



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham

JOINING TOGETHER
IN THE TRANSFORMING
MISSION OF GOD

An introduction to social media

Setting up an account

Privacy & security

Sharing the Gospel

The Nine Commandments

Colossians 4. 6: "Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone."

May 2015

Living Worship Growing Disciples Seeking Justice

An exciting opportunity

Facebook and Twitter are very useful communication tools that have grown enormously over the past few years. They are an exciting, free, limitless opportunity to share the Gospel, but beware the pitfalls - all of which can be avoided by following some basic guidelines and bearing in mind the verse below:

Colossians 4. 6: *Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone."*

The nine Commandments for using social media

1. Don't rush in.
2. Remember updates are transient yet permanent.
3. You're an ambassador for the church.
4. Don't hide behind anonymity.
5. Think about the blurring of public/private life boundaries.
6. Safeguarding: communicating directly online is like meeting someone in private.
7. Stay within the legal framework.
8. Respect confidentiality.
9. Be mindful of your own security.

Facebook: Using a personal profile

Mix it up – don't talk about church all the time but don't avoid it either. If you are part of a church it would be odd not to talk about church and related activities.

There is not much point preaching and quoting bible verses – tell people what you are doing, what happened or share inspirational faith stories.

Share well-written articles about faith from online papers and magazines, or share details about campaigns or topics of interest.

Accept that people might disagree with what you say but be gracious in your response.

Photography

Pictures are an opportunity to show people the range of exciting, fun, and sometimes serious things that happen in your church. Take and publish 'selfies' and use photographs of church activities that are FUN, but be careful around children and young people - you must get permission from their parents to take and use pictures.

Running a church page

Lots of the same things apply but there are import differences and the person, or team, running your social media should operate to guidelines that have been agreed with the vicar/PCC.

Keep it bright, positive and mainly non-controversial. It is worth noting, however, that engaging with people's emotions, sympathy, anger, nostalgia, is more likely to get your information shared across networks.

A lot of people use social media to highlight the exciting things that happen in their lives – giving the impression they are having a great time - so follow their example and make sure your church looks like the fun, vibrant, supportive, place it is. With permission, upload photos of weddings, baptisms, special services, weekends away, social events etc.

You want to promote a vibrant image so don't take boring, long-range pictures from the back of the church during services. Wait until afterwards and then try to set up something more interesting.

Interact with people to build online relationships – if people respond to your post, 'like' the response. If people comment regularly on certain things, invite them suitable to events at church.

Twitter

Twitter is similar to Facebook but is designed to limit the amount of information you share. This system is for posting a text update with a maximum of 140 characters. It doesn't have the different levels of privacy found on Facebook, so what you say is public.

Updates, or tweets, can be searched and grouped by using hash tags, for example #socialmedia. If you searched Twitter using that hash tag, it would return all messages about that subject from the whole of Twitter. So for example, while watching a TV programme, you will often see a reference to a hash tag. If you search that hash tag you will find a stream of tweets about it and you can then join the conversation.

Individuals can be more outspoken when using Twitter – but still think twice before tweeting. When tweeting on behalf of the church it is wise to be more circumspect; again it is best to think through a policy with the vicar/PCC. Share photographs, link to web pages and reply directly to queries. Live tweet events and post photographs.

Remember, you can reach people who have never been anywhere near your church. Social media works best when it is used in day to day life. Failing that it should be updated on a very regular basis, not just once a week. People engage with users who update at regular intervals with news, and ask questions throughout the day.

It is easy to make mistakes on social media but do not be afraid of it. Go carefully, seek advice and tell a vivid story about your church community.

Final thoughts

Remember that the law views anything you share online as being in the public domain.

Assume that what you say is permanent; even if you delete a comment you have made on a website it could still have already been seen by other people and/or re-published on other, unconnected sites.

Have clear boundaries when communicating with children and young people. Remember that the law and diocesan policies around safeguarding apply in your communications with children and young people – you should not exchange private messages with young people via social media and should not accept "friend requests" from young people without due consideration.

You can follow the Diocese of Southwell on Facebook by searching for 'Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham' and Twitter by following @diocswellnott.

For more information contact fraser@southwell.anglican.org or richard.ellis@southwell.anglican.org

<http://southwell.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Appendix-P-Social-Media-Guidance.pdf>

If you are still keen to have a go, the next few pages will show you how to set up your account:

