them a co-host.
- **Meeting reactions.** This feature allows people to give a clap, thumbs up, thumbs down emoji during the meeting. Many choose to enable.
- **Allow participants to rename themselves. ENABLE.** This is an important one for helping to identify people during your meeting. It's especially important if different folks use the same zoom account to attend meetings.
- **Break-out rooms. ENABLE.** So this feature is very useful if you have a large group of people in a meeting and you want them to be able to discuss a question or two with just a handful of others. Creating and sending participants to a break-out room is the same as saying to a room - "now turn to two or three close to you and discuss this question amongst yourselves." You can choose to create and assign participants to a room ahead of time or let the computer break them up randomly. The host sends them off to discuss and then brings them all back together after sufficient discussion time. The host can even send messages to everyone while they are in the break-out room.

Under the RECORDING tab:

If you have a paid account, you can activate CLOUD recording. I would recommend enabling ALL of those options. You never know when one will be needed.

When you have a meeting you intend to record, be sure to choose the cloud option so you get all the different options. You can always delete what you don't want or need later.

HOW TO USE ZOOM AS A RESERVABLE "ROOM"

Your church has a Zoom account. In order to log in to a meeting as the host, you need to know the account user name and password used to create the meeting. But what if that staff member isn't going to be attending the meeting? Did you know that a designated participant can claim the host responsibilities WITHOUT passing out the account log-in and password? It's true! You need to know your "host key." Here's how to find it:

When you log in to the zoom.us website -when looking at your profile, scroll down and find "Host Key." It will likely be a series of ********. Hit the "show" button to see the code. This host key never changes. You can give it to the person in charge of a meeting so they can "claim the host" when they log in.

- ALERT! When you create this kind of meeting, you must be sure to turn the waiting room OFF for this to work.

Now you can offer the extended meeting times and functions that come with a paid account to any of your groups. Treat this meeting space just like you would a physical room someone might reserve in your building.

Valuable Tips

- The zoom.us website is likely to serve you best when creating meetings and copying invitation codes. This tip was shared at the beginning, but it deserves repeating.
- When sharing the meeting invitation - send the full invite that includes the links, phone numbers and passcodes for the meeting. We never know when someone will need those important bits of information.
- The host should "end meeting for all" at the appropriate moment so the space is free for the next scheduled meeting. When the host/co-host clicks the leave button, they will have the extra option to end the meeting for all.
- Be careful about ending the meeting too soon, especially if there is conversation happening. Be sure to give a warning so attendees are not surprised when the meeting is ended. If the meeting ends before they think it should the participant can be left feeling like they have been "kicked out."
- If using zoom to make a presentation that you are recording, consider muting everyone and turn off the ability that allows them to unmute themselves. This way you get a good clean recording for that portion you really do not want interrupted. Those mute controls are found at the bottom of the Participants window. (In the little box with the 3 dots)
- If you have a large group of participants, consider making someone a co-host to help with maintaining order in the meeting.
- During a discussion time, encourage people to use the "raise hand" feature found at the bottom of the participants window. When someone raises their hand, their name moves to the top of the participant list and shows a tiny blue hand next to their name. The host/co-host can then lower their hand after they have been called on if the participant does not do it for themself.
- If you can't find a feature, try clicking the little boxes with the 3 dots in them. Hovering over some spaces also might show a "more" button that might have what you are looking for.