



 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham

How to use Social Media

EQUIPPING PARISHES TO CREATE, SHARE, AND CONNECT



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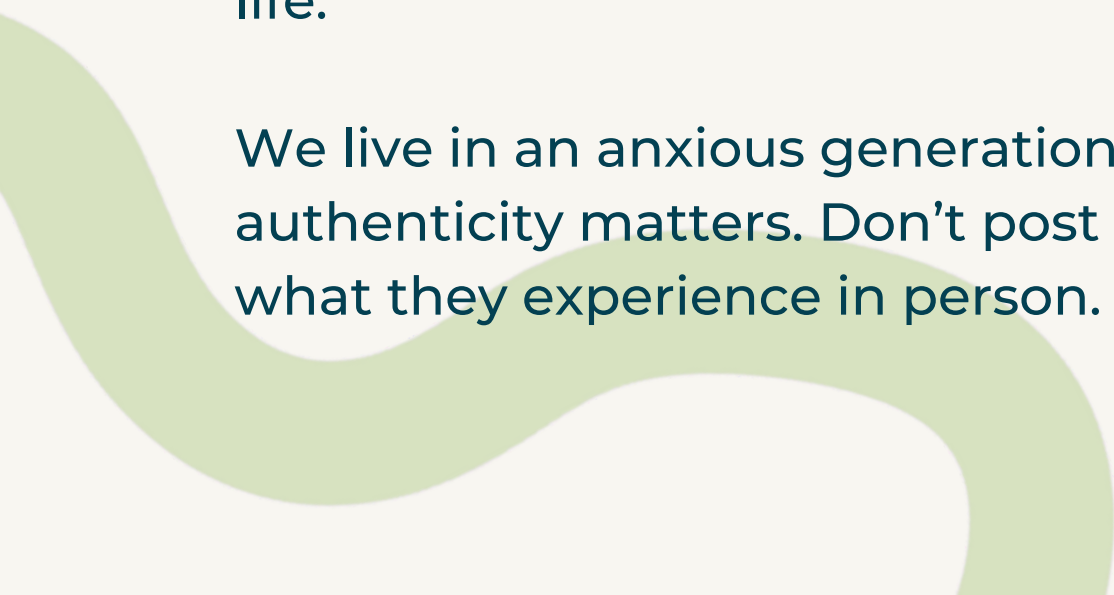
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But I'm not 'Creative'

You might feel like social media isn't your thing—that you're not creative enough, don't know what to post, or worry about getting it wrong. But it's not as scary as it seems. Everyone has a voice, and with a little guidance, you can do this.

We use social media because we believe in the power of communication: to warmly welcome all people, fling wide the doors of the Church, and invite the Lord's children in. Today, more than ever, people want a peek through the window into parish life.



We live in an anxious generation that wants to know what they're walking into before they ever walk in. That's why authenticity matters. Don't post something that doesn't feel like you or your parish. What people see online should match what they experience in person. When it does, barriers fall, trust grows, and the Church feels accessible, welcoming, and real.



Why Social Media ?

SHARE KEY INFORMATION

Service times, location, events, contact info, and ministries—your website becomes a central place for everyone to find what they need.

IT REFLECTS HEART AND VALUES

When content feels genuine, it mirrors the real experience people will have in person and that authenticity is what draws people in.

WELCOME NEWCOMERS

Most people search online before visiting a church. Social Media helps you make a good first impression and share what your parish is all about.

REPRESENTATION

To Quote 'It's Facebook, not poster book'—a place where people can see the life, the people, and the joy of your church - representing different generations, faces and stories

BEYOND A SUNDAY

Some people are curious but hesitant. Social media lets them observe, listen, and belong before they ever attend. Additionally, helps parishioners stay engaged throughout the week.

PEEK IN THE WINDOW

People are curious, and Social media is often the first place they'll "peek in the window" to see if your church could feel like home. The people, the moments, the community so they know what they're walking into.



Stay Relevant in a Digital World

Today, nearly every aspect of life—communication, learning, giving, and even community—is shaped by social media and digital platforms. When your parish has an active, up-to-date social media presence, you're showing that the Church is present in people's daily lives, responsive, and open to connection.

A strong social media presence helps the Church stay connected with:

- Younger generations who expect to engage with organizations online and value authentic, visual communication
- New families moving into the area who often check social media to get a feel for a parish before visiting
- People returning to their faith, who may follow quietly for a while before taking the step to reach out
- Volunteers and supporters, who want to understand your mission, see your impact, and know how to get involved

While not everyone—especially older generations—uses social media regularly, maintaining even a simple, consistent presence matters. Posting real moments, clear information, and welcoming messages helps people recognize your parish, feel at ease, and take the next step toward connection.

