

ACNA Children's Ministry Coronavirus Connections Zoom Call 3.25.20

Outline of what was covered in the Zoom call on how to do children's ministry online on 3.25.20. Please watch video for more information.

1. After a brief welcome and prayer, we went over **Zoom etiquette** including mute, naming yourself, raising your hand, changing your view, chat box, being present, and recording video.
2. What we've learned so far:
 - a. Turn off settings for whiteboard and screensharing; mute everyone upon entry; consider whether or not you want a public/private call.
 - b. Blogs are posted on both [C4SO](#) and [Gulf Atlantic Diocese](#) websites.
 - c. Consider changes to Ministry Safe protocols in an online world: virtual room is the same as a physical room, avoid 1:1, don't Zoom in a bedroom, be appropriately clothed, parents must be communicated with regarding ways you are doing ministry.
 - d. Expectations regarding time are very different from three weeks ago; be prepared to see some with lots more time and others with significantly less. How can CM leaders meet these expectations? How are you protecting yourself from burnout?
 - e. Consider side effects from social distancing for those in unsafe situations or who are depressed. How can we be tuned in to warning signs?
 - f. From Aaron: be mindful of the amount of time you should be presenting content (can you really keep their attention for an hour online, as you might have been able to in person? Probably not).
 - g. From Aaron: what are we doing to help families continue in formation and healthy relationships that does not engage a computer or screen?
 - h. Consider comprehensive ministry- how are we *now* meeting new people, connecting them with Jesus, sharing growth in the Holy Spirit, and how are we encouraging spiritual leadership?
3. **Breakout room discussion:**
 - a. **What is working for you?** We met in small groups to discuss what is working for people and how they are approaching online children's ministry.
 - b. **Ideas:**
 - i. From Angela: children's **sermons; talking points** from adult sermon for families; 5 min **teaching video** with talking points for families; sending **personalized video** for child (to parent's cell); **talent show** on Zoom; children can **draw pictures/mail notes** to those in vulnerable population or mail carriers or neighbors. Contact angela@trinitythomasville.com for more information.
 - ii. From Meg: **evening prayer** with families on Zoom; reading responsively is probably the best idea due to delay on Zoom, rather than reading simultaneously.
 - iii. From Sarah: **Compline** with teens/tweens works; have students pre-assigned to read and lead.
 - iv. From Louise: **Podcast** for kids (like WeeWonder podcast) called "Pray and Ponder."
 - v. If you are giving a '**discussion question**' for families; try to craft a question that is up at the top of the learning taxonomy (see page 5).
 - vi. Ideas mentioned in small groups:
 1. Short **children's church** (Ps. 23, had kids bring items of comfort to the chat);

2. Invite whole church to listen to Scripture and **share artwork**;
 3. Reading **Jesus Storybook Bible** to preschoolers;
 4. For Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, encourage families to create their own **Prayer Table**, approach quietly as in Atrium, begin to integrate practical life or other work over weeks
 5. Closed **Facebook group** with story time, activity ideas, etc.
 6. Facebook live with **lesson and emailed activity page**;
 7. **Reading** *Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe*
 8. **Video lesson** for kids
 9. Sending **resources** to parents
 10. Sending **survey monkey** to families to discern what would really serve them in this time
 11. Focus on **equipping and ministering to parents** in their own spiritual growth and encouraging them as the primary spiritual shepherds of their families
 12. Encouraging **Praying in Color**
 13. Create a video for your families on simple, effective way to do a **short family devotional time** with kids of all ages
 14. Using **Marco Polo App** to deliver Sunday lesson via parents' phone which enabled ministry safe protocols
 15. Sent a **lesson** via google doc with coloring sheets, etc. but found that multiple lessons per family was too much so combining into one lesson
 16. Church used a **zoom call** and gave each age group 15 min to breakout with same lessons
 17. I recorded a modified **Godly Play session** asking families to wonder together
 18. Keith and Kristin Getty are hosting **weekly family hymn sings** with their children. I'm going to invite/suggest this to our families.
 19. *The Pilgrim's Progress* movie has now been made available online for free. Should be able to find it by google.
- vii. Additional ideas:
1. Write one thought-provoking **question** for the sermon that is applicable to all ages; go beyond recalling information and toward applying it to personal experience (see taxonomy, page 5)
 2. **Gratitude** chain: links for each day apart
 3. Encourage children (of all ages) to **journal**
 4. **Testimonies** of gratitude (by video; send in and compile; show on Easter or upon returning)
 5. Video **challenges**; submit and compile to share each week
 6. **Chalk** the walk with Scripture or scriptural themes; send pictures
 7. Recorded children's **sermons** that correspond to pastor's sermons
 8. Children's **activities** that correspond to pastor's sermon
 9. **Family challenges** corresponding to worship service / sermon / readings
 10. Rule of Life (see [Rule of Life](#) workbook)
 11. **Letters** (draw pictures) to the elderly, or to the church leadership
 12. **Praying in color** ([click here for more info](#))
 13. **Family prayer** in BCP
 14. **PRAY**: Praise, repent, ask, yield or 5 finger prayers (family/friends, leaders/teachers, govt/authority, the vulnerable, myself)

