



Church at Home | Host Guide Fall 2020

CHURCH AT HOME GENERAL INFORMATION:

WHAT IS CHURCH AT HOME?

“Church at Home” is Element Church’s method of gathering during the Covid-19 pandemic (size of gatherings will phase in correspondence with government and CDC allowances and recommendations). Church at Home is the method of gathering through the end of 2020.

WHAT DOES A CHURCH AT HOME GATHERING LOOK LIKE?

These will be casual & friendly gatherings of small groups of people who meet together and engage the Element Church weekly Livestream. Essentially, these are “house churches” meeting in three environments:

- *In homes physically*
- *in student housing physically*
- *in zoom rooms virtually*

Most Church at Home gatherings will happen on Sundays although some virtual groups will meet at other times. Every Church at Home Gathering will include 4 elements:

- *worship (livestream)*
- *teaching (livestream)*
- *food/conversation*
- *prayer.*

The worship & message is provided via video on Facebook or YouTube (or through an Element specific platform) and the group will also gather around a meal or snacks for community, conversation, & prayer. Church at Home gatherings will typically be groups of 3-10 people although virtual zoom rooms may have more and then utilize “breakout rooms” for conversation.

WHAT IS THE TIMELINE OF A TYPICAL CHURCH AT HOME GATHERING?

The average Church at Home Gathering will last around 2 - 2.5 hours from start to finish. This includes worship, message, food/conversation, & prayer. (time for the typical Church at Home group: 10:00am-12:30pm). Here is an example Church at Home timeline:

- 10:00 am - Guest arrive/Church at Home virtual pre-gathering lobby
- 10:30 am - Element Virtual Gathering officially starts
 - Welcome, family announcements, teaching, worship, ministry time
- 12:00 pm - Church at Home Food/Fellowship/prayer (virtual livestream officially over)
- 12:30 pm - Church at Home gathering officially ends with prayer

We anticipate that Church at Home Gatherings will be happening through 2020. We are exploring plans beyond 2020 as the community health landscape continues to open up in the future.

WHO CAN BE A CHURCH AT HOME HOST?

Almost anyone can be a Church at Home Host. You must have a physical place to host, or be able to host a virtual zoom room and be willing to facilitate the 4 elements of a Church at Home gathering: worship, teaching, conversation and prayer. You must also commit to communication with the Element Church leadership team weekly (by attending the virtual meeting or through listening to recording post meeting). We believe “clarity breeds confidence” and in hopes of offering clarity we have outlined the commitment a Church at Home host is making and also what the hosts can expect from Element Church leadership.

Commitment of C.A.H. Hosts

- **I commit to lead on Sundays in the following ways:**
 - I will gather 3-10 people physically or virtually
 - I will be ready to host from 9:45(ish) am to 12:30(ish) pm
 - I will lead engagement of the Element Church Livestream from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
 - I will endeavor to offer and/or facilitate pastoral care for the members in my group
 - I will have communion elements available on the 1st Sunday of each month
 - I will provide, or facilitate, food or snacks weekly
 - I will facilitate post livestream conversation: “i.e. What’s the Spirit doing in your heart?”
 - I will submit weekly attendance report (PCO Groups)
 - **NOTE: Church at home leaders will not be responsible for collection of any tithes or offerings. All giving will be done online, through text or can be directly mailed to Element Church P.O. Box 52 East Lansing, 48826**
- **I commit to engage throughout the week in the following ways:**
 - I will support Element Church financially through consistent tithes and offerings
 - I will personally engage, and encourage others to engage the shared reading SOAP guide
 - I will personally engage, and encourage others to engage 21 Days of Prayer
 - I will attend or listen to the weekly Leadership Call on Thursdays from 12:30pm-1:00pm
 - I will offer vital feedback to “make it better” when asked

