

Social Media 101

Updated Nov. 2025



Diocese of Toronto
Anglican Church of Canada

Content

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“

“Do you want someone to sign up? Show up? Give? Serve? Share? Accept Jesus as their Savior? It’s going to take effective communication to help them take action.

The words you use, the way things look, timing, tone, and strategy all play a crucial role in whether your message is heard or ignored.”

- Phil Bowdle, *Rethink Communication* (2019)



Who are we trying to reach?

- Be specific.
- What language do they speak?
- What platforms do they use?
- What's important to them?



What are we trying to say?

- Tell the story of your church, event, service, etc.
- Audience wants to know “What’s in it for me?”
- Key messages: simple, short
 - Tailor them to your audience(s)



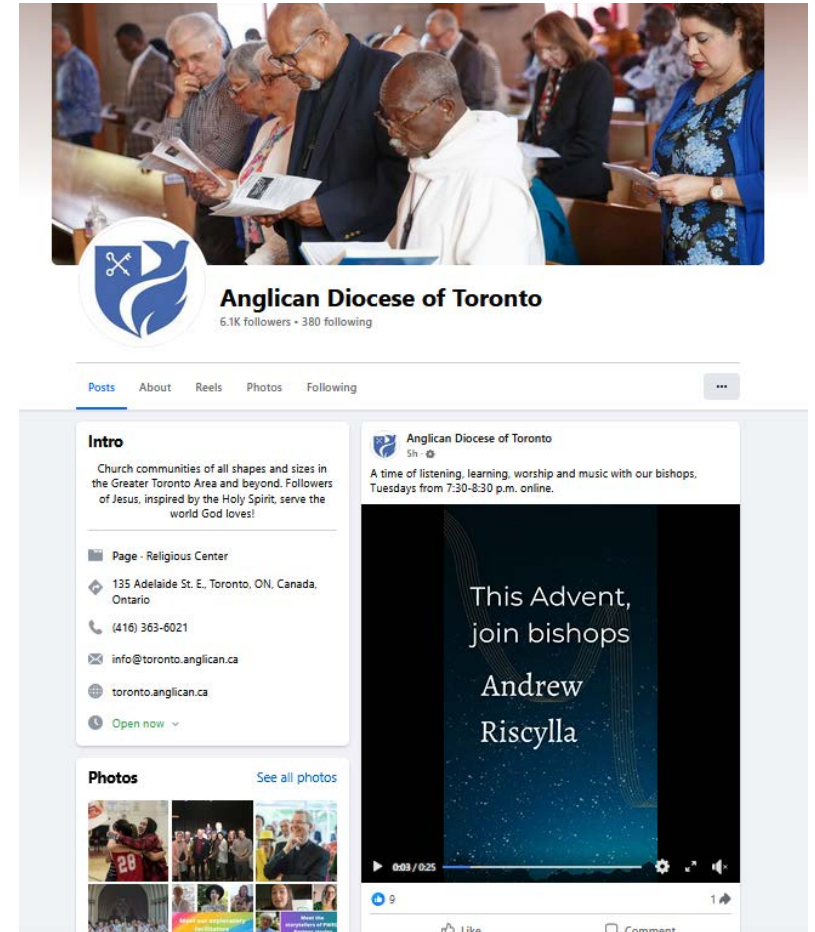
How we communicate

- Consider what channels you have
 - Emails
 - Newsletter
 - Sunday morning announcements
 - Notice boards
 - Facebook
 - Indoor & outdoor signage
- Who do you reach with each one?
- What are they looking for?



Social media

- Ability to reach people who don't already know us
 - People whose names we don't know, whose email addresses we don't have
- Relies on core Anglican audience to click and share
- Exciting opportunities
- Remember: different channels reach different people



Example: Refugee sponsorship grants

- Story appeared on the website

Diocese provides matching grants for refugee sponsorship

Posted on January 19, 2016

By Stuart Mann

Parishes in the Diocese of Toronto can now apply for funds from the diocese to help them sponsor refugees.

The diocese, which has earmarked \$500,000 for refugee work, will make the money available to parishes in the form of matching grants.

Diocesan Council approved how the funds will be disbursed at a meeting on Jan. 16. The funds are a tithe from the diocese's Ministry Allocation Fund.