15. Develop a **ministry verse** (mantra) and encourage families to do the same; repeat this verse frequently, pray it, cling to it, use it to encourage others when they need it
 16. Explore children's **reactions** and validate their feelings
 17. Pray the **Psalms**
 18. Utilize Godly Play's language of "**I wonder**"
 19. Avoid 1:1 conversation with children online
 20. Be **predictable** with scheduling contact
 21. **Pray** for your children, pray with your children
4. **Ideas for Easter.** Beyond getting online, we began to think through Easter. Here are some ideas we presented:
- a. Palm Sunday:
 - i. Have **Palms and a little box of Holy Week supplies** available for pick up at church (outside in bags). This could include a sprig of thorns, a palm branch, instructions on how to fold into a cross, the readings and liturgy for Holy Week, instructions for a foot washing service, etc.
 - ii. Send home a **scavenger hunt** a few days before to find props that families will need during the service; Liturgy of the Palms- Have families walk around their houses for the triumphal entry. Passion reading recorded ahead of time on Zoom. During the reading, have the family use props found in the hunt to keep kids engaged in the story; Have the reader (and pastor?) use similar props during the reading (and sermon?) to connect to within the home.
 - b. Maundy Thursday/Good Friday:
 - i. Have a **passion reading** with multiple voices from the congregation; splice together
 - ii. Virtual **stripping of the altar**
 - iii. Online Tenebrae service with alternating readings, songs, and prayers. This can be done with 1-4 people.
 - iv. Virtual **Foot Washing** service: Families wash each other's feet; Volunteers drive to those living alone to wash their feet.
 - v. **Stations of the Cross** at home: We are using a blank template with just the station name and having people write prayers and color pictures that are associated with each station; Children's sermon during service;
 - vi. Jesus Storybook Bible **reading** for kids about the Crucifixion
 - c. Easter:
 - i. **Easter box**: build shoeboxes for every family in the parish filled with things that they will USE during the Easter service
 - ii. Drive-thru communion, **gift bags for kids**
 - iii. **Children's Sermon** during Easter Vigil; Ahead of time delivering Easter eggs to families with props for the children's sermon inside; Having a few children involved in the readings recorded from home ahead of time; Flowering the Cross: Set up cross outside of church, Add a few flowers ahead of time, Families can come by and add flowers throughout the day, Jesus Storybook Bible reading of the Easter Story.
 - iv. Have everyone pick up (at the church, perhaps) **seedlings or small trees** and go home and plant it; create a litany with prayers and scriptures for new life in Christ.
 - d. **Returning home.** Consider what you could be doing now that could make the return to worshipping in person special. We don't know when that will be, but make it big. Perhaps

- everyone wears the same shirt when we return, or perhaps everyone builds a gratitude chain while we are apart and brings them in to the church on our return, hanging them up as an act of solidarity and praise. Give the people something to do now that can be celebrated upon our return to the building. Consider journaling and sharing what the Lord showed you, or having people send in testimony videos.
5. **Breakout rooms: Felt needs.** We broke into different groups to discuss our biggest needs in online children's ministry. Needs:
 - a. **Expectations and Grace.** Children's ministers feel somewhat overwhelmed and feel they are not able to meet expectations for the church, the families and their own family.
 - b. **Balance.** CM are trying to balance how much content and access they offer/ask since we have to go around/through parents.
 - c. **Build structure** as soon as possible; people want to see familiar and predictable things each week. Do not do nothing. Get creative.
 - d. We talked about how we need more **time**. Maybe a consistent and best practice way to communicate with the whole church.
 - e. Help with **Technology**.
 - f. **Trusting** the Lord to be at work even though we are limited.
 - g. Needing a clearer sense of what the families actually **need**.
 - h. **Wisdom:** knowing what to do and courage to do it.
 - i. Working with preschool and elementary children, it needs to be more **low-tech**, since they don't have phones.
 - j. Parent resources offered as **opportunities**, not as required.
 6. **Q/A.** We held a brief question and answer period. During that time the following things were mentioned:
 - a. **Know your bandwidth.** An easy way to test this is <https://speedtest.net> which enables you to ensure your broadcast will be stable. You want to make sure it is above 10 in all measured areas prior to broadcasting. Note: this measure changes depending on time of day so explore that based on projected time for broadcast.
 - b. **Social media policy.** C4SO and GAD have both issued updates to their policies amidst the crisis and can be found at the end of this document on pages 6-7.
 7. Closed in **prayer**.

We will continue these Zoom calls for ministry leaders **every Wednesday at 11am** (<https://zoom.us/j/392212840>).

We may consider merging with youth leaders, who meet on Mondays, if that seems easier. Contact Aaron Buttery for Mondays with youth leaders @12n EST (<https://zoom.us/j/933820199>).

