

THE PRESENT WORD

ADULT BIBLE LESSONS

Ideas for Distributing and Using The Present Word

We understand that the COVID-19 pandemic has altered how we gather for worship and education. As you look forward to receiving your fall 2020 standing order shipment, we wanted to offer some suggestions for how to distribute and use this resource beloved by your adult study groups in case they cannot meet in person.

DISTRIBUTION

Social distancing guidelines make it more difficult to distribute the books you get in your seasonal shipment. Below are some options and tips.

- *Offer curbside pickups.* Assign volunteers to be at the church on a few select days and times for people to pick up their participant book. Notify participants by phone, email, or mailings and keep a checklist to make sure all participants have received their book.
- *Offer delivery of participant books.* Organize volunteers to deliver books to participants based on geographic area. They can leave them outside for the participant and can even have some additional outreach by chatting through storm doors. Suggest that your volunteers bring a notepad and pen in case members express certain needs that can be relayed back to leadership teams.

MEETINGS

Below are some suggestions for group study when physical gatherings are not possible for some or all. Combining options is encouraged!

Use Some New Technologies

- *Use video conferencing tools and apps.* This is an option that is most like in-person meetings. Consider creating some guidelines for the virtual meeting space and leave extra time for technical glitches. While Zoom is very popular, there are other free options such as Google Hangouts (can be used on a browser or an app and includes screen sharing capabilities) and the newly released Facebook Messenger Rooms (only the host needs to have a Facebook account and no software needs to be downloaded as it can be accessed using just a web browser).
 - o Extra Tip: With Zoom, people can also call in using a cell phone or landline phone. Long distance charges may apply for those without unlimited plans. You can purchase an Audio Conferencing Option to enable toll-free numbers.
- *Use Facebook Groups.* This is a great option for groups with members whose schedules have been altered more significantly or who are used to having childcare during your regular meeting times. The group leader can create a posting schedule to include prayers, biblical insights, and discussion questions. Then, throughout the week, participants can engage with the leader and each other.

Other Options

- *Create a phone tree or organize study partners with your group.* For groups with members who have limited or no internet access, this is a great way to keep the group intact given the limitations. When you distribute the phone tree or pairings to members each week you can include a note of encouragement and a list of questions from the lesson to discuss.

- *Encourage individual study.* If providing online or phone-based meeting spaces does not seem feasible for your group, suggest that they continue their study individually. Practices such as spending time with the Scripture notes and journaling responses to questions will allow for continued faith development.
- *Use a hybrid approach.* Encourage weekly study with phone partners and meet as a group (virtually) at the end of each of the three units in a quarter of *The Present Word*.

SURVEY

How do you plan on holding your adult study group meetings using The Present Word this fall?

We will meet in person.

We will use video conferencing (such as Zoom).

We will use Facebook Groups.

We will form multiple small groups who meet via phone or video conference (such as Facetime or Zoom).

We will study independently with periodic check-ins with the leader but not meet as a group.

We will use a mix of options, with some people studying together in person while others will meet online.

We will stop using The Present Word for now but hope to return to using it in the future.

We no longer use The Present Word.

Other (please specify)

Based on how you plan to hold your classes for The Present Word this fall, is there something we could do differently to assist you?

Please share any plans regarding your adult Christian education ministry during the COVID-19 pandemic and ways we may be more useful to you as a publisher.