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The social media landscape

- The landscape and the number and type of platforms are changing all the time; but over the past few years, Facebook, YouTube and Instagram have been consistently the most popular platforms used by churches.
- Different platforms will appeal to different demographics, so it is an important consideration when considering who you need to communicate with.
- While figures will vary year to year, broadly speaking Facebook remains the most prolific social media platform in the UK among most age groups. Instagram, YouTube and TikTok, however, are effective at reaching younger audiences.

Which platforms for which purpose?

Facebook

Facebook supports a wider mix of content, including text, photos, videos, links, events, and groups. It reaches a broader age range and is better for sharing updates, event information, and building ongoing community connections.

Facebook biggest engagement in young adults (25–34) and older

Instagram

Instagram is a visual-first platform focused on photos and short videos (Reels). It's ideal for sharing quick, informal, behind-the-scenes moments and showing what church life looks like. It tends to reach younger audiences and works best for storytelling through images and video.

Instagram reaches mostly Gen Z and Millennials (roughly ages 18–34)

Youtube

YouTube is a video-first platform designed for longer-form content. It's ideal for sermons, talks, testimonies, teaching series, and recorded events that people want to watch in full or return to later. YouTube reaches a wide age range and works well for building a library of content that helps people explore faith at their own pace.

YouTube reaches adults aged 18–49. Especially popular with the 25–44 age group

Find your voice!

- Before creating an Instagram page, clarify your voice, vision, and purpose. Doing this matters, if you haven't thought it through, it will show in your content. It's better to start a little slower but do it well, rather than rush.
- Ask yourself: Why are you creating this page? What are your key values and mission statements? Who is your audience and what demographics do you want to reach? What are your key events or themes to highlight? Who will speak on behalf of the church?
- Consistency is Key
- Speak with one clear voice: e.g., "At St. Mary's, we..."
- By clarifying your why, your voice, and your key messages, your Instagram page will feel authentic, engaging, and unified from day one.

Lets get started Instagram



Step

1

1. Download & Open Instagram
2. Get the Instagram app from the App Store / Play Store
3. Open it → tap Sign Up
4. Create Your Account
5. Sign up with email or phone
6. Choose a username
7. Keep it simple - The name of your church will do!
8. Set a password → continue

Follow these steps, using the screenshots to visually guide you through the instructions and website settings step by step.



There will be TOP TIPS throughout the presentation, so keep an eye out!

Add Profile Basics

Step

2

1. Add a profile photo
2. Church Logo (just image no text sometimes allows your logo to be bigger)
3. Bright, simple, and easy to recognize
4. Edit Profile
5. Name: Use the church name
6. Bio (short & clear): Who you are (church, parish, or ministry)
7. When is your Sunday Service - Example Bio: St. Mary's Parish, Inspiring faith & community every day Join us for updates, events & prayers.
8. Add website URL or **Linktree** in the Bio.



Professional Mode

Step

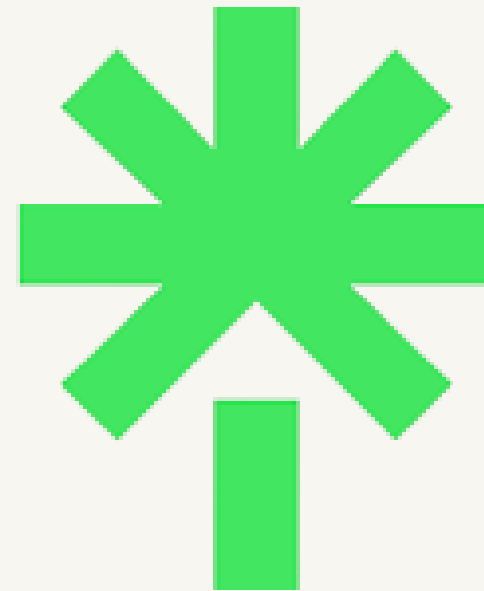
3

1. Go to Profile → ≡ (top right)
2. Tap Settings
3. Tap Account
4. Tap Switch to professional account
5. Choose: Choose “Religious Organization” or “Church” when selecting your category.

This gives you analytics, music access, and better reach.



