Introduction

The good news is that you can run *Forming* in an online format, and it works quite well!
This document will help you get started. There's a lot of detail, but it's not difficult.

There are a number of ways in which facilitating the course online differs from leading in a classroom environment, which is why this document is longer than we had hoped. One of the main issues we have encountered is that normal internet speeds have a lot of trouble accommodating the high-quality videos we created for the *Forming* course. The high-density video is simply too much of a load for normal internet speeds. For example, if you have a DVD version of *Forming*, the participants may experience periodic jumps in the video or significant lags between what they see and what they hear. As the presenter watching the video that you are transmitting, you may be completely unaware of the challenges faced by your viewers. Please take care to follow the guidelines below to insure that your users have the best possible experience.

We highly recommend that you test everything out ahead of time, before you begin the course. Connect with a friend who can watch what the participants are seeing and can provide you with feedback on how the videos are playing, etc.

There are also a few unique Copyright considerations when sharing *Forming* videos online.
Please see the Copyright notice at the end of this document.

Getting Started

We recommend using ***Zoom***, which is becoming very popular. All of the instructions that follow below assume a Zoom context, and should be accessible to anyone who is new to Zoom. If you are using another platform, please read these instructions anyway as a guide that you can adapt as needed.

For starters, you will need a paid Zoom account. The free version limits your group time to 40 minutes, and *Forming* sessions last at least 90 minutes. Zoom prices are have increased ($149/year as of this edit) so you might consider asking your group members to contribute. A lot of churches and para-church ministries already have Zoom accounts, and they might be able to provide a meeting room for you to use.

As a facilitator, you will become the ***Zoom host*** who schedules meetings, invites the group members, and moderates the time together. You will have a few features that attendees do not have (for example, you are the only one who can end the meeting or "mute" everyone's microphone at once).

If you are familiar with Zoom, you can skip this paragraph. Otherwise, please locate tutorials on **zoom.us** and elsewhere to learn the details about how to set up meetings and invite people to join. But briefly what it means to run a Zoom meeting is that you login to your zoom account, create a scheduled meeting, copy the text it gives you that tells people how to join the meeting, and then go to your favorite email system and paste that text into an email that you send to your group members. All they need to do is click on the link you send them in order to join the meeting at the scheduled time.

When participants read their email and click the link to the meeting, Zoom will automatically download and start. If participants have trouble with this, see troubleshooting.

Best Practices During the Meeting
Please read this in its entirety

When you host a meeting, you will need two separate active windows on your computer. One window will be Zoom, of course. The other will be for the *Forming* content. If you are using a DVD, that second window will be your computer's DVD player, and you should have the first video for that session already queued up before starting the group. If you are using a USB or a Streaming option, you should access that particular Session, which will display in your default web browser, which will then become the window you will share at the appropriate times.

It is best to have ALL of the participants mute themselves while others are talking, and only unmute when they want to talk (clicking the microphone icon at the bottom of the Zoom window). Otherwise, the background noise at each location can feed into the Zoom session and create quite a noisy session, and sometimes even interrupt whoever is speaking. As the host, we recommend using ear buds or a headset to prevent any feedback, and work in a quiet room so you don't have to keep muting yourself.

Once everyone is online in the Zoom meeting, you can begin the class as you normally would.
When it is time to show a video, use the "Share Screen" option at the bottom of your Zoom window, and select your Video window to share. Be aware that when you do this, what you see on your screen as the presenter will not be the same thing as what other group members are seeing. You mostly have to trust that it's working. Depending on their Zoom settings, they might still be able to see other group members while watching your shared video. So regardless of what you see on your screen, you will not be invisible to the group members unless you disable your camera for the duration of the video.

In fact you should always disconnect your camera (clicking the camera icon on the bottom of the Zoom window) so that your internet connection does not have to transmit your live image in addition to the *Forming* video. Also be sure to "Mute" yourself before sharing the video screen (it only mutes your microphone, not the video). Otherwise, when the video plays and the audio from the video comes out your speakers, it can feed back through your microphone and echo back to the other listeners, lagging behind the computer audio by a second or so, which makes listening virtually impossible for your viewers.