If you have any questions or want to hear more about a topic in the future Zoom calls, please email Jessica: jjones@gulfatlanticdiocese.org

Example
Bloom's Levels of Learning

Applied to the Prodigal Son

Creating	Write a modern parallel story to the Prodigal Son. Do not use the same images or location or context.
Evaluating	Judge whether the prodigal, the father, and/or the elder son were good or bad. Defend your opinion.
Analyzing	Compare this story to reality. What events could not really happen today?
Applying	Demonstrate how a prodigal would be received in your house.
Understanding	Explain why the Prodigal Son left and then decided to return.
Remembering	Detail the events that happened in the parable of the Prodigal Son.

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Consider: how are you asking discussion questions in the upper half of this taxonomy, rather than the lower?

C4SO Original Social Media Policy:

- The term “social media” refers to social networking services, blogs, short-message services, message boards, wikis, podcasts, image- and video-sharing sites, and other methods for real-time information sharing among users. Because this is a constantly evolving area, these principles below apply to all new social media platforms whether or not they are specifically mentioned here.
- Don’t connect with children on social media when they are younger than the minimum age as established by each social media outlet (for example, Facebook’s minimum age is currently 13).
- With parental consent, engage in healthy interactions with youth on social media.
- Use personal interactions on social media avenues to model appropriate behavior both on and off social media.
- Report any concerns about social media to your ministry supervisor and/or rector.
- Social media core values: In areas where this policy does not provide a direct answer for how members of your community should answer social-media questions, members should use their best judgment and take the most thoughtful and prudent action possible:
- Be responsible – social media posts are individual interactions, not official church communications. Members of your community are personally responsible for the content they publish. Official statements of church policy may only be made by the rector or her/his designee.
- Be smart – a blog or community post is often visible to the entire world and can be shared by others in ways that you cannot control. Remember that what you write is public and will remain public for a very long time. In private communications with students, if a student ever attempts to engage in any sort of inappropriate conversation you should discontinue the conversation, document the conversation, and report the incident to the ministry supervisor and/or rector.
- Respect the privacy of others – do not publish the personal information of others in the community without their permission or, in the case of children under 13, written permission of their parents. Personal information includes that information that can be used on its own or with other information to identify, contact, or locate a person.
- Be respectful – your church is a thoughtful and prayerful community that encourages free expression and values civil debate. If you disagree with others, do so with civility. Respect your audience, express your views with appropriate language, and be respectful of the Church and its teachings.
- Be trustworthy – Students may confide in you about personal matters. While you should never repeat their personal matters as gossip, you cannot promise confidentiality. There may be occasions when it is necessary to share personal information a student disclosed to you due to potential harm to the student.
- Be selective – there are a variety of communication methods available and not all communications are well-suited to social media platforms. Consider whether your communication is better suited to face-to-face conversation, a phone call, email, or other method.

GAD Original Social Media Policy:

- **Social Media:** Social media avenues are important ways for youth ministry staff and volunteer leaders to connect with students. Their world is often constructed around social media, for better or worse. Having personal interactions in this venue allows adults to model appropriate behavior in social media, and it forms valuable connections with students.
- The Diocese strongly recommends that each church have a proactive policy for social media and other forms of electronic communication in the context of children’s and youth ministry. Clergy,

staff members, and volunteers shall refrain from connecting with students on social media when students are younger than the minimum age as established by each social media outlet.

- Sending sexually explicit or offensive communications (e.g., text messages, emails, social media messages or posts) is included in the definition of sexual harassment and will not be tolerated.

Additional considerations for social media policies during Covid19, implemented by both C4SO and GAD and posted under Covid19 updates on both diocesan websites:

- Remind your adult leaders and volunteers that a virtual space is the same as a room, and not to be alone in that space with a student.
- If your ministry features one-to-one discipleship models, switch to triads or small groups. Using an app or conference call that has a recording feature does not make it a safe environment, as recordings can always be deleted.
- Be mindful of texting and apps that have one-to-one features. Marco Polo and GroupMe are some of my favorite communication tools because they have strong group functions. Your students will reach out to you individually, and these apps allow them to return to the group easily.
- Use of social media is increasing exponentially. Use it as a means to encourage public connection, and work to avoid private messaging.
- Be open and clear with your students and their parents about your safety guidelines.
- In your video calls and connections, make sure you are fully and appropriately clothed, and that there are no beds or suggestive items in the background. When orienting students to your online environment, asking students to be in a main room (not bedroom) and appropriately dressed, is also recommended.
- Keep your background checks and Ministry Safe training up to date.
- Be cautious and diligent if recruiting new leaders. Young people are already targeted at higher rates for online predation, and we are the first line of defense for that in our churches.
- Set up a schedule of online meetings with your adult leaders to ensure that students are not falling through the virtual cracks, and to encourage Ministry Safe practices online.
- For those students under 13 (this is the usual minimum age for social media platforms by the platforms themselves), get parent permission for any communication and welcome the parents into that environment.