

# Invitation to Virtual Council

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**By Tom Pawlak, Co-Convener for Illuman of Indiana-Michigan**

We are immersed in a pandemic that has certainly been a challenging teacher.

It has forced us out of our normal patterns and has led us where we typically would not go. Work schedules have been disrupted, schools and churches have been closed. Retreats have been cancelled, including our spring retreat, like other events all over the country. All this, and yet people are creatively figuring out ways to connect and stay in touch.

Illuman has seemingly been preparing for such a time as this. They have been offering ways for men to do their inner work by gathering in Virtual Council circles for the past three years. I personally had been slow to participate in these open circles, but recently I participated on a couple of Saturday mornings. I now feel my initial disinterest at looking into this new way of gathering in Virtual Council was shortsighted. In fact, these Councils have been and are facilitated very well, creating a safe space to share and including excellent prompts. These allow men to openly share from their hearts—similar to what we would do at one of our retreats.

If you are interested in learning more about Illuman's Virtual Council opportunities, including gathering times, check out this link: <https://illumian.org/virtual-council/>. The Virtual Council page also includes a link to download the free Zoom online gathering platform software that allows you to join a scheduled meeting.

The Virtual Councils I've joined have had 20–25 men participating. The good news is that, after the welcoming and initial orientation for new participants, you are split up into smaller groups of four to six men for about one hour of Council time together. I think you will be pleasantly pleased if you give it a try.

Hoping to see you in Virtual Council sometime soon.