



# 5 Rhythms of Online Ministry

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It isn't too late to move your ministry online! These are the 5 rhythms of ministry that we invite you to shift online. On this page, you'll find an overview of the rhythms, links to video webinars, and other resources to help you get started. In the pages to follow, you'll find a quicksheet for each of these ministry rhythms that we hope will help you take your next steps.



### Leaders' Meetings

[Webinar Preview](#) | [Full Webinar](#)

Start by gathering your leadership team together. Re-establish your rhythms of meeting and pray for direction. Care for your student leaders, interpret the moment, and invite them to care for their networks.

Want training for your student leaders? Invite them to a [student workshop](#)!



### Small Groups

[Webinar Preview](#) | [Full Webinar](#)

Connect in smaller groups to deepen relationships and learn to recognize and obey God's voice. Study Scripture together, listen to God in community, and respond to God's invitation.

If you want ready-to-use [Bible study materials](#), we've got you covered!



### Large Groups

[Webinar Preview](#) | [Full Webinar](#)

Gather in a large group to worship together and to hear God's Word. Focus first on the why, who, then how of the gathering; determine roles needed; and invite students.

If your group is small or you don't want to invest in the production, join us for [InterVarsity LIVE!](#) It's our gift to you. Plus, you can host a watch party with that week's [Chapter Time guide](#).



### Outreach

in word: [Webinar Preview](#) | [Full Webinar](#) || in deed: [Webinar Preview](#) | [Full Webinar](#)

Though it is important to care for your group, it's also still important to reach out to others in both word and deed. Create space for fun, model honest vulnerability, and invite students to explore Jesus with you. Also, practice embodying spiritual disciplines, create space to respond communally, and provide immediate application opportunities.



### Prayer

[Webinar Preview](#) | [Full Webinar](#)

While you're hopefully praying in all four of the other ministry rhythms, prayer is too important to not have its own section. Establishing prayer meetings can also boost the power of prayer in the other four rhythms. Raise expectancy for God to show up in power, listen to God's voice, and pray with boldness for healing.

## Online Leaders' Meetings

Care for student leaders • Interpret the moment • Invite to care for their networks

### Timeline

- :00 ● Welcome (2m)
- :02 ● Agenda (1m)
- :03 ● Student leader care (20m)
- :22 ● Interpretation of the times (5m)
- :27 ● Care for networks (20m)
- :46 ● Make a plan (10m)
- :56 ● Post on Social Media (5m)
- :60 ● Closing

### Guidance

*"Thank you all for joining me for our first online leaders' meeting..."*

*"We are all going through a bunch of unexpected transitions..."*

1. Fill out *Table 1: Check-in*

*In Breakout Rooms*

2. Pair Sharing (2m) and Prayer (2m)
3. Scripture – Psalm 23
4. Fill out *Table 2: Word from the Lord*
5. Pray to close

*"...If we seek the Lord in our time of scattering, I think he will care for us and use us in ways we can't imagine today..."*

Scripture – Acts 11:19-21

*In Breakout Rooms*

1. Brainstorm community connections (3m)
2. Fill out *Table 3: Network Map* (3m)
3. Pair prayer for students by name (3m)

*"Let's brainstorm ways we can connect and care..."*

4. Fill out *Table 4: Brainstorm*
5. Read aloud, invite improvement

*In Breakout Rooms*

6. Share your favorite idea (3m)

*"Let's make a plan. Be specific. Who will you reach out to this week? ..."*

Fill out *Table 5: My Plan*

*Post: "I'm praying for all my college friends and faculty today as we navigate online classes and other transitions..."*

*"Leadership is going to look different. Let's commit to doing these 3 things..."*

### Tables

[Link to Sample Outline](#) with tables to copy & paste

#### Table 1 | Check-in

- How are you doing amid all the unexpected transitions? What challenges are you facing?
- What's one thing you're grateful for?

#### Table 2 | Word from the Lord

- What word or phrase is speaking to you? Why?
- What habit can you start or continue this week to allow Jesus to minister to you?

#### Table 3 | Network Map

- One table per student leader
- List names of small group members and non-Christian friends
- How are they connected to InterVarsity?

#### Table 4 | Brainstorm

- Brainstorm ways to connect and care for our networks.
- Ideas - think creatively!
- Improve an idea

#### Table 5 | My Plan

- Who will I care for this week?
- What will I do? When? What help do I need?