The maximum grant a parish can receive will be based on its annual revenue. Parishes with total annual income of less than \$250,000 may apply for a grant of up to 50% of the total cost of the sponsorship; parishes with income between \$250,000 and \$500,000 may apply for up to 35% of the total cost; and parishes with income greater than \$500,000 may apply for up to 15% of the total cost.

For parishes with income above \$500,000, the amount of financial assistance requested from the diocese should be for a more ambitious sponsorship – in particular, the number of family members being



Supporters listen to a panel of experts on refugee sponsorship at a town hall in Orono. Photo by Michael Hudson



Example: Refugee sponsorship grants

- Story shared on social media the same day



Anglican Diocese TO

@anglicandioTO

Diocese provides matching grants for refugee sponsorship toronto.anglican.ca/2016/01/19/dio ...



11:37 AM - 19 Jan 2016



Example: Refugee sponsorship grants

- Details on applying for grants included in an email



Diocese of Toronto
Anglican Church of Canada

The Bulletin Board has been updated and can be found at the following link:

<http://www.toronto.anglican.ca/2016/01/26/bulletin-board-jan-26/>

Highlights include:

1. Diocese provides matching grants for refugee sponsorship
2. Parishes reminded of screening requirements for high-risk ministry positions
3. Appreciative Inquiry course returns to Toronto
4. Save the date: Clergy Conference



Example: Refugee sponsorship grants

- Story published in *The Anglican*

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BY STUART MANN

PARISHES can now apply for funds from the diocese to help them sponsor refugees. The diocese, which has earmarked \$500,000 for refugee work, will make the money available in the form of matching grants.

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For parishes with income above \$500,000, the amount of financial assistance requested from the diocese should be for a more ambitious sponsorship – in particular, the number of family members being sponsored – than would otherwise be undertaken by the parish.

The matching grants and funding formula are intended to provide opportunities for the greatest number of parishes to actively participate in refugee sponsorship while also ensuring that the greatest number of refugees are being assisted to come to Canada.

Although consideration was given to the possibility of directing some of the funds to support overseas work with refugees, such as through the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund, it was felt that the extension of the federal government's matching funding for donations to programs in Syria decreased the potential impact of the tithe, and that the limited amount of funds would be better directed to the practical engagement offered through refugee sponsorship.

The diocese will work closely with AURA (the Anglican-United Refugee Alliance), a FaithWorks ministry and the official sponsorship agreement holder for the Diocese of Toronto, in implementing the matching grants program.

Parishes wishing to access the funds will be asked to demonstrate that, apart from lacking adequate funds to fully fund a sponsorship, they meet all other basic requirements set out by AURA, including the existence of a steering committee, proper screening for all volunteers, and participation in AURA's training programs.

The funds will be used to assist refugees not only from the Middle East but from other parts of the globe, such as Africa and Asia. While the focus may be primarily on Syrian refugees, there are refugees throughout the world who are eligible to come to Canada if local groups are prepared and able to sponsor them.

There will be two rounds of ap-

plications. The initial round of applications is due by March 15, 2016. Following this, if funds remain, a second round of applications would be invited, with a deadline of May 15, 2016. Applications are available on the diocese's website, www.toronto.anglican.ca. Completed applications should be emailed to rwatson@toronto.anglican.ca or by mail to the attention of Ryan Weston, Diocese of Toronto, 135 Adelaide St. E., Toronto, Ontario M5C 1L8.

As of Jan. 9, 59 parishes in the diocese were taking part in or interested in taking part in refugee sponsorships. Parishes were in the process of sponsoring 37 refugees, of which four families had already arrived.