Element Leadership Commitment TO C.A.H. Leaders

- Element will provide a life-giving, Biblically oriented Sunday Morning Live Stream
 - The Element Livestream will include “Apostles Teaching”
 - Offering DNA/Culture
 - Offering Bible Teaching
 - Offering Vision & Leadership Direction
 - Unifying invitations for shared spiritual growth practices
 - SOAP
 - 21 Days of Prayer
 - Shared Mission Partners & Projects
 - The Element Livestream will include Worship
 - You can do something else if you would like
 - Worship recording will be provided
- Element will provide Pastoral Care for Group Leaders
- Element will provide weekly encouragement and teaching during the Group Leaders meeting
- Element will provide extended Pastoral Care to Group Members when the care needs surpass the ability of the C.A.H. group
- Element will provide a system for reaching and connecting with new people
- Element will provide tools to communicate with your group
 - Group communication can take place through PCO Groups for all hosts
 - Virtual Zoom Room Licenses will be provided for virtual hosts

You can let us know about your desire to host a gathering on the Church at Home Host Application Form.

[Click Here | Host Application Form](#)

CHURCH AT HOME ENVIRONMENTS:

Here are some Church at Home Host suggestions as you prepare for your gathering:

BEFORE YOUR GUESTS ARRIVE:

- Have a fun, tidy/clean, and safe home environment. Sanitize areas that are frequently touched. Those in attendance can decide if they would feel most safe with the use of masks.
- Be hospitable - Have coffee and/or beverages available, and be ready when your guests arrive.
- Be prepared - Have the TV already on and linked to services on YouTube or Facebook. And if children are joining you, have any related kids activities ready.
- **Covid-19 Specific**
 - Please prepare your hosting environment according to your comfort level around reassembling in groups of people. We have defined three levels:
 - I'm very comfortable reassembling (i.e. "I can't wait to hug someone.")
 - I'm moderately comfortable reassembling (i.e. "Let's elbow bump and give each other space.")
 - I'm not very comfortable reassembling (i.e. "Please don't touch me... Let's make sure we've all got our masks on.")
 - Please have a hand washing or Hand sanitizer station available (a sink will do!).

- Please stay mindful of CDC recommendations and encourage (and honor) people's comfort levels as everyone re-engages.

ADULT SERVICE:

- Model engagement during service. During worship - communicate that people are welcome to sit or stand during worship. During message time - Have your Bible and notebook ready.
- Communion: On Communion Sunday have juice and bread prepared ahead of time for your gathering to take together.

FAMILY FRIENDLY SERVICE:

- Kid friendly host sites: We understand focused engagement may be challenging with young children present. Enjoy the families and encourage engagement while communicating that "distractions" are going to be a part of the process with families. They don't have to be distractions - they can be seen as a part of worship together as families. Do a lot of encouraging and be ready to roll with the punches!

MEAL/DISCUSSION/PRAYER

- Make preparations to "Break bread"/share food together. This could look like a cookout, a bring your own dish meal (potluck), sandwich & chips or simple snacks/appetizers. Bless the food together before eating. (note: you can provide food, arrange a schedule for people to take turns bringing food or let people bring their own snacks - whatever you do communicate with your group clearly).
- As the Church at Home Gathering Host, be intentional to engage in meaningful conversation that builds life-giving community dynamics and encourages spiritual growth during the meal/gathering. Please read and follow [Group Dynamics Guidelines](#) for guidance on how to cultivate a healthy group dynamics.
 - Here are some examples of the types of questions you could ask:
 - What is the Holy Spirit speaking to your heart after this morning?
 - What stuck out to you during the teaching today?
 - Is there a scripture or a part of a scripture that impacted you?
 - How are you doing right now?
 - Do you or your family have any prayer requests?
- At some point in the gathering, probably at the table, at the end of the meal, pause and pray for one another and any requests that were shared.

CLOSE OF GATHERING

- Make sure it is understood when the ending time of your gathering is (12:30pm), and that people are free to leave whenever they need to. We do not want the gatherings to become too long, that they become burdensome and not sustainable for weekly rhythms.
- Communicate plans for the following Sunday.