## Online Small Groups

**Study Scripture** together • **Listen** to God in community • **Respond** to God's invitation

### Timeline

- :00 ● **Welcome & Zoom etiquette** (2m)
- :02 ● **Community check-in** (5m)
- :07 ● **Intro prayer** (7m)
- :14 ● **Scripture** (5m)
- :29 ● **Listening prayer** (3m)
- :32 ● **Share how God is speaking to you** (10m)
- :42 ● **Apply the Scripture** (8m)
- :50 ● **Brainstorm ways to care for others** (5m)
- :56 ● **Make a plan** (2m)
- :58 ● **Close in prayer**

### Guidance

*"Thank you all for joining me for our first online small group meeting..."*

Fill out *Table 1: Check-in*

**Reflect: What's ending? What's unknown or undecided? What's new?**

*In Breakout Rooms of 2*

Pray about that. Give your feelings, expectations, and fears to Jesus

**Study a passage of Scripture together**

If you need Bible study resources, these are our recommendations:

[COVID-19 Grow Guide](#)

[Encountering Jesus](#)

[Flourishing Communities](#)

For active engagement, try inductive manuscript study on Zoom! [Watch this tutorial.](#)

**Create space to listen to God**

*In Breakout Rooms of 3-4*

- Fill out *Table 2: Hearing from God*
- Share and debrief what you heard

*In Same Breakout Rooms*

Share a way you want to respond to the passage

**Invite a missional response to reach out to others & brainstorm ideas**

Fill out *Table 3: Caring for others*

*"Let's make a plan. Be specific. Who will you reach out to this week? ..."*

### Tables

[Link to Sample Outline](#) with tables to copy & paste

#### Table 1 | Check-in

- How are you feeling?
- What's the peak (best) and pit (worst) of your week?
- What's one thing or person you're grateful for today?

#### Table 2 | Hearing from God

- What is God saying to you?
- What's one thing you can put into practice this week?

#### Table 3 | Caring for others

- How can we care for others this week?
- What's a next step you can take?

### Does using technology make you nervous?

Find tips on using Zoom [here](#). But remember, be gracious with yourself. It's normal if things don't go perfect the first time. Keep learning and growing!

### Free Bible Study Resource:

[COVID-19 Grow Guide](#)



## Online Large Groups

**Focus** on why, who, *then* how • **Determine** roles needed • **Invite** students

It's tempting to start with the what and how. The challenge is to focus on: Why is God inviting us to gather? Who are we trying to reach? How will we do that?

**Possible Roles** (your group may not need all 10, and some people can play more than one role)

- 1. Tech Host:** Schedules meeting, sends Zoom link to Communications Director, has host permissions, disables waiting room when pre-party begins, manages audio during the call (muting people who forget or join late, removing people if necessary), sets up breakout rooms for discussion
- 2. Communications Director:** Posts on social media, schedules people to go on IG live, sends out emails, etc.
- 3. Prayer:** Prays for speaker, intercedes for the night, prays for those who ask for it after the meeting. This can be an individual or a team.
- 4. Scribe:** Writes discussion questions, puts the questions in the chat, creates Google Doc.
- 5. Pre-Party Leader:** Leads before large group starts, keeps the conversation going, welcomes new arrivals
- 6. Emcee:** Officially starts the meeting, transitions, runs announcements, "spikes" it spiritually at the end, etc.
- 7. Worship Leader:** Leads solo (guitar/voice or keys/voice), needs strong Wi-Fi and decent audio (external mic is best), or shares computer audio to stream a pre-recorded worship song
- 8. PowerPoint:** Preps and runs PowerPoint during the Zoom call, manages the share-screen functions (correctly sharing the specific window and timing it right). This person should have host or co-host permissions on Zoom.
- 9. Speaker:** Preaches the message. It is wise to include a couple moments where you invite people to type something in the chat, or to un-mute and repeat a key phrase (e.g. "Un-mute and repeat 'God is with me!'"). This helps keep participants engaged.
- 10. Administrator:** Creates virtual contact card, data entry, and follow up

## Tips to Inviting Students

### Identify barriers to students joining

- "Zoomed Out" (screen fatigue)
- Overwhelmed with life
- Lacking motivation
- New rhythms of their current life at home
- Technological issues
- It's unfamiliar
- Desire to "shop" for the best content

### Help students overcome those barriers

- Pray for them
- Classic 1-1 follow-up, checking in relationally first
- Encourage students to invite other students
- Give a winsome vision-cast
- Invite a student to be trained to be the speaker
- Utilize Social Media in new ways: build the hype!
- Host a pre-party and an IG Live before it

