Best Practices for a Safe Church Online
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In this brave, new world of online meetings for worship and fellowship there are some easy ways to maintain our Safe Church: Creating a Healthy Environment for Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults policies and keep everyone safe.

- Interactions in the virtual world need to be transparent. That is, occurring in such a way that it is easy for others to see what actions are performed.
- Make sure to never be alone in a chat room with a parishioner, particularly minors. Have the hosts (two unrelated, trained adults) log in a few minutes before the scheduled time.
- In the virtual world, healthy boundaries and Safe Church practices must be adhered to as they are in the physical world.
- For meeting with anyone (adults and/or minors): the host can mute, turn off video, or remove participants from the call.
    - We suggest, if possible, that whoever is spiritually leading the meeting is NOT set as the host, so they can focus on their ministry. Ask another trusted leader to be the host of the meeting to run a ministry of boundaries.
- For Zoom meetings specifically, go into your settings and make the following changes:
    - Turn off "Join before host"
    - Turn off private chat
    - Auto save all chat history
    - Turn off file transfer
    - Turn off screen sharing for participants
    - Turn off the whiteboard. Or turn on auto save if you're using it for the lesson/game.
- Don't post screen shots of meetings online without permission of everyone in the photo. If possible, remove names from the photo before posting. Do not share screenshots of minors without permission from their guardian.
- Another way to provide transparency is to record the entire meeting. If you do record, be sure to let every participant know that it is being recorded and for what purpose. If you are recording minors, you should get the permission of their guardians.
- Laws regarding mandated reporting of suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children or youth apply in the virtual world as they do in the physical world.