



The Episcopal Church

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Social Media and the Episcopal Church: A New Way to Tell a 2,000-Year-Old Story

The Episcopal Church Office of Communication has produced a free guide to assist congregations in using social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) for growth, expansion, and to tell their stories.

“So much of the information out there about using web and social media marketing is geared toward selling products and services,” commented Jake Dell, Episcopal Church senior manager of digital marketing and advertising. “We saw the need to write a guide that Episcopal congregations could use and would speak to them, but at the same time we wanted to borrow as much as we could from the business world.”



Logos via Asthma Helper on Creative Commons (“<3” is the emoticon for a heart.)

The social media guide (or white paper) points out that if your congregation is typical, you probably don’t spend a great deal of time or effort on your Web presence. “You probably have a website, but it may be little more than a static page that lists basic information such as your church’s address, phone number, and scheduled services. Yet at a time when participation in organized religious communities is declining across the board, you simply can’t afford not to create a strong online presence. ... In this white paper, you will learn how social media can help you welcome new members to your community in a warm and deeply personal way, encourage participation in parish activities, and tighten the social bonds of your congregation to build a stronger and more vibrant spiritual community” (Social Media and the Episcopal Church, p. 3).

To download a complimentary copy of this guide, scan the QR code on the right, or go to <http://episcopal.ekkleisia360.com/white-paper>.



Best Practices for Church Websites

(from *Social Media and the Episcopal Church*)

(1) Know Thyself. Make a list of the top five programs that make your congregation unique (e.g., your church’s preschool or mission trip team). Create Facebook pages and Twitter accounts for each program, and delegate responsibility for each account to a member of your community who is active in that particular area.

(2) Make Your Website the Crown Jewel of Your Communications Strategy, and Keep It Fresh with Constant Updates. Your website should definitely include such things as service schedules, directions to the church, bios of church leaders, and other basic “about us” information. But you should also include transcripts of sermons, articles written by staffers as well as members of the congregation, blogs, news feeds, videos of events, status updates of church fundraising projects, and any other information that might be of interest to future or current parishioners.

(3) Make It a Two-Way Conversation. Provide e-mail addresses of church administrators, leaders, and authors of articles posted on the church website or Facebook page. Enable feedback forms so people can type in their reactions to what they’ve just seen or read.

(4) Put Someone in Charge of Your Online Strategy. Treat your online communications as an essential part of your church’s operations. Write a job description—even if the “job” is a volunteer position—that specifies precisely how often the website will be updated, how many Facebook updates will be posted every week and how many Tweets will be sent out a day.

(5) Don’t Be Too Controlling. Establish guidelines, but don’t be overly strict. Provide people with the opportunity to express their opinions. Insist on good manners and polite discourse by all means, but don’t censor messages that simply express disagreement with prevailing congregational attitudes.

(6) Don’t Reinvent the Wheel. Always research what products and services already exist in the market before attempting to build anything yourself. It is very likely that someone has already created what you need.