

# FLOURISHING for the FUTURE

## Reaching new people with online ministry

### Summary Document

Thank you for downloading the “Flourishing for the Future” Resource Pack to help your church / Circuit with a mixed approach to becoming a digital-first church. This pack of digital resources contains:

- Best Practices for Church Facebook Pages (2021)
- Online Worship, Zoom, & Live Streaming Checklist (2022)
- Church Website Checklist (updated for 2023)
- Using your church Facebook Page for Evangelism (2020)
- Digital Safeguarding Best Practice (2022)
- Suggested tools & resources – systems & processes (updated for 2023)

Are you placing the same importance online as you do offline in your church? Thinking digital-first isn't about replicating everything you do online, but about having a counterpart – it might look very different. 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 becoming a church with an active online ministry then I'd recommend the book: **MetaChurch - How to Use Digital Ministry to Reach People and Make Disciples**, by Dave Adamson. 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:

### → Simple Digital-First Checklist

This could be for a single church, which is the ideal. But where the skills and people are lacking, look at providing this online ministry as, and through, your circuit. A group of churches working together to provide one set of online prayers, only needing one website, one social media volunteer, one weekly live stream, one place to go to find all publicity.

- **[Be present]** Have a website and one social media presence. To be 'digital-first' we need to be present in the digital world. A website is unlikely, at this small scale, to be a facilitator of online ministry in itself, however it is the perfect hub for signposting all the on-site and online weekly events and groups that you run. Here you can showcase that you are truly embracing being 'digital-first' by the way you

publicise your activities: that you are placing the same importance online as you do offline in your church. You need to be on social media to be a 'digital-first' church – pick one that best fits your ministry, commonly churches go for Facebook. Don't worry about being on all platforms – it's better to do one well than all poorly.

- **[Use digital communication]** Follow the advice in the “Flourishing Now” pack. Ensure all your publicity is being communicated well online. Find help with this in the resource pack: [FLOURISHING NOW](#)
- **[Have a shop window]** Provide one live stream per week (this doesn't have to be your Sunday Service). It could be evening prayers from your minister once a week live on Facebook. Or join with your circuit and have a rota of lay people providing morning prayer Monday to Friday on Facebook Live. You don't need lots of fancy tech – a phone with a camera and internet is all you need. It doesn't have to be an hour long. In fact, 15-20mins is the perfect length. Or alternatively, you could double up and live stream an event that's already happening on Zoom.
- **[Build community]** Run one online event per week (Zoom bible study, coffee morning, or creative worship). If you run a mid-week church group in-person, then to minister to those online, you also need to have an equivalent digital group. It doesn't need to replicate existing events and doesn't need to be run by a minister or church leader who is already stretched. What are the needs in your church and community and start from there – build an online community group around it.
- **[Integrated]** Set up the ability to give money digitally. And all the other little things that we do in the building that will need to have an equivalent for those online to be fully active members of your church. And for those in the building to be fully integrated online. Remember, the church must embrace the understanding that digital and physical are part of a single experience – a hybrid, holistic whole. Can those in the building use a credit card in the collection, and can those online set up a direct debit? Can those online sign up to church rotas? Can those in the building sign up to emails? Or connect with your Facebook Page? Is digital fully integrated into the life of your church?

→ The documents in this resource pack are to help you with some of the specifics mentioned above, however, ultimately, I'm suggesting that for your church to “flourish for the future”, it is more of a mindset. Whatever capacity you have to achieve a 'digital-first' church, it always comes back to: are you placing equal importance on your online initiatives as you do on activities in your church building?

*Written by Elliot Crippen, Digital Enabler, for Yorkshire North & East Methodist District  
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**Find more help and guidance here: [District Digital Resources](http://www.yorkshirenemethodist.org/digital-resources)**  
[www.yorkshirenemethodist.org/digital-resources](http://www.yorkshirenemethodist.org/digital-resources)