

Enjoying what matters most this holiday season

Make use of new technologies to connect with loved ones and forge new traditions that will stand the test of time



A National Lutheran Community

While this year has forced us to put some of our old traditions on hold, it also gives us the opportunity to create exciting new traditions that fit new needs. Use the tips below to reinvent your holiday season, as well as add new occasions for celebration to your everyday routine:

- **Bring family to you with a scheduled video call.** If your loved ones are reconsidering plans to visit for the holidays, offer them an alternative: a virtual gathering. And why wait for the holidays? Start a monthly, bi-weekly, or even weekly video call with family and friends.



- **Start a shared photo album.** Google Photos, Dropbox, and Apple's Shared Albums all provide simple, user friendly ways to share photos with friends and family. Share memories in real time, comment on each other's escapades, and recreate the feeling of sitting over a book of family photos.
- **Bring the family together for a weekly activity or meal.** Put a new spin on a favorite holiday recipe or acting out your favorite holiday story. Putting down your phone and talking to family about their week, the challenges they've faced, and their hopes for the future can create an occasion to look forward to.
- **Create a family recipe share,** which is especially good for families who usually celebrate with potluck dinners. Everyone can share their recipes so each household can replicate the meal.

(Continued on back)

- **Play board or card games that have been adapted with online versions.** Play family favorites like Uno and Monopoly with grandchildren virtually.
- **Record a video of yourself reading a holiday bedtime story,** such as “How the Grinch Stole Christmas” or “The Polar Express” for your grandchildren to enjoy throughout the season. Apps like Marco Polo are great for this.
- **Make a family holiday playlist** using a service like Spotify and have each family member add their favorite holiday songs.
- If you cannot attend your usual religious services together, **have a virtual meeting to read the Christmas story and sing your favorite Christmas carols.**

While the holidays this year will be different, your creativity can make them even more special. Make an effort to reach out and rekindle relationships that may have been put on hold as we have sheltered in place. Take the plunge this year and spark a new reason to bring the family together. It is likely that you will find great meaning in your new experiences.



Call 301-355-2801 or visit: www.thevillageatrockville.org

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