Using Linktree



People don't read online, they scan. Studies show users typically decide whether to stay on a page within the first **10–30 seconds**, and if they can't quickly find dates, locations, or clear actions, they're likely to leave and not come back.

- Sign Up: linktr.ee → email/social login → set password
- Profile: Photo: church logo or welcoming image
- Name: church name
- Add Links: Live Stream / Sermons, Event Sign-Ups, Giving Page, Newsletter / Blog, Website, Youth, Students exc..
- Organize: drag links → prioritize main link (Featured)
- Appearance: match church colors/logo → optional background
- **Top Tips: Clear, short link titles, Update regularly, Keep 5–8 main links**

How to link to FB



4 Step

1. **Prepare Your Accounts :** Make sure you have: A Facebook Page (not just a personal profile) + An Instagram Professional account (Business or Creator)
2. **Go to Meta Business Suite :** On desktop: business.facebook.com Or download the Meta Business Suite app on your phone.
3. **Connect Instagram:** In Meta Business Suite, go to Settings → Instagram Connection.
4. **Click Connect Account :** Log into your Instagram account + Give Meta permission to manage your Instagram account.
5. **Verify the Link :** After connecting, your Instagram account will appear in Meta Business Suite.
You'll now be able to: Post and schedule directly to Instagram, View analytics, Manage messages from one place
6. **Check on Instagram :** Open the Instagram app → Settings → Account → Linked Accounts / Sharing to Other Apps - Make sure your Facebook page is listed.

Think before posting

Step

5

You've set up your account—now let's make it a window into your church. The first few posts should introduce people to who you are and what life at your church looks like.

Starting with this landing page approach sets a strong foundation before building a wider communications strategy. It lets new visitors quickly understand your vision, community, and what it's like to be part of your church.

Make Your Instagram a Great Landing Page

Your First 6 Posts

- Vision Post: Reel (30–60 seconds) sharing the heart and vision of the church.
- Space & Community: Reel showing your church building, with music and highlights of your community on a Sunday.
- Congregation Photos: Photos of people of all ages, showing the diversity and warmth of your church.
- Service Highlights: Pictures or clips from your Sunday service or other events.
- Welcome Video: A short clip from your vicar or leader welcoming newcomers, showing their face for a personal touch.
- Testimonies : Share stories from congregation members about faith, transformation, or community impact.

Other ideas:

Teaching Window: Short soundbite clip of teaching (iPhone voice note over video works well).

Bible verse graphic : Share a verse, or an encouragement post that is fundamental to the churches, vision, values and heart.

Story Highlights : Create a highlight called “What to Expect” to guide new followers. Look at examples like Trent Vineyard or St. Saviour’s Church, Nottingham for inspiration.

Post ideas

- **Testimonies** : Share stories from congregation members about faith, transformation, or community impact.
- **Event Highlights / Recaps** : Photos or short reels from recent events, groups, or outreach programs.
- **Prayer Requests & Encouragements** : Share a weekly prayer, a verse, or an encouragement post.
- **Behind-the-Scenes** : Show church prep, volunteer work, or small groups in action.
- **Youth & Children's Ministry** : Fun, light-hearted photos or reels showing kids' activities or youth events.
- **Quotes & Scripture Graphics** : Beautifully designed posts with inspiring Bible verses or key messages.
- **Community Outreach** : Highlight charity work, community support, or local collaborations.
- **Seasonal & Festival Posts** : Special posts for Christmas, Easter, harvest, or church anniversary.
- **Meet the Team** : Short videos or photos introducing staff, volunteers, or ministry leaders.
- **Music & Worship** : Clips from worship sessions, choirs, or solo performances.
- **Historical Posts** : Photos or stories about the church's history, building, or notable milestones.
- **Calls to Action** : Invite people to join a small group, sign up for newsletters, or visit the church website.

How to post

Step

6

1. **Open Instagram** : Launch the Instagram app on your phone. (Make sure you're logged into your account)
2. **Tap the + icon** at the bottom center (or top right, depending on your app version).

3. **Choose what you want to post:**

Post → Single photo or multiple photos (carousel)

Reel → Short video (up to 90 seconds)

Story → 24-hour temporary post

4. **Choose Your Content** : Select photo(s) or video(s) from your camera roll, or record directly in the app. (For Reels, clips should be short, dynamic, and vertical (9:16))

How to Edit

Step

6.5



Assume people have sound OFF:

Over 80% of social videos are watched without sound: Always add captions
Don't rely on voiceovers alone

5. **Edit Your Content** : Crop clips, Trim videos to be shorter, add transitions.