The participants have a few options when viewing a shared screen, but only one of them insures that they see all of your shared window. So during the welcome time, help them with their settings. First, share your video screen with everyone, and direct them to the "**Options**" button at the top of their screen next to the green bar that says they are "**Viewing … Screen**". They should click the Options button and note the options there. One says "Full Screen" mode, which allows them to "Enter" or "Exit" "Full Screen." They should NOT use Full Screen, as it might cut off some of the shared video. The other option will toggle between "Original Size " and "Fit to Window". They should always use "**Fit to Window**" in order to see everything correctly. This also means that they will always see the same size video, regardless of how big the video window is on your computer (as long as it is wide enough to accommodate all the video). Once everyone has their settings, you can "Stop Share". Make sure everyone is familiar with their options and begin the session

Later on during the session **when it is time to show a video**, turn off both your mic and video, then click the "Share Screen" button. In addition to choosing which window contains the video, there are 2 check

boxes at the bottom of the "Share" pop-up screen. One says "**Share Computer Sound**". Be sure to check that box, so that the Video window can play through the Zoom connection directly. The other box is "**Optimize Screen Sharing for Video Clip**". Whether you click this depends on what video you have (see below). Make sure nothing overlaps the Video window, including the Zoom control panel, because any overlap will look like a black area on the participant screens. Also be sure to move your mouse off the video controls so that they drop off the display. For best results, make sure there are a few seconds between the time you Share the screen and the time you start playing the video. That gives Zoom time to synchronize things.

During the exercises that require reflection, you may want to encourage people to disable their cameras so they can have more privacy with God. Be sure to mute yourself during this time as well. About 2 minutes before the end of the reflection time, temporarily unmute yourself and let them know how much time is left. When each person is done, they should turn their video back on so you will know when everyone is ready for discussion.

In a few places, the facilitator guide suggests dividing up into smaller discussion groups. Although Zoom has the ability to do breakout rooms, we would suggest not doing this unless (a) you have a really big group, (b) you are really tech savvy and can divide the group very quickly.

At the end of Session 8 is an exercise titled "What If You Were There?". This one is difficult to run online as originally designed, since it requires breaking into small groups that discuss different perspectives and then report back to the large group. We suggest instead, that you lead the entire group together through all 4 perspectives, one character at a time, and then summarize the results at the end (see the summarizing questions in the exercise).

With those guidelines, everything should work just fine. Once people get comfortable with the technical context, they will begin to interact very freely as if they were all were in the same room.
Blessings on your group and your online experience!

Important Settings for Participants
Make sure your participants are aware of these features.

Controls in the Upper Right of the Zoom Window

Gallery View / Speaker View == Allows user to switch between 2 ways of viewing the group.
        Try them to see what you like.

Full Screen Icon == Allows users to enlarge their Zoom window to full screen.

Sprocket Wheel icon == All Settings (not visible on all Zoom windows)
        Gives you access to various settings
        e.g. If the icons at the bottom of the Zoom window overlay part of the shared video,
                Click the Accessibility tab; clear the box "Always show Meeting Controls"

If participants do not have the sprocket icon, they can still access all their settings. Just click the caret next to the camera and select "video settings". Once the pop-up is visible, all other settings are available as well.

Menu / Icons on the Bottom of the Zoom Window

Microphone (Mute) Icon
- Click to mute and un-mute microphone.
- Use caret ("^") next to mic to change audio settings.
  - If you have multiple mic's or speakers connected, you can choose which to use.
  - If you need to connect with phone for audio, you can switch it here.

Camera Icon (Video)
- Click to disconnect or reconnect camera to Zoom.

Chat
- Opens or closes a chat window for the users.
- Users should be free to chat during the class.

Leave Meeting
　　　Allows users to leave the meeting early.

Keyboard Shortcuts
Be sure that Zoom is your active (highlighted window in order for these to work.
Alt + A == Audio mute and un-mute
Alt + H == Hide or Show Chat area

Special Features / Highlights

Enable a Co-Facilitator to have Host Privileges
After your co-facilitator joins the meeting
- click "Manage Participants"
- Move mouse to your co-facilitator's name. Click "More..."
- Click "Make Co-Host"
- Click "Yes"

To Mute All Participants at Once
Click "Manage Participants" icon.
Click "Mute All" button.