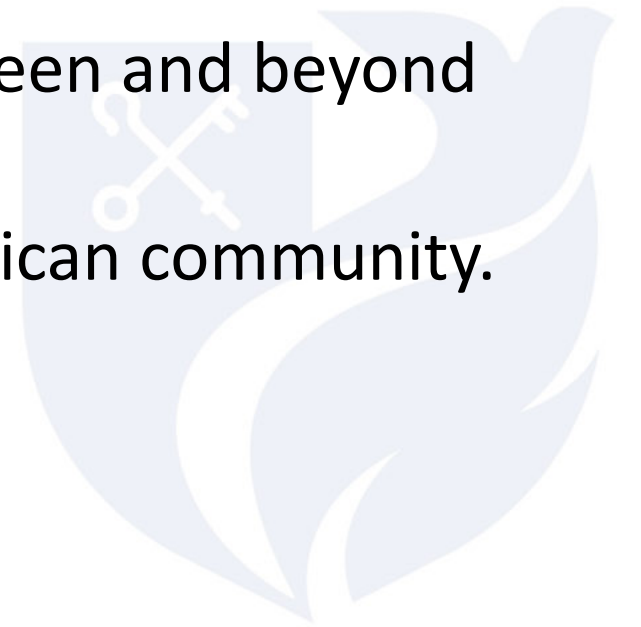
Social media strategy

- Articulates what we're trying to achieve
- Includes goals for particular platforms, and strategies & tactics to achieve those goals
- Links our social media activity to our vision, mission & values



Sample social media goals

- Portray St. Swithun's as diverse, dynamic and engaged in the wider world.
- Invite or inspire seekers to connect with us as their local Anglican church.
- Strengthen relationships within the parish between and beyond Sunday worship.
- Develop online connections with the wider Anglican community.



What we need: a plan

- High-level strategy
 - See all the moving pieces
- Smaller plans for specific events or initiatives
 - Parish anniversary, Advent, stewardship campaign, fun fair
- Daily/weekly schedule
 - Know what's coming, plan ahead, space out posts, balance all priorities
- Who? When? How? How often?



What we need: content

- What's already available?
 - Sermons, bulletin announcements
 - Decide what to give higher profile
- What can you adapt?
 - Prayers from the BAS or BCP
 - A poster on a bulletin board, or a sign outside the church
 - Turn sermons into short-form video
- What do you need to create?
 - Images for social media



What we need: time

- The biggest challenge!
- Who can help create and post content?
- What tools can make you more efficient?
 - Canva: creating images and videos; premium version free for non-profits
 - Scheduling through Facebook Business Suite



What we need: flexibility

- Adapt content for different platforms
 - What works on one won't work as-is on another
- Be spontaneous
 - If you find the perfect post for today, be willing to reschedule things
 - Easy to do when you have a schedule
- Learn as you go
 - Rethink strategy and tactics if something isn't working
 - Research and try out new tools



Facebook



- Share links, photos, events, video
- Reach people who already know us (and their friends)
 - As posts are shared, we can reach a wider audience
- Robust metrics
 - Track who you're reaching & how
- Targeted ads
 - No minimum budget
 - Focus on specific geographic areas



Facebook: What works?

- News about us
- Something people are proud of
- Something people are curious about
- Appeals to core audience



Trinity Anglican Church Bradford added 2 new photos.

Yesterday at 2:58pm · 🌐

👍 Like Page

The restoration has begun!!

We are still fundraising, as the work goes on.



👍 🤔 23

1 Comment

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share

Chronological



Sandra Longthorne Yippee!!!!!!

Like · Reply · 🗳️ 1 · 22 hrs



Facebook: What works?

- Photo albums
- Show the story in photos
- Tell the story in captions
- People look for photos of themselves, their friends



St. Hilary's Church added 5 new photos.

January 15 at 7:45pm · 🌐

Bishop Jenny's visit to St. Hilary's.

We sure had fun!

And, congratulations and blessings to Mammen and Paulina who were commissioned as new Lay Readers.

We are truly blessed.



👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share



👤 Jenny Andison and 14 others

Chronological ▾



Facebook: What works?

- Approachable educational tools
- Seasonally relevant
- Visitor friendly



Anglican Diocese of Toronto

Published by Martha Holmen [?] · November 28, 2018 ·

This Sunday marks the beginning of Advent. Not sure what's in store? Here's a refresher!



YOUTUBE.COM

Advent in 2 Minutes (NEW!)

Watch in 1080p HD for best results What is Advent all about? How is Advent different than Christmas? In a BRAND NEW version of our classic video,...

3,757

People Reached

501

Engagements

Boost Post



Matt Barter, Olive Bensley and 31 others

2 Comments 65 Shares



Like



Comment



Share



Most Relevant ▾



Write a comment...



Shelley McVea Wow! This is really good. Busted Halo - love that.

Like · Reply · Message · 6w



Facebook: What works?

- Holidays & observances
- Some Christian
 - All Saints, Transfiguration, Epiphany, Holy Cross
- Some secular
 - Canada Day, Thanksgiving, back to school
- People will share to show they're part of the event



Anglican Diocese of Toronto

Published by Martha Holmen [?] · November 11, 2016 ·

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. #RemembranceDay



3,103 people reached

Boost Post

Like

Comment

Share



Aftab Pervaiz, Mary Kay Hon Grabig and 62 others

Chronological

41 shares



Margaret Cunningham So sweet and sure wish that would come to pass !

