

SUGGESTIONS FOR USING Zoom CONFERENCE CALLS TO STUDY THE *HORIZONS* BIBLE STUDY

In preparing for the study of “Cloud of Witnesses: The Community of Christ in Hebrews” by Melissa Bane Sevier, here are some suggestions for creating new on-line groups at your church.

Q: Why would PW at my church want to expand the study outside circle meetings?

A: It could increase the number of women in Bible study to include those who do not regularly come to circle meetings. It may also have the effect of increasing awareness about Presbyterian Women and their activities, missions, fellowship, and other good benefits!

Q. Who might be interested in coming?

A. Circle members who miss a meeting and want to discuss the missed lesson – but more importantly, the on-line group could include those who are homebound, those who have driving issues, women who work on the days or evenings that PW circles meet, moms with young children, those who don't like to attend “another meeting” outside the home, etc. The membership could change month to month. Younger women may have taken on-line courses in college and could already be familiar with Zoom from their work or personal life.

Q. Just what is Zoom?

A. Zoom provides HD video and high-quality audio in conference calls that includes screen sharing (e.g., documents or scanned pages from the study book). Anyone can sign up for a free account which allows a 40-minute limit for 3 or more people in meetings; however, the host (who sets up the meeting) and all participants can then sign back into the same meeting immediately, using the same link with the meeting-specific number. This can be repeated as long as needed – but most Bible study sessions can probably be completed in one or two of these 40-minute calls. See <https://zoom.us/> for more information. There are more advanced Zoom accounts with monthly or yearly fees, but you will just need the free account for these type of Bible studies.

Q. What equipment do the host and participants need?

A. A computer, laptop, tablet, or smart phone with a camera and mike are needed in order to see all those in the meeting and any documents shown on the screen. If a participant does not have this, she can join the meeting using her regular phone. She will be able to talk and hear everyone, but would need printed materials that will be discussed.

Q. Who leads the Bible study?

A. Groups could decide or the PW Moderator/Bible Moderator could assist in finding someone to get the on-line group started, e.g., the same woman who taught the lesson in circle meeting that month or a pastor. The on-line group may find that there is talent within the group for teaching! Be creative: maybe your near-by churches may want to combine a few members from each church to form a group and rotate who leads the Bible lesson.

Q. What about using the DVD by the study's author? It includes questions and discussion starters, lesson summaries, and main points outline for each lesson.

A. Using DVD's on Zoom could have issues with copyright laws, but according to Susan Jackson-Dowd, Executive Director of PW in the Louisville office, PW owns this DVD so she highly approves of using it for lessons on Zoom.

Q. How can the on-line meetings be easily scheduled?

A. The group can determine when the meetings will be each month. A standing date and time could be selected, or meetings could be scheduled monthly depending on availability of participants for that month. The group could determine this verbally, through e-mails, or even better---use a Doodle poll on-line. See beta.doodle.com/free-poll.

Q. When can we start?

A. Now! Publicize the idea of this on-line study group, start recruiting members, order the study books---you're on your way to understanding *community!*

