

IDEAS FOR BIBLE STUDY

during a time of social distancing

Little Rock Scripture Study

We know that many of you are in the middle of Lenten or spring Bible studies but can't continue to meet in person due to Coronavirus precautions. What a challenging time! Here are some ideas for your groups. Feel free to reach out to Amy Ekeh, director of LRSS, at aekeh001@litpress.org with other ideas or with questions. We'll get through this together!

A note about video lectures: For groups using our New Edition format, there is a link to the online lectures on the Table of Contents page of each book. Individuals in your group can watch or listen to the lectures online on their own if they have internet access. For those using Classic Studies with a DVD, you may simply continue your study without the Wrap-Up Lectures for now. Once your group can meet again, you can gather to catch up on lectures if you'd like!

- **Use web-conferencing to continue to meet at your usual time.** If your group has a tech-savvy member that can get you all connected using free web-conferencing software like Skype or Zoom, this can be a really satisfying way to continue to meet once a week. It is wonderful to be able to see each other's faces as you talk about and share what you have learned during the week. This may take some time to set up and get used to, but it's a wonderful tool once you have it up and running. If you have a large group, you may wish to break up into smaller groups for the purposes of these gatherings and discussions. If certain members of the group are unable to connect this way, perhaps others could reach out to them for a phone conversation during the week.
- **Use email to keep in touch and share ideas.** Some of our Bible study groups have very active email lists! A group discussion can carry on this way throughout the week, or simply on the day of your usual gathering (to minimize the number of emails, especially for larger groups). Everyone can share one or two things that they learned during that week's study, or that they really pondered, or that they questioned. Hearing from each other by email isn't the same as meeting in person, but it can keep you connected and cheer you all up! You can also share prayer requests and let each other know how you are doing.
- **One-on-one faith-sharing by phone.** When you can't meet as a group, another option is to share in one-on-one conversations. One person in the group can assign pairs to talk on the phone once during the week, discussing the content of the lesson as usual. The following week, new pairs can be formed, etc. This can be voluntary as not all members may wish to participate.
- **Harness the power of Facebook.** If a significant number of members of your group are on Facebook or are willing to join, you can form a Facebook group just for your Bible study group. You can share about what you're learning and reflecting on, prayer intentions, favorite Scripture passages, and encouragement. Facebook also has video conferencing options that your group might explore.
- **Plan to gather for a final "debrief" when the situation allows.** None of us knows how long these social distancing precautions will continue, but once we do know, your group can make plans to gather for a final meeting for some large group faith-sharing and a celebration of your study.
- **Suspend your study for a time if you feel this is best for your group.** Some groups may simply decide to postpone their group study and resume it once they are able to meet again in person. If your group does this, you may want to find ways to stay connected and offer each other spiritual support during this time. If your group has an email list, you can keep in touch by email, sharing encouragement, favorite Bible verses, and Good News with each other during this time of separation. If you're looking for supplementary material to read and discuss together, we have free articles available on a variety of biblical topics at www.littlerockscripture.org/resources (scroll down to "Articles").
- **Continue praying for each other.** Another way to stay united during this time is to commit to praying for one another on a daily basis, something many groups already do. Prayer draws us together as we lift one another up to God with our thoughts, words, and emotions. It is comforting to know that others are remembering us in their prayers, and it builds our relationships as we remember others in our own prayers, praying for their needs, their anxieties, and their health. And know that here at Little Rock Scripture Study, we are praying for all of you!
- **Check in with LRSS from time to time.** As we hear from groups that share what is working for them, we will update this page, which will be accessible from our homepage at www.littlerockscripture.org. In the meantime, feel free to reach out to Amy Ekeh at aekeh001@litpress.org or 320-363-2081 to share your own ideas or to receive any support or help we may be able to offer. May the healing presence of God be with you!