Like · Reply · Message · 1 · November 12, 2016 at 5:10am



Facebook: What works?

- Pretty pictures
- Top 10 lists
- Something to be proud of
- Light, fun content



Anglican Diocese of Toronto

Published by Martha Holmen [?] · April 7, 2016 ·

Like Page

We spy a few familiar faces in this [top 10 list](#).



10 Of Toronto's Most Stunning Churches & Cathedrals

There's more to our city's architectural story than just steel and glass.

THECULTURETRIP.COM | BY SANDRA SANCHEZ

2,584 people reached

Boost Post

Like

Comment

Share



Rosemarie Cuffy, GrandpaChris Greaves Sr. and 39 others

Chronological

12 shares

1 Comment



Asa David Coulson I've attended St James Cathedral and Holy Trinity on some of my soccer match weekend trips!

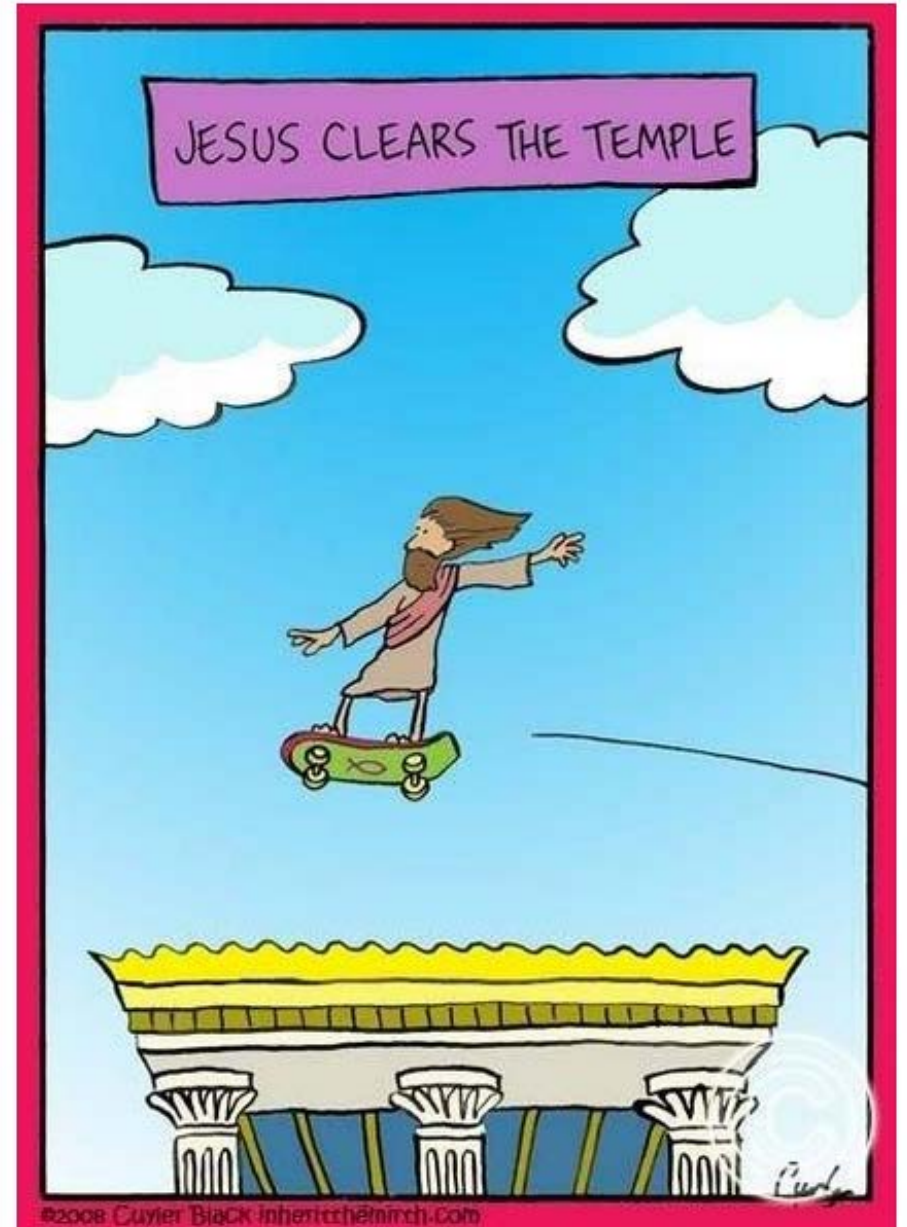
Unlike · Reply · Message · 1 · April 7, 2016 at 5:58pm

Facebook: What works?