## Online Outreach in Word

Create space for **fun** • Model **honest vulnerability** • Invite students to **explore Jesus**

**How to Connect Your Hobby to the Gospel** [Link to Full Worksheet](#) for students to make a plan

Invite students to do the following three steps to create their own outreach event. The online event should have two components: (1) something fun related to the hobby and (2) an invitation to be honest about life

### Step 1: Spark

- Brainstorm: What are your hobbies? What do you enjoy enough that you could do it with your friends online?
- Write an invitation to an event that involves something fun (your hobby) and an invitation to be honest.
- Invite your networks to this event

### Step 2: Bridge

- Invite God into your own brokenness and pain
- Practice listening prayer and record how God is working in you
- Write out a brief, personal testimony (the more honest the better) to share
- Be prepared to transition the group from fun to honesty and be ready to share first

### Step 3: GIG (God-Investigation Group)

- At the end of the event, one or more people may be ready to explore Jesus with you
- Prepare to invite those people to another event (a GIG you start, a welcoming Bible study, or InterVarsity LIVE)
- **Important:** Don't try to incorporate a Bible study into the initial event if you didn't advertise it, so it's not a bait-and-switch. They expect fun and honesty—start there!

## Online Outreach in Deed

**Embody** spiritual disciplines • Respond **communally** • Provide immediate **application**

### Learning from InterVarsity's First Online Justice Program

1. Embodying spiritual disciplines provides space to be fully human in a digital age with screens.
  - Being outside with God in creation
  - Dancing to worship music
  - Body Prayer from Julian of Norwich
    - Await (hands at waist, cupped to receive) – Await God's presence, however it may come to you.
    - Allow (reach up, hands open) – Allow a sense of God's presence to come... or not... and be what it is.
    - Accept (hands at heart, cupped towards body) – Accept as a gift whatever comes or does not come. Accept that you don't know everything, that you are not in charge.
    - Attend (hands outstretched, ready to be responsive) – Attend to what you are called to, willing to be present and be God's love in the world, however God calls you.
2. It's hard to pursue justice alone. There's a real desire for community and for people to do things together and be united in that purpose. Create space for students to respond communally.
3. Give everyone something practical that they can do that same day and provide debrief accountability. If people don't know how to respond, they most likely won't. Empower students with tangible ways to impact their families, communities, and beyond.

## Online Prayer

**Raise expectancy** for God's power • **Listen** to God • **Pray with boldness** for healing

The method of prayer is less important than the power and faith behind it.

### Building Your Boldness

- Cultivate faith through stories and Scripture
- Take a risk and make space for God to move in power
- Debrief it: How did this increase your faith?

### Practical Tips for Leading a Prayer Meeting

1. Be the first to share to set the example
2. Be direct about whose turn it is to pray (screen order is different for everyone)  
*Angelo, could you pray next? Then Jon, then Heather. OR: We're going to go alphabetically.*
3. Mark transitions well  
*Thanks everyone for writing your prayer requests. Now, we're going to sign up to pray for one another. Read through our table and put your name next to two requests.*
4. Keep track of time for the group

### Prayer Meeting Outline [Link to Full Outline](#)

#### Step 1: Get everyone in the Zoom room

Hey everyone – let's gather online to pray together at [insert **time & date**] on Zoom. When you click the link, it will download the Zoom app, if you don't already have it: [insert **Zoom link**]

#### Step 2: Introduce & Host

Welcome to our prayer time! Please mute your mic when you're not speaking to avoid background noise.

#### Step 3: Pray

##### Option 1: Pray for the same topic in small groups

1. Leader sets up the prayer topic
2. Set up breakout rooms & split up to pray (Repeat as many times as desired)

##### Option 2: Share requests & pray for each other

1. Create a table in Google Docs
2. Write 1-2 prayer requests each
3. Write in your name to volunteer to pray for someone else
4. Pray down the list

##### Option 3: Listening Prayer

1. Share vision for listening prayer
2. Give an example of how you've experienced listening prayer. Offer a clear thing to listen for.
3. Pray to open the listening time
4. Silence for listening
5. Invite everyone to share
6. Close in prayer

#### Step 4: Debrief

Invite everyone to share the experience praying together online:

1. What was your favorite part?
2. What will you keep praying for?
3. When should we meet next? (offer 2-3 times)