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Social Media Sunday is September 30th

How social media savvy are you? What about your congregation and its leaders? On September 30th, churches around the world are invited to playfully explore these questions. Social Media Sunday is an ecumenical effort to share the good news about building community online. This annual event gives faith communities an opportunity to consider how to reach out online, digitally welcome people, and share their story. There is still plenty of time to begin planning! To get started, join the [Social Media Sunday Facebook Group](#).

Social media continues to be an important area for churches to consider. First impressions online are so essential, yet so fleeting. Church websites and social media posts can convey so much vibrancy for active and engaged congregations. Quick glances make viewers think, “This is a place where I can be a part of something!”

Social Media Sunday, with the hashtag #SMS18, can easily integrate into worship, fellowship time, or even beyond with faith formation opportunities. This designated Sunday, while important, should be the first of many times that you ask those in the pews to interact with the church on social media.

Ideas for Social Media Sunday

1. **Preview** the Sunday worship music on Facebook, or through email newsletter.
2. **Live-stream** the worship service, if you have video cameras in your worship space. Popular platforms for live-streaming are Facebook Live, Periscope, or YouTube.
3. **Blessing** of the devices as part of the worship prayers.
4. **Bibles**. Encourage BYOB (bring your own Bible) via phone, tablet, or e-reader.
5. **“Like Station.”** Set up a table or area after the worship service where parishioners

can “like” your church Facebook page. All you need is some computers and friendly helpers.

6. Tech-help desk at Coffee Hour.

7. Church selfie photo booth.

Next Steps: Beyond #SMS18

Every church, no matter what size, can have a social media presence. Going forward, your church can develop a basic social media strategy (or an advanced strategy if you are already doing this work). Social media is a great place for collaboration: gather parishioners for a social media team to help create photos, videos, and useful links to be posted on your church’s Facebook page.

Additionally, social media is where pastors and church leaders can curate online resources for spiritual growth. Your parishioners will be thankful (and likely to read) when you recommend a faith-based article, online activity, app, or podcast. Just remember to be specific. Don’t just share a website and say “lots of good stuff here.” Instead, link to the specific article and tell why you liked it.

Sarah Stonesifer is the Digital Missioner for the Center for the Ministry of Teaching at VTS. She is passionate about using digital media for ministry, and helping others to do the same. Throughout her career Sarah has been a youth leader, camp director, school librarian, and yoga teacher. You can follow her [@sarahdigitally](https://www.instagram.com/sarahdigitally).