- Jokes, cartoons & memes
- Social media is fun!
- Occasional & understated
- The more relevant, the better
 - Wait for the right timing
- People like to smile
- Church isn't boring

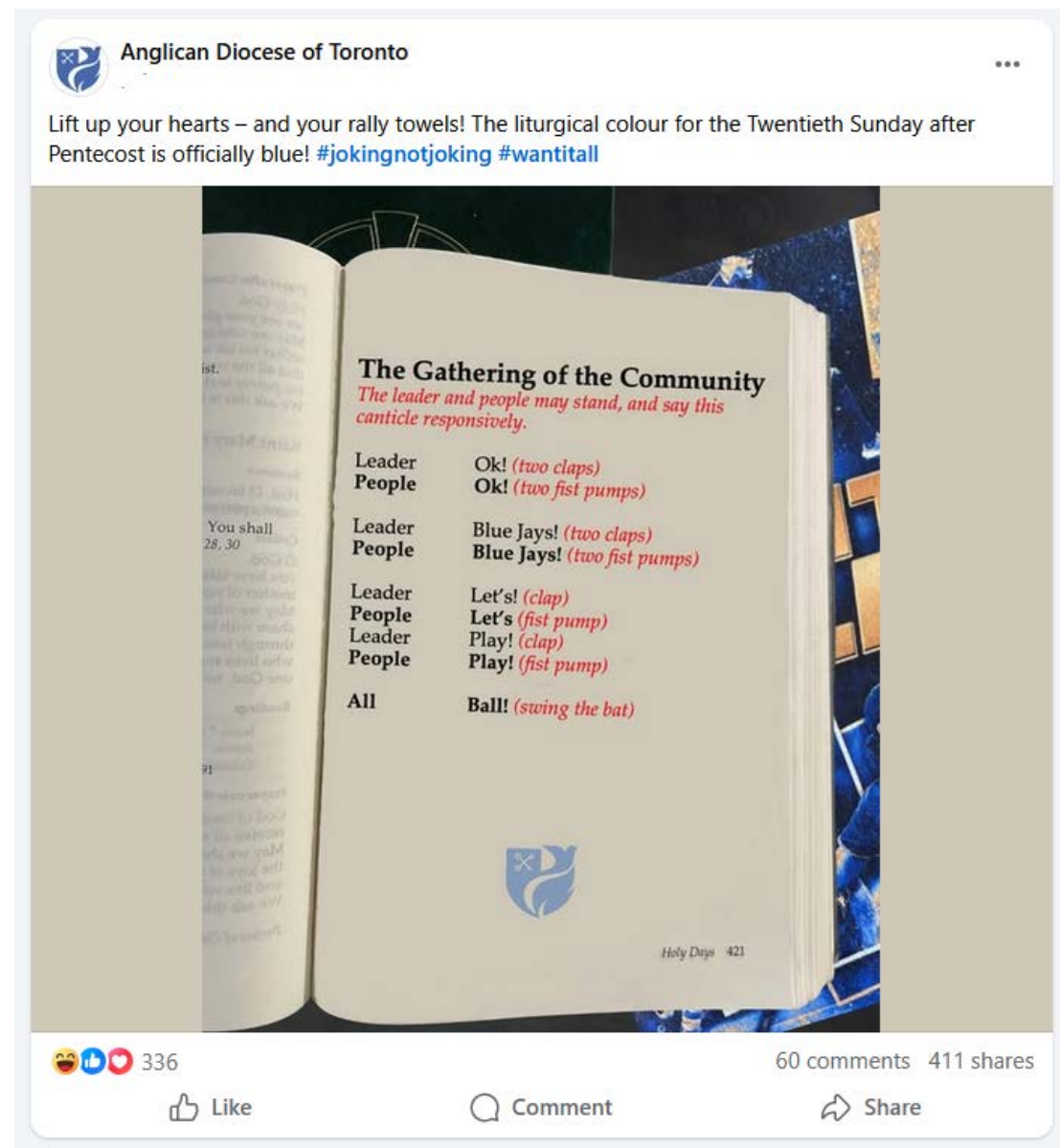


From Inherit the Mirth® -- an alternate image for [yesterday's Gospel?](#)



Facebook: What works?

