

In 2020 Statistica reported more than 60% of people in the UK have a social media account. Creating a page or profile for your church is completely free and presents an opportunity to reach new people within your local community.

Learn how to create a new account for your church below.



# Creating a new social media account

## Choosing a profile name

If possible, use the same profile name across all your accounts so that it is easy for your community to find you wherever you are present.

## Login and contact details

When creating a new social media account, use a general church email\*, rather than a personal email, as the login and main contact details.

*\*This rule does not apply to Facebook, where each editor or admin needs their own personal Facebook profile.*

## First impressions count

The images and words you include on your profile or page will give a lasting impression on your community. Use words and phrases which make everyone feel welcome, avoiding churchy phrases, accompanied by friendly images, to give the best first impression.

## Sharing the new account

Once set up, share the news with your community. Talk about it during services and events, and update your website and newsletters with the link.

## Keep it up to date

Posting at least once a week will keep your profiles and pages looking fresh and the church open.

Below, explore each platform, alongside advice on how to create an account.

Facebook page



**A Facebook page is an outward-facing platform, where both church community members and members of the local community can discover and keep in touch with the church**

*Consider it to be like a mini-website for your church on Facebook!*

Anyone can view a Facebook page, however only those with a Facebook profile can comment, like and share the posts.

## **There are a few ways to share content to a Facebook page**

- **Newsfeed post** - Write a caption and include an image or video to appear in the newsfeed of those who follow your page
- **Go live** - Broadcast in real-time from wherever you are to your online page followers
- **Create an event** - Use the events option to create a calendar event and invite your community. Your event will not only be seen by those who follow your page but your local community too
- **Facebook Stories** - Tap the rectangles at the top of the newsfeed to see short-form videos and images. Expect to see behind-the-scenes moments and fun engaging posts here. They are only visible for 24 hours but give an insight into the personality of the account. Quick to make and easy to share.

## **How-to guides**

- Before you create a Facebook page, you must have a personal [Facebook account](#) as this is how you log in to the platform
- [How to create a Facebook page](#)
- [How to customise a Facebook page](#)
- Create and manage your page from the Facebook app on [Apple](#), [Android](#), or through your [internet browser](#).
- [How to post to a page](#)
- [How to post to Facebook Stories](#)
- [How to go live](#)
- [How to create a Facebook event](#)

Discover Digital Labs blogs on using Facebook, [here](#).

**Facebook groups**



# facebook

## A Facebook group is a place where members of your church community can gather and talk with one another

Anyone with a Facebook account can create a group, although it's best to create one linked to your church's Facebook page so it's easy for your community to find. Anyone with a Facebook account can request to become a member of the group.

Groups work best when there is a common interest or theme, such as a group for local families, Bible studies, or perhaps a hobby. Any member of the group can post and start conversations making it an ideal place to build a closer community online.

### How-to guides

- [How to create a Facebook group](#)
- [How to customise your group settings](#)
- [How to link an existing Facebook group to your Facebook page.](#)
- Create and manage your group from the Facebook app on [Apple](#), [Android](#), or through your [internet browser](#)
- [How to post in a Facebook Group](#)

Discover [Digital Labs](#) blogs on using Facebook, [here](#)

### Instagram



# Instagram

## Instagram is a photo and video sharing app owned by Facebook

Compared to Facebook, it is a platform of younger users, especially those under 30 years. Expect to meet younger local audiences, as well as your church community, using this platform. To get started, download the Instagram app to your phone or tablet.

### There are a few ways to share content on Instagram

- **Feed posts** - Scroll down to see a newsfeed of images and video, from people you follow on the platform, much like on Facebook. Press the **+** button to create your first post. Note, videos can be a maximum of one minute on the feed.
- **Stories** - Tap the circles at the top of the feed to view short-form videos and images from those you follow. Expect to see behind-the-scenes moments and fun engaging posts here. They are only visible for 24 hours but give an insight into the personality of the account. Quick to make and easy to share.
- **IGTV** - Long-form video content which aims to rival YouTube. Post videos longer than 15 seconds and up to one hour, such as thoughts, reflections, prayers and stories.
- **Reels** - Short-form video with clever in-app effects - think TikTok but on Instagram. Expect to be entertained with comedy, viral dance trends and fun transformations.

If the options above seem a little daunting when starting, get to grips with **posting photos and video** on the feed, and using **Stories**, before trying anything else.

### How-to guides

- First, download the app for [Android](#) or [Apple](#)
- [How to create an Instagram profile](#)
- [How to edit an Instagram profile](#)
- [How to post a photo on Instagram](#)
- [How to use Instagram Stories](#)
- [How to use IGTV](#)
- [How to use Reels](#)
- [Link your Instagram account to a Facebook page](#)

From the Instagram app, you can log in to up to five accounts, meaning you don't need to log out to access a different account.

- [Learn how to switch between Instagram accounts here.](#)

[Discover Digital Labs blogs on using Instagram, here.](#)

Twitter



## Twitter is a short-form blog platform allowing users to share comments in the form of 280 character tweets

It's a platform for conversation and community. Thought leaders, businesses, local groups, charities and organisations find the platform useful for B2B networking - understanding this may help a church refine how it creates a Twitter presence. It may not be the place to invite local people into your worshipping community, but it may be useful for raising the profile of the church amongst local leaders, business and organisations.

