

Guidance for TRINITY ST ANDREW'S for using Zoom - the virtual meeting platform

Zoom is free, easy to use and the website has useful video tutorials to help make the most of online meetings. This platform has a number of advantages when gathering children and young people virtually. It supports a conversation with many participants, allowing the whole youth group to meet in one place. It also has a share screen feature available during the call which makes sharing videos, passages and questions with the group very easy.

There is a free version of Zoom, which is best used from a computer. On the free version, you can only chat for 40 minutes, but you can arrange a second meeting to start about 10 minutes later. Alternatively, as a church/youth leader, you can sign up to pay the monthly fee to be a 'host' then all the participants (i.e. your whole youth group) can still join in chats for free. Anyone **over the age of 16** can sign up to Zoom and download it to their device using the free option. It is recommended that parents/guardians do this.

Zoom's advice around under 16s using the platform is: "Children under 16 cannot create a Zoom account. A parent or guardian may, however, permit the child to use that parent or guardian's account with their supervision."

Youth Leaders *can* schedule meetings and then invite participants via a link (**for those under 16 the link must be sent to their parents/carers**), which can be shared by text/email etc. It is advised that *the* group should meet at a regular set time.

IMPORTANT: Due to the increase in 'Zoombombing' it is vitally important that the meeting invite link is only shared with the parents/young people in *the* group - and that the importance of not sharing the link beyond the group is stressed to all participants.

The "waiting room" facility should also be used so that only those who should attend the meeting do so.