

During these days when many people are self-isolating, it is handy to have access to some video conferencing solutions. This is a powerful tool for continuing ministry when you can't meet in person.

One of the best tools to use is Zoom, because its basic functionality is free. Using the free Basic option, you can schedule and host your own meetings. The basic version has a 40-minute limit on group meetings of over three people, but unlimited time for meetings with less than three participants.

To sign up, go to <https://zoom.us/>.

In the upper right-hand corner, click on "Sign up, it's free."

At the next screen, enter your email address. You will then receive an email from Zoom to finish your registration.

You will need to download the Zoom computer program by going to <https://zoom.us/download> - once there, you will click the download for "Zoom client for meetings."

After it downloads and installs, you can sign into your Zoom account.

You can join meetings by simply clicking on the Zoom link that you received with the invitation to a Zoom meeting, which comes in through an email message. The Zoom client software will automatically launch when you click on the meeting link and take you to the video meeting.

You can also join a meeting through the Zoom client software by clicking on the Meetings tab, selecting your meeting, and clicking "Join."

To schedule a meeting, open the Zoom client software and click on "Schedule." Give your meeting a title, and then choose the date, time, and duration. You can give your meeting a password, but I do not recommend it. The defaults for video and audio are best, with Video "on" and Audio set as "Computer and Telephone." Click schedule.

Once it is scheduled, make sure you are in the main screen and choose "Meetings" from the top tab. Look on the left-hand side, and click on your scheduled meeting. Once your meeting comes up, look at the right-hand side and click "Copy Invitation."

This invitation can be pasted (Ctrl-V) into an email and sent to your participants. By clicking on this invitation, participants can join with video on the computer or smart phone, or they can simply call in and listen and participate like a conference call.

This link contains short videos of how to sign in and schedule a meeting, as well as more advanced functions.

<https://blog.zoom.us/wordpress/2020/03/18/quick-info-how-to-zoom-new-videos/>