

A guide to holding a Virtual Christingle



christingle.org

This is a unique year for Christingle as for the first time ever many will take place online. But whether you're a virtual meeting expert or giving it a go for the first time, this guide will outline everything you need to know for holding a virtual Christingle celebration.



If you have any questions in your planning along the way, you can always contact our friendly Supporter Care team on **0300 303 7000** – or why not try joining the Christingle Organiser's Forum at facebook.com/groups/Christingle where you can learn tips and tricks from fellow Christinglers?

Using the right platform

Before you begin your planning, it's worth considering which platform is best for hosting your Virtual Christingle. There are many options, all with different strengths and weaknesses, so have a think about which is best for you and your community. Here are a few pros and cons for some of the main platforms we'd recommend:

	Facebook Live	Google Meet	Microsoft Teams	Streamyard	Zoom
Sharing Video content	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Multiple hosts	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Stream to more than one platform (e.g Facebook and Youtube)	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
Participant interaction	In comments only	✓	✓	In comments only	✓
Watch later	✓	✗	✗	via Facebook/YouTube	✗
Join through web browser	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Breakout rooms	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
Public forum	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗
Live subtitles for accessibility	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗
Join via phone	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
Cost	Free	Free for 1 hour, up to 100 participants	Free version available	Free version available (Streamyard logo in video)	Limited to 40 minutes unless paid for (£11.99 per month)

Livestreaming your Christingle service

If you are able to gather for your Christingle service, you may wish to livestream it for those unable to attend in person.

Things to consider:

- Choose the platform on which to livestream (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, YouTube).
- Check you have a good phone or internet signal in your venue.
- Set up your phone/camera on a tripod or stand.
- Consider how you might get permissions for videoing participants or simply have the camera only trained on the leader.
- Ensure you have the correct licence for playing music as part of your service.

Online safety

When sharing anything online, always consider safety and privacy. Ensure you have permission to share any images or film of any participant. (See our Social Media and Photography Guidance resource for more details).

Remember that what is shared on the internet - even in a private forum - will remain 'out there'. If you use Zoom for your online gathering, ensure you use the 'waiting room' function to avoid 'gatecrashers' and find a secure way of sharing the link (such as via email).

Options for those who are completely offline

You may wish to use telephone conferencing to enable a group of people to dial in and speak on the same line. Free telephone conference services such as WhyPay enable numerous people to join the same call, meaning those at home can join over the phone.

Share the phone number, room number and pin code with participants and tell them when to dial in and then conduct your service or meeting over the phone. You could also put a phone on speaker/hands free that is dialled in to the number when you're running a live event in church that people at home could ring in to listen to.

Another option is to enable people to dial in by telephone to a Zoom meeting.



Organising your Virtual Christingle

This year we've created a collection of new resources specifically designed to make holding online celebrations easier – simply visit christingle.org/resources to order them.

All our other resources have also been adapted to enable Christingles to take place online, or in small numbers with social distancing, so this will make it easy for you to continue to share the light this year.

Bringing Christingles into homes

Will you supply oranges and sweets to homes or leave them at church for people to collect? Perhaps you'll ask people in advance to source items themselves? Whatever you decide, we've created bags that make keeping all your items together a little easier.

- Don't worry if you don't have the time or people to bring Christingles to people's homes. Our **Talks and sermons resource** includes a 'Scavenger Hunt' activity, enabling people to create a 'Christingle' without the items! This means anyone can join without the need to prepare.
- Our **Christingle at home resource** provides Christingle prayers and reflections for members of your congregation who don't have internet access. You can customise the resource, print it out and then make it available to your offline community.
- The **Christingle arts, crafts and games resource** also provides at-home reflections and fun activities for children. This can be used for adults and families without internet access, or in addition to your virtual service.

Music in Virtual services

- While singing together and hearing each other sing isn't possible in virtual services, you may wish to play music as part of your service. You can visit the [Christingle playlist](#) for some inspiration. Please note, to stream music, your church must have a streaming license, such as that offered by CCLI. You can find out more at uk.ccli.com

Promoting your Virtual Christingle

- Placing a Christingle colour-in prayer card in your window is a great way to share the light with your community – and colouring them in is such a fun activity for children! You can distribute the cards to your community in the bags, or send them online so people can print them out at home.
- Don't forget to register your event at christingle.org/join where you'll be able to share details on how to join your Virtual Christingle.



Inspirational videos

- **Promotion video:** Download this video to help you promote your Christingle celebration in your community.
- **Video about The Children's Society:** Play this video in your celebration to show how our vital work changes young people's lives.
- **Thank You video:** Play this video at the end of your celebration to thank everyone who took part. This will be available later in the year – check christingle.org/video when you're ready to thank your community

Raising money for The Children's Society

- Get started at christingle.org/join By signing up, you'll get a unique fundraising page for your Christingle, so you can securely take donations directly to The Children's Society – perfect for virtual Christingles, and a cashless option for in-person celebrations. Your donations will go directly to The Children's Society (donors will be able to Gift Aid) and you'll be able to see how much your service has raised! Your congregation will be able to easily donate online by visiting your unique page.
- Playing the Christingle video during your service is an easy way to explain the work of The Children's Society and how your service's donations help young people. If you don't want to play a video in the service you can always use the **How Christingle helps resource** to share the work of The Children's Society with your congregation.

Visit christingle.org/video
to find our inspirational videos

