# FLOURISHING NOW

## Raising awareness online of your church in the community

## Summary Document

Thank you for downloading the "Flourishing Now" Resource Pack to help your church / Circuit with publicity and communication. This pack of digital resources contains:

- Church Comms & Publicity Checklist (2022)
- Design & Branding Best Practices (2022)
- Setting up a Church Facebook Page guide (2021)
- Converting a poster for online (updated for 2023)
- Suggested tools & resources – publicity (updated for 2023)

Publicity and Communications is a big topic, and the above resources don't cover everything, but hopefully provide some initial guidance to help you flourish in 2023.

If you want a full blueprint for engaging in great church communication then I'd recommend the book: **SO EVERYONE CAN HEAR - Communicating Church In A Digital Culture**, by Mark Crosby. It is a practical guide for those in charge of communication at your church, and perfect for those who want to move on from the basics.

However, for those looking for something a little more suited to smaller churches with limited people and skills, here is my approach for those getting started:

### → Online Publicity Blueprint

For most looking to promote events online to an external audience, the place to be is on Facebook. Check the **Church Comms & Publicity Checklist** to see if this is the right platform for you, or if a website or Instagram would be better. If you want to have an official presence, read the **Setting up a Church Facebook Page** guide. However, you can have just as much success as an individual promoting your church with posts in a local community Facebook Group. The best way to grab people's attention on social media is through pictures and video – so make sure any publicity online includes one of these. Usually this takes the form of a poster. If you already have a physical poster for your event, follow the instructions in **Converting a poster for online**. If you're designing something specific for social media, make sure to refer to the **Design & Branding Best Practices** document – a style guide, containing colour and font suggestions, along with examples and design tips. To achieve all this, as someone without digital skills or limited on time, then refer to the list of **Suggested Tools & Resources** to find free help and simple tools.

## → Have a consistent, joined-up approach

Churches tend to have lots of different people running many different events/groups, and all doing their own thing regarding communication and publicity. Try to have a consistent approach across the church: collate all the information together and present all your activities clearly (rather than separately and disjointedly). One way to achieve this is to have a welcome pack, leaflet, or notice board that showcases everything you provide for the community – and have a digital version that can be shared online!

## → Social Media Post Schedule

Our success on social media is going to be limited if we are only posting publicity everyday – even if we have taken on board the point above and the publicity is consistent in appearance, content, and co-ordinated with others leading groups in our church. So here is my suggestion for a feasible social media schedule for small churches looking to promote themselves to their community:

- **Monday:** post a simple graphic that displays what community events / church groups are taking place that week (remember to briefly explain what each one does!) – this could be a variation of the welcome leaflet mentioned above. Remember it's not about "come to our great event" it's about showcasing how you are caring for your community and providing where there is a need.
- **Wednesday:** engage with your community. Comment on a local post, share a post from a local business, or post something that isn't publicity.
- **Friday/Sunday:** Share stories or photos from events / church groups that have taken place that week. How did it go? Thank people for coming.

There's no need to include internal church notices and information about worship. Those in the community won't know what the Circuit plan is or be interested in the coffee rota. Remember the goal is to raise awareness online of your church in the community.

This obviously works best as joined-up church communication, run by a social media volunteer, administrator, or minister – however you can still apply the basic principle if you're an individual who leads a church group. Remember to engage with the community online, don't just promote your event and leave. Try to return and share something of how the event went afterwards.

It may seem like a lot for a small church but remember you can schedule posts in advance, and it can all be done from your smartphone, wherever you are.

There's so much more you can do with social media – publicity should only form a small part of your engagement. If you want to explore more holistic ways to use social media for your church, then take a look at the resource pack:

**FLOURISHING FOR THE FUTURE** - **Reaching new people with online ministry.**

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