End Meeting
When the session is over, click "End Meeting" (lower right corner). The Zoom meeting will end.

Prevent Participants from Sharing Screens

Only the facilitator should share a screen during the meeting.

- Click the caret ("^") next to "Share Screen" and Click "Advanced options"
- Under "Who Can Share?" click "Only Host"

Alternately, click the Security icon and uncheck "Allow Participants to Share Screen".

Keep the same URL for All 12 Sessions

If you are meeting weekly at the same time, you can create a recurring meeting and everyone can use the same URL for all 12 weeks. When scheduling your initial meeting

- Click the "Recurring meeting" box
- Enter the proper info for the recurring sessions

Even if you are not meeting in a given a week due to holidays, etc, leave the extra meeting scheduled. It's just easier that way.

Summary of Steps for Sharing Video Window

To begin sharing with maximum effect:

1. Mute your mic and Stop Video.
2. Click "Share Screen" icon.
3. Click on the window that contains the video (DVD player or Browser).
4. Click the box "Share computer sound".
5. Optionally, click the box "Optimize Screen Sharing for Video Clip" (see below).
6. Click "Share" button.
7. On Zoom control panel, click "More" >> "Chat" (so users can communicate problems)
8. On Zoom control panel, click "More" >> "Show Video Panel" (see what users can see)
9. Make sure nothing overlaps the Video window.
10. Make sure at least 5 seconds have passed since you clicked "Share".
11. Click "Play" on the video window.

To End Screen Share:

1. Click "Stop Share" on Zoom control panel
2. Unmute and Start Video

About the checkbox: "Optimize Screen Sharing for Video Clip"

When you turn on this option, Zoom transmits a low resolution video to the participants.
In theory, this is a great idea, because high-density video will create a choppy presentation.
However, the original *Forming* videos are very high quality, and while the drop in resolution does not hurt the "movie" portions of the video, the "slides" that are shown become so fragmented that they are virtually unreadable. Please see Forming-Course.com for Low-Resolution options.

If you are using any of the following, do NOT click the box:

> DVD
> High-Density Streaming (HD) on USB or Streaming
> Even so, please be aware that participants may experience lagging in the video.

If you are using either of the following, it is BEST to check the box:

> Low Resolution videos on USB
> Low-Resolution Streaming (LR)

Troubleshooting

When Sharing a Window, the Participants See a Black Screen
Please click this link for a solution.
https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/202082128-Black-Screen-During-Screen-Sharing
You will probably need to reboot your computer after applying these changes in order for them to take effect.

Participants are Seeing Extremely Distorted Videos
You probably have a bad internet connection. You might consider closing the meeting and restarting it. Of course, be sure to let the participants know they should rejoin in about 15 seconds.

Participants See a Lot of Lag in the Video
Due to internet bottlenecks, the audio can continue even though the visible portion slows down. The difference between them can become rather significant. If the participants can message you in the chat window to let you know about this, you can pause the video for a few seconds to let things catch up. If it persists, you can try restarting the meeting or simply ignore the problem.

Zoom Does Not Start Automatically for Participant
In some instances, computer problems may interfere with normal Zoom startup.
They can go to the following link to download the Zoom program and install it on their computer.
If the email link still does not work, they can run Zoom manually, click "Join Meeting" and enter the meeting ID that was sent in the email.
https://zoom.us/download#client_4meeting

Copyright Considerations

Please be aware that the *Forming* videos are all protected by copyright. They cannot be copied or stored in a cloud account. Nor can they be broadcast to the public at large. When you run an online group, it cannot be presented in a pod-cast format that is available to hundreds of anonymous attendees.

You must specifically invite individual people, and not more than 25, thus creating a closed group format. This best corresponds to what would happen if you ran a small group at your church.
If you wish to host a larger group, please email david@KingdomFormation.org for permission.

You **may not** use the Zoom **Record** feature while any *Forming* Video is playing, as that is an infringement of copyright laws.

– End –