



How to create a Church Website

A guide for all in our District

We currently have 92 websites in our District – no matter what your context this guide will help you create one.

Budget:

Firstly, let's talk money. There are a few options for creating a website that's completely free, but these have significant draw-backs (normally adverts and restrictive URLs). Usually you are going to need a budget for your first church website. This can range drastically: from no setup fee plus ~£6 per month at the lower end, to ~£1,500 setup fee plus ~£50 per month at the other.

Select your platform:

There are many options out there, and it will depend on your budget, but here's some examples:

- WordPress.org / WordPress.com
- SquareSpace.com / Wix.com / Weebly.com
- Churchedit.co.uk / Church123.com / Churchpages.co.uk
- Local website designer / Agency

Hosting:

Hosting refers to where your website 'lives' on the internet. You wouldn't move to a new house without first checking it was affordable, big enough, and structurally sound; Finding a hosting provider for your church should be no different. Depending on what you've selected above, hosting might be included (e.g. Wix.com) or you might need it (e.g. WordPress.org).

Here's some options for hosting your website:

- HostGator
- InMotion
- Bluehost
- 1&1 IONOS
- GoDaddy

Choose a Domain:

You can't have a website without a domain. Your domain name is what people type into their browser (e.g. Google) to find your site. Our District website domain is: www.yorkshirenethodist.org. You probably want to use your church name for your website domain, but you'll have to check it's available. Lots of our churches use ".org" or ".org.uk", and this would be recommended, but there's lots of choice out there. Try to avoid acronyms that are hard to understand.

Main tips: make it short, make it memorable, and make it easy to spell.

Build your website:

The ‘how’ of building your website will vary considerably on which platform you’re using. You’ll probably want to create some standard ‘pages’ which most church websites have.

Example of menu options: **Home | About | Services | Events | News | Contact**

Details of youth work, mission etc. can be listed under ‘about’. Details of what to expect on a Sunday could be listed under ‘Services’. This is just an example. You might want to also have a main menu button for ‘church hire’ or ‘weddings’, but the key is to keep it short and try to limit to as few tabs as possible. Recommend max of 7, but over 9 is too many. Remember you can have additional tabs and links in your website footer – this can direct visitors to certain pages if they can’t find what they’re looking for in the main menu.

Ideas for website page titles: (remember to only use a max of 7 main menu options)

- Home / Welcome
- About / Who we are / Our Church
- What we believe / Our values
- What to expect on Sunday / New here? / Never been to church?
- Directions / Where we are / Find us
- Contact us / Get in touch / Got a question?
- Ministries / Mission / Youth work / Our groups
- Resources / sermon recordings
- Weddings / Venue hire / Facilities
- Service times / Meeting times / Weekly info / Worship
- Calendar / Events
- News / Notices / Newsletter
- Give / Giving / Donate
- Church staff / Our people
- Safeguarding
- Links / Our partners
- Data protection / Our privacy policy

Content and Design:

See companion guide – “Website Checklist”. Try to follow this list when visually designing your website.

Test and review:

Get some users to test your new website and make changes if necessary.

Make it live!