



PODS WITH A PURPOSE

(Little groups for connecting with God, a few others, the church and the community)

<https://www.pod-church.com>

Fall is here! The virus is still here (: Sunday morning worship is important but not enough! Congregations need to find fresh ways to encourage people to have meaningful connection with God, others & community as well as be engaged in worship, whether online or in-person.

There are many shifts in patterns, needs and opportunities due to the virus such as:

- *A busy couple with small children used to attend church faithfully while the kids were in Sunday School. Now the kids are uninterested in online worship & with uncertainty of the day the parents no longer engage worship online & they are in no church groups.*
- *A regular church attendee who is in a high-risk category or just received a diagnosis such as cancer, must be very careful to protect themselves from the virus and stay away from large or social events.*
- *Those who live alone, those with church as the main interactive part of their lives, or who just moved to an area, are all struggling with isolation and loneliness.*
- *Some church members continue working in the public setting. Although they follow safety procedures concerning the virus, they do not feel comfortable attending worship for fear of spreading the virus to others in the congregation*



PODS (small Groups) Offer an Opportunity for Engaging/Re-engaging People



- **A pod is a life-giving *little* group supporting and empowering the people of God.**
- **ANYONE CAN DO THIS---students to senior citizens can initiate a group.**
- **Pods are easily do-able, expandable *little* groups that help us grow in our relationship with God, with the people of God, and with God's work in the world.**
- **The ministry of Jesus and the early Christian Church involved many pod-style groups: most of them were *little* groups who supported one another and were sent to join Jesus' mission in the world. Pods can fill the need for those who hunger for connections and purpose during these times.** *(continued on page 2)*

Pod-Based Ministry

- A life sustaining *little* group supporting & building relationships, growing more like Christ, and being sent into their community: work, school, family, neighborhood...
- Groups are *little*, typically 3 to 5 people (maximum of 11)---*the closeness of relationships increases as the size of the group decreases*
- May last for 6 weeks or may be ongoing
- May meet immediately after person/online worship, a class, or a standing event (in breakout rooms) or anytime during the week (45 to 90 minutes in a place with social distancing requirements)

Pod-Meeting Format

Pods follow the Word-Share-Prayer discipleship triangle when they gather understanding that a gathering ends with being sent to serve.

- **This format allows:**
 1. **The Inward Journey**
growing in relationship with the Triune God and each other
 2. **The Outward Journey**
growing as we are **sent** → to serve.



Word-Share-Prayer

- **WORD**---Share insights from a biblical text
- **SHARE**---Share personal blessings and needs
- **PRAYER**---Pray for one another by one another
- **SENT** → *Sending* one another to engage & join in Christ in his mission at home, work, community. . . (see The Halverson Benediction below)

(*Time Spent on each of the above is adaptable and expandable depending on time allotted for pod meeting. Refer to home page of <https://www.pod-church.com> for more details.)



The Halverson Benediction

You go nowhere by accident. Wherever you go, God is sending you. Wherever you are, God has put you there. God has a purpose in your being there. Christ lives in you and has something He wants to do through you where you are. Believe this and go in the grace and love and power of Jesus Christ.

For many ideas for launching pods, pod resources, podcasts, clever graphics, etc. . .
from Rev. E. Stanley Ott, PhD.

go to <https://www.pod-church.com> and check out the links.