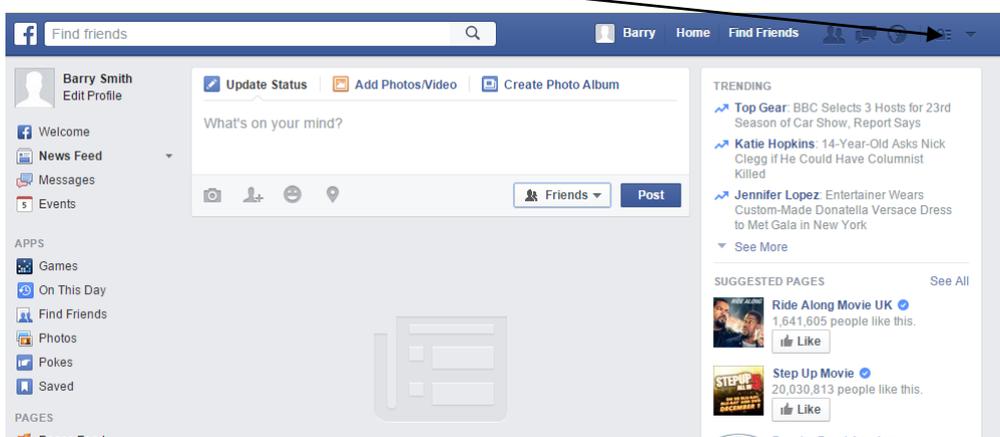
Facebook

How to setup your Facebook account

- Go to www.facebook.com
- Under the words **Sign up** enter your basic details
- Ensure you set a complicated password. Keep a record of this password.
- Step 1 will offer to scan you email systems to find people who are already on Facebook. It is safe to use this service, but feel free to click on Skip this step (bottom)
- Step two – Add your profile picture. This will help people find you as a friend.
- You should now go into your email and follow the instructions in the email from Facebook, to verify your email address.

Set your privacy settings

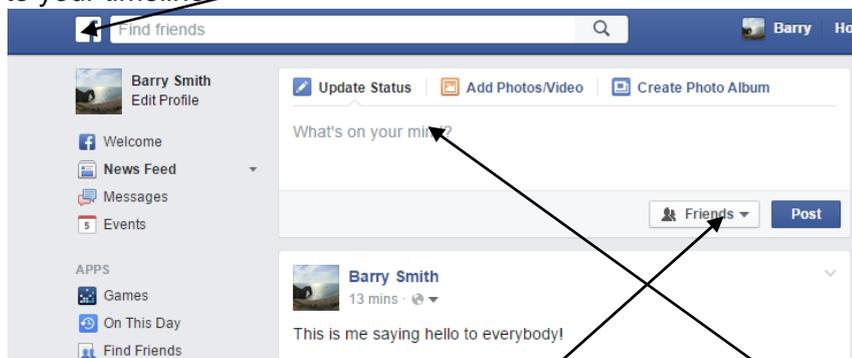
- Click on the Privacy settings



- Go through each setting and set the level of privacy you want
- You can also click on the See more setting options which will give you even greater controls. There is no right setting and you may want different levels of privacy to others.

Post something

- At any time you can click on the Blue F at the top left of the screen, this will send you to your timeline



- To make a post you can just start typing a message in here
- When you type a post you can specify who can see it. You can see this message was shared with the users friends. This can be changed to public by clicking on it.

Add friends

- At any time you can use the search bar at the top of the screen to find someone to become friends with. Just type their name and you will see a list of possible matches. This is where a profile picture can really help.
- If someone wants to become your friend you will get a notification (circle with a number in it) next to the friend request icon



Help!

You can find answers to all of your questions by clicking here and then clicking on the help button. This is a really useful place where you can type a question or look for help.

Deactivate your account

At any time you can close your account which will remove you and everything you posted, just click on, then click on settings and then click on Security. At the bottom of the screen you will see the words "Deactivate your account"

Twitter

How to set up your twitter account

Go to www.twitter.com

Under sign up just enter your full name, email, password then click sign up. You can then choose a username.

Once you have chosen a username, click sign up again. It will ask if you want to add your mobile number, you can enter details or skip.

It will now ask what you are interested in so it can suggest who to follow. You can choose to follow everyone in the list, a few of them or none of them. These will be celebrities and organisation who match your interests.

The next step will be to set up your profile with a picture and a few words about yourself.

Then you will be asked if you want Twitter you look at your email contacts to find your friends who are already using twitter.

Tweet your first tweet

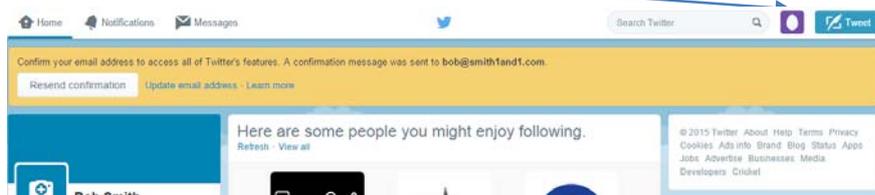
Look for this box and say what you want!



When you tweet you are limited to 140 characters and you are also encouraged to use a Hashtag. For example if you were tweeting about the elections you could say “not sure who I am voting for yet #elections” If you now search that hashtag using the search at the top of the screen you will see what everyone else is saying about that topic.

There is only one simple security setting in twitter. You can make your account private or public. The whole point of twitter is to be public, however you can change the settings so only people who follow you can read what you are saying.

To change the settings click your profile picture or if you have not set one it will look like an egg



Now click on settings

Down the left hand side of the screen click on Privacy and Security, then choose the option “protect my tweets” This will make your tweets private.

In these screens you can also make adjustments to other settings which you should review, you can also deactivate your account here too.