

Effective Communication

A BUILDING BLOCK FOR HEALTHY CHURCH CULTURE

Effective communication is a hallmark of a healthy church culture. Whether between church leadership and the congregation, pastor(s) and staff members, or between the church and the community, communication either creates an environment where people feel engaged and connected or uninformed and isolated.

Below are best practices for churchwide communication that can be adapted for faith communities of any size.

Who is communication for?

Your faith community's demographics influence the different channels through which you need to communicate. Often, a blend of print and digital communication is necessary to meet people's needs.

WEBSITE

Your church's website should be the hub for all communication. Keeping the website up-to-date ensures an accurate source of information is available to reference and lead people to at all times. Events and updates should be visible on the website 6-12 months out, when possible. Ideally, one person (staff or volunteer) should be the designated "webmaster" to keep the look and language of the website consistent.

PRINT

Printed materials, including newsletters and program calendars, should be distributed quarterly.

EMAIL

Weekly digital newsletters are a low-cost, convenient way to keep people updated. If program areas (children's or youth ministry, for example) send their own emails, create an email schedule so that people know when to expect information and aren't receiving multiple emails per day.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media posts should focus on storytelling and occur multiple times a week. Photos of ministry in action with captions connecting the work to your church's mission are the most effective.

THE 80/20 RULE

80% of communication should **GIVE** recipients something: news, discipleship resources, photos, stories of impact, etc.

20% of communication should **ASK** recipients for something: donations, volunteering, opportunities to get involved, etc.



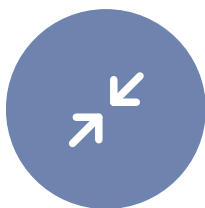
Most people need to hear or read something **5-7 times** before they will commit it to memory. This is true for churchwide communication, too, so it's important to keep these three elements in mind.

Communication Should Be:



IMAGE LEADING

Avoid text-heavy communication. Include graphics or photos whenever possible.



SUCCINCT

People are more likely to read content that is three sentences or less.



CONSISTENT

Consider designating one person to oversee messaging so that information is accurate and complete.

Reflection

Think about the current communication practices in your faith community, then answer the following questions:

1. What is getting in the way of effective communication in your faith community?

2. What communication channels could be added or eliminated to make communication more effective? *Consider any feedback you've heard about the faith community's communication.*

3. What is one best practice you can implement right away that would positively impact communication within your faith community?