6. **For Reels, you can also:** Add music, Add text overlays, Add stickers or captions

7. Write a Caption : Keep it clear and engaging.

Include:

- Short description of the post or message, Call-to-action (e.g., "Join us this Sunday!")
- Relevant hashtags (#ChurchLife, #StMarysChurch, #FaithInAction)

8. **Tag People & Add Location** : Tag accounts if relevant (team, volunteers, event hosts).

Add location, people to see where the church is.

9. **Share** : Tap Share (or "Done" for Reels). : Your post will appear on your feed, and for Reels, it will also show on the Reels tab.

Reel Top Tips:



- **Keep Clips Short :** Use clips no longer than 3 seconds when combining multiple shots.
- **Speak to the Camera in Call to action videos :** Look directly at the camera; be natural. - Hand gestures are fine—don't stay completely still.
- **Keep It Simple :** Don't overcomplicate with effects or transitions. A clear, authentic message is more important than fancy editing.
- **Do Your Research :** Watch other church Reels you like and take inspiration. Stay true to your church's vision, don't just chase trends.
- **Show Your Church Life :** People want to see your community, not just trending content.
- Highlight worship, events, volunteers, and members. What are your key events you want to show case.
- **Enlist Young People:** If you have youth in your congregation, involve them in filming. Let them shoot content—it brings a fresh perspective and helps your reach.
- **Keep It Short:** Reels should be **90 seconds max**—attention spans are short.
- **Plan Before You Film :** Decide your story/message in advance. Think about the one thing you want people to take away.
- **Consistency Matters:** Make Reels regularly, even if simple, to keep your Instagram active.

What to write?



People should quickly be able to answer:

What is happening? When is it happening? Where is it happening? Who is it for? What do I need to know?

Step

7

Every social media post is an invitation. Whether you're advertising a coffee morning, Inviting people to a service, or sharing community news, the way you write can make people feel either welcomed in or simply informed.

COMPARE THESE TWO EXAMPLES:

Informative but neutral: Coffee Morning on Saturday from 10am - 12pm in the church hall. Tea, coffee and cakes available.

Warm and inviting: We'd love you to join us this Saturday for our community coffee morning. Come along for tea, coffee, homemade cake, and a chance to catch up with friends old and new. Everyone is welcome! [Time and location]

Both contain the same information, but one feels much more personal and welcoming.

How to Schedule:



Only **Professional** Instagram accounts can be linked to Facebook Pages. Linking allows cross-posting, scheduling, and ad creation.

Step

8

1. Open Instagram and **make sure you're on your Professional account.**
2. Tap the **+** Button to create a post or Reel.
3. **Add Your Content :** Upload your photo, video, or Reel, Edit if needed, add filters, text, or stickers.
4. **Write Your Caption :** Include hashtags, tags, or location.
5. **Tap “Advanced Settings”** (at the bottom).
6. **Select “Schedule this post” :** Choose the date and time you want it to go live.
7. **Tap “Done”** → “Schedule” - Your post is now set to automatically publish at that time.
8. **Check Scheduled Posts :** Go to your profile → menu → Scheduled posts to review, edit, or delete.

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Social media guidelines

- As Christians, the same principles that guide our offline interactions apply online. Social media does not change our responsibilities for confidentiality, conduct, or Christian witness.
- Act consistently with your values and take responsibility for what you say, write, or share. Refer to our detailed social media policy when creating your parish or church guidelines. These guides protect both you and your users.
- Follow the platform's rules to avoid account suspension. Use strong passwords and share them only with trusted team members via secure tools like Google Password Manager.
- Only share information or images you have permission to post, especially when it involves children or young people.

Social Media Maintenance

Now lets ensure all your efforts can stay up to date, relevant and helpful -

- Update content regularly – Keep service times, staff info, and sermons current.
- Review homepage monthly – Check colors, images, and overall layout for freshness.
- Maintain the calendar – Ensure events in ChurchSuite or other tools are up to date.
- Remove outdated pages/buttons – Delete or update pages, links, and media no longer needed.
- Check functionality – Test forms, donation buttons, and navigation.
- Ensure accessibility and mobile-friendliness – Make the site easy for all users.
- Back up and secure the site – Keep software/plugins updated to protect data.



Any Questions?

Make sure you've reviewed every step and completed the setup. If you still need help, contact Elisha Oak at **Elisha.oak@southwell.anglican.org** with the reference *"Social Media Support"*