

WHAT NOW?

A tool for congregations to
plan in the age of COVID-19

HOW WILL WE GATHER?



Activity worksheet

This exercise can be done as a stand alone planning activity or as part of the full "What Now?" planning tool available from RootedGood. This exercise is meant to take an hour or less.

INTRODUCTION

Since Covid-19 began spreading rapidly across the US, the rhythms and rituals of congregational life have been challenged in a way that is unprecedented for many.

The future is uncertain. And while restrictions are being lifted, we don't know when we will be back to 'normal'. In this 'interim' time, the number and complexity of leadership decisions are exhausting and overwhelming.

The purpose of this exercise is to help a congregation or organization have a good conversation and make decisions about how they will gather given the current context.



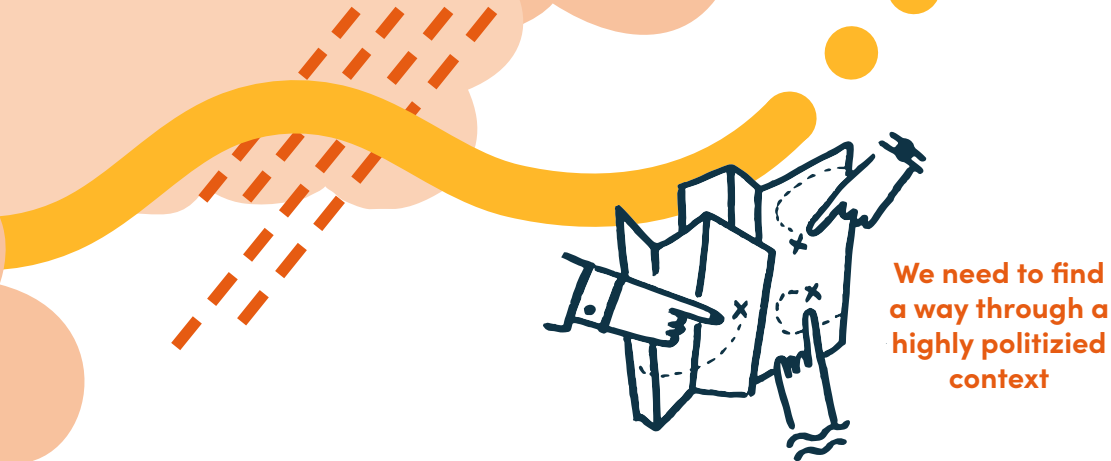
WWW.ROOTEDGOOD.ORG

1. HOW DO WE DISCERN HOW TO GATHER FOR OUR COMMUNITY?

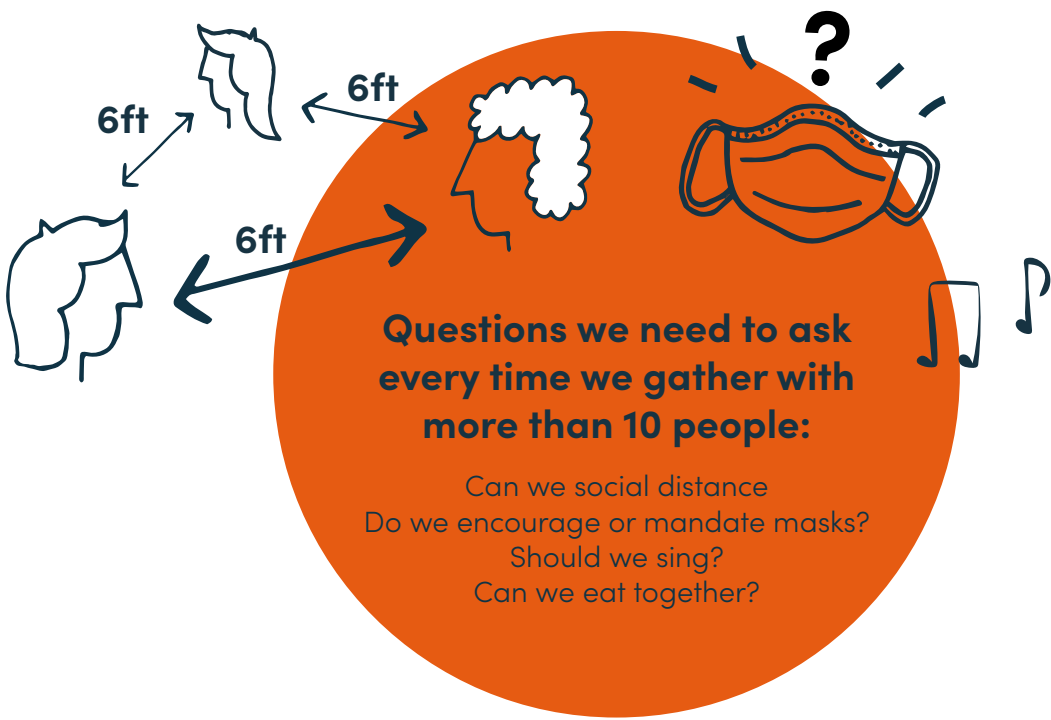
In a difficult and complicated environment we must discern how we will gather in a way that fulfills our mission and purpose even if our practices look different now.



