

Inclusive on-line worship and group participation



Formatting, preparation, and videotaping

- Use an easy-to read font of a color that contrasts with a plain background for headings, song lyrics, scriptures etc.
- Narrate any written headings and messages for people without visual access.
- Limit flashy and busy visual effects and transitions.
- When on camera, stand in front of a plain background and avoid windows or other forms of back-lighting.
- Have speakers introduce themselves when they speak. If possible, use a name caption and state the name aloud.
- Speak slowly enough to articulate and project your voice so that the automatic captioning function won't scramble your message for people using the CC (closed captioning) feature.
- Review and correct mistakes before broadcasting or have someone ready to type the correct word or phrase in the Chat box when the auto-caption is off-base.
- Explain any on-screen actions, e.g. if you are using Zoom and people are clapping, state that. If you have children at their family screens and ask them to show something, name the child (if the space is private) and briefly describe each object. If you use images or photos, explain what is being shown.

Invitations and media communication

- Send a Word document Order of Worship or agenda ahead of time by e-mail.
- Make sure that invitations include multiple ways to access the platform, e.g. for Zoom include the direct phone number and the one-touch number along with the primary link.
- If your service is on YouTube, post a direct link – make it bold and in a larger font so people can easily locate it.
- If you are posting the event to or hosting in on Facebook, offer an alternative access method such as via e-mail or a DVD for members who don't have Facebook.
- Remember to caption those uplifting and informational graphics, photos, and images you post to your Facebook page!

Online group interaction

- Find ways to involve those who are accessing small groups by phone.
- Have speakers identify themselves by name when they speak.
- Keep your face visible so that persons who rely on speech/lip reading will be unable to understand you.

General Resources

“Coronavirus Resources for Churches” by DMC Communications. 3/27/20:

<https://umcdmc.org/2020/03/27/coronavirus-resources-for-churches/>

Note that this site will be continually updated as new resources are identified.

Resources focusing on accommodations for people who are Deaf or have hearing loss:

“Online and Virtual Gatherings: Inclusion for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Members,” by Rev.

Leo Yates, Jr. 3/27/20: <https://umdisability.blogspot.com/2020/03/online-and-virtual-gatherings-inclusion.html>

“Captions,” United Methodist Committee on Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Ministries:

<https://www.umdeaf.org/atech/caption.html>

“Deaf and Hard-of Hearing Awareness Resources, section 5: Health and Safety”:

https://www.umdeaf.org/resource/general.html?fbclid=IwAR3VsQXWVNP3Z1ofu6jY6dMU2G21V_Nc-9OnH8nHwhwI28TLvITIFAMOa6o#5

“Add your own subtitles & closed captions” [to a YouTube video]:

https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2734796?hl=en&ref_topic=7296214

“Online Education and Website Accessibility,” US Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 3/17/20: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DCMLk4cES6A&feature=youtu.be>

“A guide to group video calling apps for hearing loss,” by Lisa Goldstein, 3/27/20:

<https://www.hearinglikeme.com/guide-to-group-video-calling-apps-for-hearing-loss/>

“Living with Hearing Loss blog: Your COVID-19 Hearing Loss Survival Guide,” by Shari Eberts, 3/17/20: <https://livingwithhearingloss.com/2020/03/17/your-covid-19-hearing-loss-survival-guide/>

Resources focusing on adaptations for people who are blind or have low vision:

“Coronavirus (COVID-19) Resources,” American Foundation for the Blind:

https://www.afb.org/blog/topic/coronavirus-covid-19?utm_source=AFB&utm_campaign=60a6066fa5-AW-December-2019_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ec813cd965-60a6066fa5-165223513

“5 Accessibility actions you can take when you’re moving your conference or classes online,”

by Elizabeth Neal, 3/17/20: <https://www.afb.org/blog/entry/accessibility-online-conferences-classes>

“Meet Me Accessibly – A Guide to Zoom Cloud Meetings from a Blindness Perspective,” free audiobook from Mosen Consulting: <https://mosen.org/zoom/>

“Guide dogs, pets, and the coronavirus,” by Janet Ingber, 3/24/20:

<https://www.afb.org/blog/entry/guide-dogs-coronavirus>