- Participating in civic life
- Tap into something people are already talking about
- Show you know how to have fun
- Put your own twist on it



Instagram



- Only photos & videos
- High engagement levels
- Younger audience (teens, 20s, 30s)
- Hashtags: connect with trends & events
- Stories: posts that expire after 24 hours
- Not as easy to link to other sites



What works?

- News about us
- Something people are proud of
- Something people are curious about



anglicandioto
St. James Cathedral, Toronto

anglicandioto Photos from the consecration of Bishop Andrew Asbil on Sept. 29 at @stjamesto. #bishopTO #anglican #bishop #cathedral #toronto #ordination #church #christian



Liked by stmaryandstmartha and 87 others

OCTOBER 1, 2018

Add a comment...



What works?

- Behind-the-scenes
- Real moments
- Less formal
- Doesn't have to be perfect



anglicandioto

anglicandioto Archbishop Colin Johnson lights a candle at the vigil on the Danforth.
#danforthstrong #torontostrong #thedanforth #toronto #prayer



Liked by stjohnsnorway and 102 others

JULY 25, 2018

Add a comment...



What works?

- Pretty snapshots
- Sights & sounds of life
- Don't overthink it
- All you need is a phone



anglicandioto
St. James Cathedral, Toronto

anglicandioto New sign outside St. James Cathedral. #welcome #church #cathedral #anglican #toronto #downtowntoronto

insta.zeus Anglican, nice profile, peep ours.