We need to resist trying to go back to how things were in the past



We need to find a way through a highly politized context



Questions we need to ask every time we gather with more than 10 people:

- Can we social distance
- Do we encourage or mandate masks?
- Should we sing?
- Can we eat together?

2. WHY DO WE GATHER?

Choose the five most important reasons 'why we gather' from this list:

- Fellowship
- Bible study
- Sacraments
- Worship
- Stewardship
- Connection
- Spiritual comfort
- Encouragement
- To learn
- Meet God in a special place
- Tradition
- Corporate confession
- Reassurance
- Share the gospel
- Get out of the house
- See God in the eyes of another
- Music
- Corporate prayer
- Discipleship
- Spiritual growth
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

Write your chosen five reasons for why we gather in the boxes,
and answer the set of questions below:

#1 WHY WE GATHER:	HOW WERE WE FULFILLING THIS PURPOSE PRE COVID-19?	CAN WE DO IT IN THE SAME WAY? YES NO IF ADAPTED	WHAT WILL WE DO?	CAN WE DO THIS WELL? Y N Are we promoting Health? Human Flourishing? Are we leading our community in ways that value life? Are we taking un-necessary risks? Is this what good looks like? Is this the best way to fulfill our mission and purpose?
#2 WHY WE GATHER:	HOW WERE WE FULFILLING THIS PURPOSE PRE COVID-19?	CAN WE DO IT IN THE SAME WAY? YES NO IF ADAPTED	WHAT WILL WE DO?	CAN WE DO THIS WELL? Y N Are we promoting Health? Human Flourishing? Are we leading our community in ways that value life? Are we taking un-necessary risks? Is this what good looks like? Is this the best way to fulfill our mission and purpose?
#3 WHY WE GATHER:	HOW WERE WE FULFILLING THIS PURPOSE PRE COVID-19?	CAN WE DO IT IN THE SAME WAY? YES NO IF ADAPTED	WHAT WILL WE DO?	CAN WE DO THIS WELL? Y N Are we promoting Health? Human Flourishing? Are we leading our community in ways that value life? Are we taking un-necessary risks? Is this what good looks like? Is this the best way to fulfill our mission and purpose?
#4 WHY WE GATHER:	HOW WERE WE FULFILLING THIS PURPOSE PRE COVID-19?	CAN WE DO IT IN THE SAME WAY? YES NO IF ADAPTED	WHAT WILL WE DO?	CAN WE DO THIS WELL? Y N Are we promoting Health? Human Flourishing? Are we leading our community in ways that value life? Are we taking un-necessary risks? Is this what good looks like? Is this the best way to fulfill our mission and purpose?
#5 WHY WE GATHER:	HOW WERE WE FULFILLING THIS PURPOSE PRE COVID-19?	CAN WE DO IT IN THE SAME WAY? YES NO IF ADAPTED	WHAT WILL WE DO?	CAN WE DO THIS WELL? Y N Are we promoting Health? Human Flourishing? Are we leading our community in ways that value life? Are we taking un-necessary risks? Is this what good looks like? Is this the best way to fulfill our mission and purpose?

3. WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN NEXT? WHO IS DOING WHAT?

ACTION PLAN

WHAT DECISIONS HAVE WE MADE?			
WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?			
WHAT IS NEEDED?			
HOW WILL WE COMMUNICATE IT?			
WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?			

CASE STUDIES: REIMAGINING GATHERING



Reimagining family ministry

One church created Grab and Go pizza box packs – activity packs for family faith-filled fun. The ‘menu’ of activities catered to a range of ages and included a Bible story theme of the week – games, crafts, snacks, music, healthy exercise, and a mission idea. They could be ordered for free from socially distanced pick up locations.

Reimagining communion

One church set up tables outside of the church building, providing the congregation with individually wrapped pretzel bags and juice boxes so that people could pick them up and stay for a social distanced communion service.