

Making Memories & Telling Stories in the Now

Reflect, Create and Be Intentional

During the Covid-19 crisis, we might take this opportunity to look back on past monumental events and reflect on what stories were passed on. Most teenagers and young adults have no idea what Y2K is or what it was like. People sold their homes, spent their entire life savings, and hunkered down in fear that the world was going to end once the clocks went from 1999 to 2000. It is a time period that has been lost to mass media and the fast pace moment of life. Yet, it was real. People were affected and there are stories to tell just like there are stories to tell now. Our youth have an opportunity to record and tell this story. Let's not let this moment go by without taking time to engage and document this and other memories in this time of our lives. Storytelling can be an impactful faith practice to engage in. This is an opportunity to engage our youth and college students in this practice and give them time to reflect and create during Covid-19.

Create a Virtual Family Tree

This is a perfect time to begin telling the story of your family and where they came from. Starting a family tree is a journey into the past. Whether the process involves a whole family or an individual, there are plenty of opportunities for growth and a better sense of self. Thankfully, in this internet age, there are plenty of resources to begin your family tree.

- Create a free [Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com) account and begin exploring your family history. In their own words, "One name is all it takes" to begin your family tree. You'll begin by inserting information about yourself and expanding from there.
- Download free family tree charts from [National Genealogical Society](https://www.familytree.org). This hands-on approach allows users to keep track of familial information as they conduct their research.
- Search through [Genealogy.com](https://www.genealogy.com). Research thousands of historical records uploaded to this genealogical database.

Talk During A Movie

Some of the best memories are shared memories of attending movies with friends and family. While talking during movies is normally discouraged, the discussion that follows afterwards are remembered for years to come. Movies are more than just fiction; they are the realities that we desire played out on screen. During this moment of isolation, many people are missing that escape to the cinema. Netflix has a solution. Watch a movie and this time, you can talk as loud as you want or at least type as loud as you want. Introducing, [Netflixparty.com](https://www.netflixparty.com).

Bring the cinema to your friends and family. Through Netflix party, you can watch Netflix with your friends while being in a closed chat room. Everyone is watching one movie while freely being able to converse as a group while the movie is playing. Here's how to get started:

- **STEP 1:** Download Google Chrome browsers on desktop or laptop computers. (all participants)
- **STEP 2:** Install [Netflix Party](https://www.netflixparty.com) from the Chrome Web Store
- **STEP 3:** Login to your Netflix account and select the show you would like to watch.
- **STEP 4:** Locate the red "NP" on the toolbar and click "Start Party".

- **STEP 5:** Share the Party URL with your friends and family.
- **STEP 6:** Enjoy the movie and conversation.

In case you are looking for movie suggestions, take a look at the [Rotten Tomatoes “Best Of” list](#). This is a great opportunity to talk about what moved you in certain films or even just to crack jokes and enjoy a laugh. Remember that making memories does not have to be hard, but it can be intentional.

Bury or Hide a Time Capsule

Time capsules provide secure containers to store the objects of today that celebrate milestones and memories. Commemorate the decade by placing pieces of your favorite memories into a time capsule and either bury it (with permission) or hide it away in a closet of the church. Either way, write down where it is and let church leadership know. The process isn’t hard and more importantly, it is a fun way to gather together the small things in a big way. In order to keep your treasured items safe and intact, there are a few steps to keep in mind.

- Select a material that can handle the journey. If burying, look for a large capsule that is rustproof and waterproof. If hiding in the church, something more substantial than cardboard might be good as it could be years before it is opened.
- Select a sealant that will ensure no air or dust particles get into your capsule.
- Ensure that everything inside the capsule is dry, durable, non-acidic, and can handle fading over time.
- Give your items as much space as possible to prevent color transferring and further corrosion.
- Seal your time capsule and create a stable environment by placing it somewhere safe.
- Don’t forget to get permission. Write down where the time capsule is located and let church leaders know.

Celebrate your finished project by writing down or talking about what you hope life will be like in five or ten years when you excavate your time capsule. This is a great chance to share future hopes and dreams.

Record and Archive Your Memories with StoryCorps

StoryCorps’ mission is to preserve and share humanity’s stories in order to build connections between people and create a more just and compassionate world. The StoryCorps App makes collecting, organizing and storing stories a snap! Participants interview each other and record meaningful conversations that are then archived at the Library of Congress. The best part is that it has a community feature which allows you to categorize and set aside your recordings just for your church, family, or organization. By placing these stories in one location, you’ll have memories you can keep adding to year after year. Getting started is easy.

Create a Community

1. Download the StoryCorps App (*Available on [Apple Store](#) and [Google Play Apps](#)*)
2. Create an account
3. Log in to your account at archive.storycorps.org from a desktop or laptop computer. That account will be the “owner” of the community.
4. Click on your profile photo in the upper right corner of the screen.
5. A drop-down menu will appear; on this menu, select “Create A Community.”
6. This will take you to a form; fill out all the required information, including a title, description, image, etc.
7. You’ll also be asked to select preferences for [moderation](#) and given the option to opt in to advanced features.

8. Once you are done, click “Create Community” on the left.
9. You’re finished. You can start using your community and encouraging others to add their interviews.

Start your Interview

10. Prepare your questions in advance but be ready to ask follow-up questions and delve deeper if you hear something interesting.
11. Partner
 - a. Try to find a quiet place to conduct your interview.
 - b. Ask your partner for permission to record them before you start.
12. Have a Conversation
 - a. Begin your recording by introducing yourself and ask your partner to introduce themselves. State the location, date, and year of where and when you are conducting the interview (e.g., Today is November 24, 2019, and we are in Grandpa’s living room in Lexington, KY.).
13. Enter Photo, Title, and Keywords
 - a. The app will prompt you to take a picture with your partner. If you prefer, you can take a picture of an old photograph of your partner or a piece of paper with the interview date on it.
14. Save the Interview and Share. StoryCorps interviews have their own URL links and can be shared and posted to your social network or website. Use these interviews not only as a time to get to know those who are close but to share with those who are far away.

The amazing thing about the Christian faith is that it reminds us that making memories is not accidental. Our rituals of baptism and eucharist are a testament to that. In fact, some moments are more memorable when done on purpose; think of weddings, graduations, and birthdays. We may be stuck in our homes, but we are not stuck in ways. We can do better than getting back to normal. We can keep moments like these going so that we are intentional with our words, our resources, and our time.

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