

Back in church but still online

How to Guide 2: Building online engagement and relationships

St Albans Parish Communications and Online Worship Group

Isaiah 42.1: But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.

The key to building engagement is creating a database of names and online contact details. Knowing someone's name and a conduit to contact them is the foundation to building a relationship with new people. We can gather contact details by regularly inviting people to contact churches using our websites, Facebook or email.

Building engagement during services:

At the start of an online service welcome visitors. During a service on Facebook or YouTube, encourage newcomers to like or comment on the service so that after the service a team of welcomers can follow up and say hello. There is an online host feature of YouTube that allows a church member to chat with newcomers during the service.

At the end of the service, provide an email address or telephone number so that people can contact the church. Keep a log of those contacts.

Even if you pre-record your service, you can still schedule a time for online chat after the service.

After the service host a virtual tea and coffee. Smaller groups of less than a dozen work best. Try and mix people who are new to your online church with established members of your congregation.

Enquires' and discipleship courses

Zoom Alpha. At St John the Baptist, Farley Hill, Luton, enquirers watch the Alpha Film Series (2016), followed by a half-hour discussion on Zoom. <https://www.stjohn-luton.co.uk/>

Zoom Bible Study. Members of St John the Baptist, Farley Hill, Luton, are watching The Bible Society's "The Bible Course", followed by a discussion on Zoom. The eight-part series is available for £9.99.

<https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/explore-the-bible/the-bible-course/>

Youth Alpha on Zoom. St Paul's Letchworth <https://stpaulsletchworth.co.uk>

Online Youth Groups. St Paul's Letchworth <https://stpaulsletchworth.co.uk/get-connected/youth-online/>

Zoom Pilgrims Course.

Zoom Book Club. Some 40 people, split across two groups, are meeting on Zoom at St John the Baptist, Farley Hill to discuss Michael Mitton's Restoring the Woven Cord: Strands of Celtic Christianity.

Prayer & Spirituality

Midweek Meditation: St John's, Harpendon

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCsWAHCM_K_3na-QAiZLbbvQ

Stations of the Resurrection, Stotfold

<https://mailchi.mp/83a99c967f4e/stotfold-stations-of-the-resurrection-5-6>

Zoom Prayer groups. All Saints Riseley.

Social events

Parish Quizzes on Zoom