

## A GUIDE TO HOSTING HOME WORSHIP

Hosting home worship in your home is a special opportunity to embody the great reality of being the body of Christ. When we gather, we are responding to a call to worship; that call is an echo and renewal of the call of God to be his image bearers in the world. *Thank you for hosting!* Below are some tips to consider when preparing to host. It is not a comprehensive list but addresses some key topics. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to reach out to Pastor Pete at [pete@holycrosstucson.com](mailto:pete@holycrosstucson.com).

### Planning for guests

- Plan your start time and communicate ahead of time to guests
- Arrange the chairs before you gather to allow for commonsense distancing
- Allow for some time before and after the service for fellowship

Consider following a sample flow of the morning:

- Welcome & getting settled (15-20 mins)
- Open with pray and checking in with others (10 mins)
- Watch the service online (50 mins)
  - Sing together (all ages)
  - Pause service right before sermon
  - Session starter for kids & bible lesson introduction
  - Resume worship service
  - Come back together for final song and benediction (all ages)
- Sermon discussion (10-15 mins)
- Prayer requests and prayer (10-15 mins)

We are recommending setting a 2-hour time limit to your gathering. This isn't a firm number but simply a recommendation to consider limiting our group interaction and allowing space for our hosts and guests to have the freedom to go on with their day. You may consider adjusting based on your particular group dynamics.

### Food & Beverages

If you prepare food and beverages for your gathering we ask that you consider commonsense hygiene practices and eliminate sharing from common dishes and utensils. You may also want to communicate ahead of time with guests to let them know if food and beverages will be available so they can determine ahead of time if they wish to partake.

### Hygiene & Social distancing

Please consider offering access to hand-washing and/or hand sanitizer to all guests upon arrival and exit. When it comes to seating, every home is different. It is best to accommodate your guest in a way that provides appropriate distance between families. Some homes may be able to accommodate larger groups than others. Below are some other tips to consider from the CDC:

- Modifying greetings to include nodding, bowing, or waving instead of hugging or shaking hands.
- Arrange seating to accommodate recommended social distancing.
- Consider paper towels in the bathroom for hand-drying instead of a shared towel.
- Do not attend if sick.

### Kids

We have provided some helpful resources online to include young children in our home worship. Some groups may decide to pause the online service right before the sermon for a brief (10 min) introduction to the Bible lesson. You may also spend a few minutes on the "Session Starter" of the kids curriculum. All these documents are found on our Home Worship Resources page. Here are some other tips:

- Have all ages join for singing.
- Print ahead of time all necessary activity pages and/or bulletin pages for kids.
- Set proper expectations (for yourself). Some young kids won't be able to track the whole service and that's ok! The hope is to encourage one another and share in this meaningful time together as we pray and worship.
- Be sure to check out the three brief video tutorials on the Home Worship Resources page for engaging with the kids curriculum.

### Communication

You may feel that some of these precautions are overkill. On the other hand you may feel that they don't go far enough. This is a time to consider how to demonstrate a posture of love, concern, and hospitality for one another. Communicating with your group ahead of time by (email, text, or phone) to let them know what to expect will go a long way to making people feel welcome and comfortable. We should consider the needs of our guests and seek to remove barriers to feelings of shame and discomfort, as much as we are able. The biblical principle here is to not cause our brother or sister to stumble (1 Cor. 8:13).