stjohnsnorway "And you are welcome" Love it! ❤️



Liked by stjamesto and 87 others

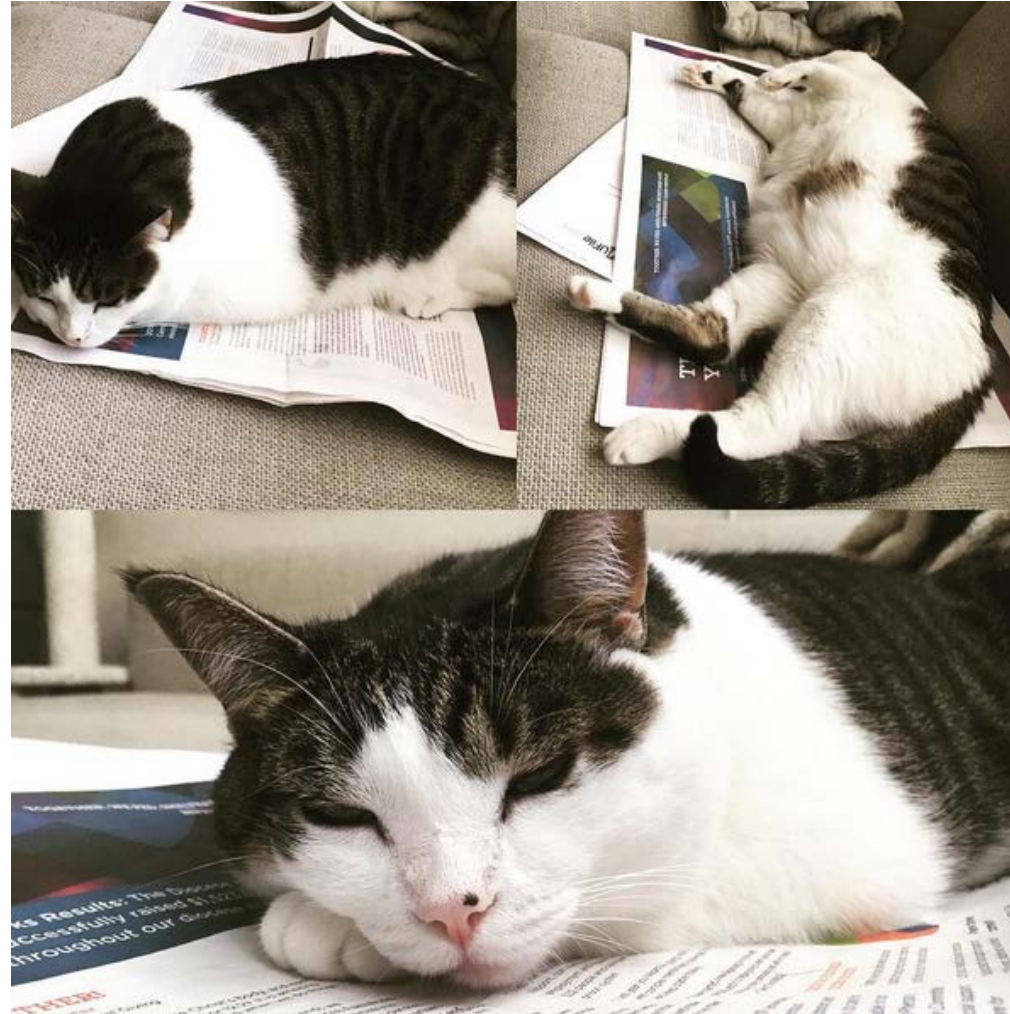
AUGUST 22, 2018

Add a comment...



Instagram: What works?

- Fun posts
- Casual, spur-of-the-moment shots
- Spontaneity



anglicandioto

anglicandioto Cats diocese-wide say The Anglican is their newspaper of choice.
#cat #catsofinstagram #newspaper #Anglican



24 likes

APRIL 27

Add a comment...



Dos & Don'ts

Do:

- Tell stories
- Include visuals
- Develop a voice
 - e.g. fresh and friendly; professional but enthusiastic
- Connect with people
- Measure & track your results
- Take calculated risks
 - Try something unexpected or surprising
 - Make sure it fits with your goals and audiences
- Keep of track of passwords



Dos & Don'ts

Don't:

- Make it all about your church all the time
 - Can get boring
 - What's happening in the world around you?
- Try to say too much
 - People stop reading
- Use churchy jargon
 - Depending on your audience
- Try to reach everyone on every channel
- Say yes to everything
 - You don't have to use every platform



How the diocese can help

- Publicity
 - Online events calendar (toronto.anglican.ca/events)
 - Re-sharing your posts
 - Likes & comments
 - Old-fashioned news stories in *The Anglican*
- Advice
 - Social media
 - Websites
 - Communication platforms & planning
 - Tips sheets



Other support

- Parishes, organizations, individuals already online
- Church communications experts
 - ChurchMarketingSucks.com (not active but good archives)
 - Facebook groups: [Episcopal Communicators](#), [Church Communications](#)
- *The Social Media Gospel* by Meredith Gould
- Non-church social media experts and sites
 - [Social Media Examiner](#)



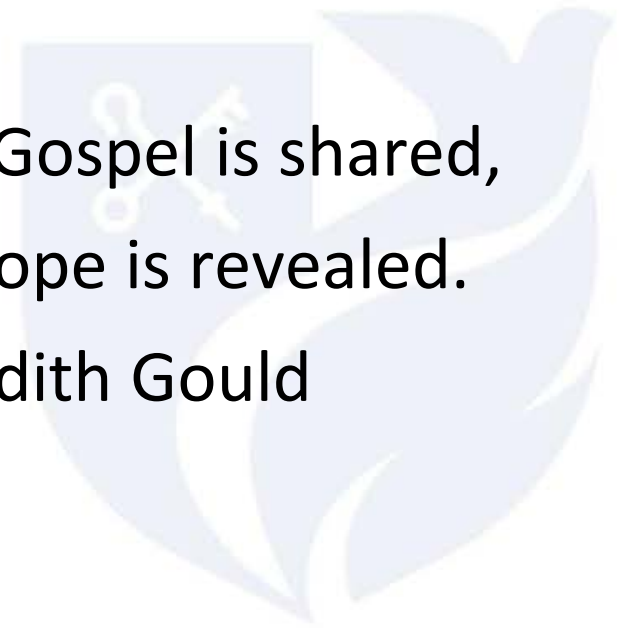
“

Christ has no online presence but yours,
No blog, no Facebook page but yours.

Yours are the tweets through which love touches this
world,

Yours are the posts through which the Gospel is shared,
Yours are the updates through which hope is revealed.

- Meredith Gould



Get in touch

Martha Holmen

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mholmen@toronto.anglican.ca

toronto.anglican.ca/about-us/departments/communications-department/



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