Online Worship and Gathering Tips

In visiting with some of the online hosts in the mission center we sensed the benefit for sharing a checklist that might be helpful for those considering or regularly using one of the many conference platforms used for worship, classes and meetings.

Sharing Account Information
For those with a business account, consider sharing the account information with more than one person so that your congregation is not completely dependent on that one individual for scheduling and opening all meetings. This shares the load of scheduling and hosting and helps to avoid a dependency on that person should they be unavailable for a scheduled gathering.

Shared Host/Co-Host Responsibilities

Safeguard against poor connectivity:
    Since everyone's participation is dependent on their personal connectivity to the internet, sharing the host role is a safeguard if the host should experience internet instability and disconnection.

Shared Roles:
The role of presider for worship is significant, and to free that person to be fully present and engaged, you might find it helpful to identify and assign other individuals to run the Powerpoint and serve as an Usher.

- Powerpoint Host-Whether or not the presider is running the Powerpoint, many have found it helpful to log in with a second device dedicated to the Powerpoint presentation.

- Usher-This role helps to monitor the gathering for auditory distractions that can occur when participants have been asked to mute, and someone joins late and is unaware of the request for muting, or inadvertently became or remained unmuted. This person will need to be attentive throughout the gathering as presiders may request unmuting/re-muting throughout the event.

Both of these roles must be identified as Co-Hosts to allow them privileges to share screens or mute participants.

Instructing or Reminding of Conference Features:
We should not assume that all participants are seasoned online conference users especially in light of the different platforms being used. While some are frequent users, others are still climbing the learning curve and may need to be reminded of the features they can control such as:
- How to muting/unmute
- Muting during singing

- Changing the view
- Resizing Powerpoints
- Chat Options – reminder to encourage people to select who the message is to go to (everyone or to a specific person if that option is available).
- Renaming themselves
- Encourage individuals that when speaking, look into the camera instead of down at the notes or to the side. (ie. Use the trick of placing words to speak on the computer screen above what is being presented)

Instructing or Reminding of your Congregation's Traditions:
Moving online increases the likelihood of having visitors. To be as invitational as possible, it is advisable to:
- Introduce those participating in the service
- Share traditions that may be unique to your congregations
    - Everyone is invite to light their own peace candle
    - Mics are unmuted/muted during Share & Care
- On Communion Sundays, always include the invitational message on our beliefs regarding the sacrament, but to allow participants to remain engaged without interruption, instruct that they will need to set up their own emblems, and provide a brief prelude to allow participants to get in the event they were unprepared for or unaware of our traditions and beliefs.