### There are a few ways to share content on Twitter

- **Tweet** using up to 280 characters, including video, photos, links and polls. Just click on the quill to write your tweet and press the different icons to add media or create a poll.
- **Fleets** - Share fleeting in-the-moment thoughts free from public interaction. Tap the circles at the top of the Twitter feed to see full-screen tweets from those that you follow, and create your own.

### How-to guides

- [How to create a Twitter profile](#)
- [How to customise your Twitter profile](#)
- To create an account and post either download the app for [Android](#), [Apple](#) or go through your [internet browser](#).
- [How to Tweet](#)
- [How to use Fleets](#)

[Discover Digital Labs blogs on using Twitter, here.](#)

### YouTube



# YouTube

**YouTube is an online video-sharing site allowing users to upload, watch, comment and share videos**

Create a channel for your church to share live and pre-recorded video content such as sermons, reflections, thoughts for the day and whole services. Expect to reach new audiences using the platform.

## How-to guides

- [How to create a YouTube channel](#)
- [How to customise your YouTube channel](#)
- Watch and share videos through the app on [Apple](#) or [Android](#), or through your [internet browser](#).

[Discover Digital Labs blogs on using YouTube, here.](#)

## WhatsApp Groups



# WhatsApp

**Whatsapp is a private messaging app for 1:1 conversations as well as group chats**

Group chats can be useful for organising teams, creating community and sharing information. They can get noisy, so keep the group chats on-topic, otherwise, you may find members start to ignore the messages.

## How-to guides

- [How to create a WhatsApp group](#)
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## How to edit a WhatsApp group

- Download the app on Apple or Android to use on your smartphone or tablet.

Although not a social media network, with more than 70 million page views in 2020, **A Church Near You** has become an essential part of any CofE church's online toolkit.

## **A Church Near You**

**A Church Near You is the Church of England's church-finding website, reaching both frequent and infrequent church attendees, and those exploring faith.**

Each of the Church's 16,500 churches has a page on the site, which can be personalised and customised for its community.

The site is free and comes with easy-to-use templates to create webpages within minutes, promote services and events, and access to the Resource Hub for free music, video and photo downloads to use online and in print.

- Becoming an A Church Near You editor

Visit the Editor Help Centre for support with using your A Church Near You page.



# Administrating and moderating church social media profiles

Through the [Digital Labs blogs](#) you can find **ideas, recommendations, case studies and how-to guides** for using social media as a church.

Before you get started, it's helpful to be aware of moderation tools and best practice for online safety.

## Facebook page



## Administrating

The legal age to create a Facebook profile is 13 years.

### A Facebook page can have different page roles to support posting, commenting and moderation

- [Administrators](#) can post and edit all aspects of the page including adding and removing others' roles, and deleting the page entirely
- [Editors](#) can post, edit some aspects of the page, and moderate comments
- [Moderators](#) can moderate and reply to comments

### Page roles can be given to anyone with their own Facebook account

- [Learn how to create your own Facebook profile](#)
- [Learn how to give someone a role on the page](#)

### Do not share one set of Facebook log-in details to edit a church page

It may be the case that someone previously has created a fake church profile and shared these details with others to edit the page. Be aware, this goes against Facebook community standards and the account may be deleted, resulting in loss of access to the Facebook page. Instead, each individual who wishes to manage the Facebook page should have their own Facebook profile and be given a page role.

### A church Facebook page should have more than one administrator

If there is only one administrator, the church is at greater risk of losing access to the page, which may happen if the owner of the admin account were to lose access to their account or fall out of touch with the church.

This is also important for safeguarding as more than one person should have access to the page's messenger account. Find out more advice on safeguarding further down this page.

# Contacting the church

## How do you want people to contact the church on Facebook?

Facebook messenger is an easy way for people to get in touch by sending a direct message, however, you might prefer to use email and turn off Messenger. Whichever you choose, keep your details up to date, and be responsive when people get in touch so that they feel welcomed and supported by the church.

- [Edit page details to include an email](#)
- [Add a contact button on your Facebook page](#)
- [Learn how to turn your Messenger inbox on or off](#)
- [Set up automatic replies on Messenger](#)

# Moderating

From time to time, there may be comments on the church's Facebook posts that go against your community guidelines, which you would like to hide or delete. Comments can be moderated by hiding, deleting or banning the profile that commented.

- [Learn how to moderate or ban comments](#)

Comments and posts can also be reported to Facebook.

- [How to report content or profiles on Facebook](#)

A profanity filter can be used to restrict certain words being used within comments.

- [Set up a profanity filter](#)

# Sharing images and video online

Follow GDPR guidelines and make sure you have the correct permissions to post photos and videos or use copyrighted material. There is more advice on this in the Safeguarding and GDPR section on this page.

# What to do if your account or page has been hacked

If you are worried about your personal Facebook account, or the page you manage has been hacked, report this to Facebook.

- [Hacked or fake accounts](#)
- [Report a page that has been hacked](#)
- [Security tips to keep your account and page safe](#)

If you have lost access to your page and you are unsure why you can [submit an appeal here](#).

# Read about safety on Facebook

- [Facebook safety guidelines](#)

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## Facebook Groups



## Admins and Moderators

Groups can have admins and moderators to help manage members and moderate comments.

- [Learn how to add admins and moderators to your group](#)

## Membership

You can set up the group to allow members automatically or set up membership approval where admins or moderators will need to approve the request.

- Click on **Membership requests** in the left-hand menu to accept new members
- [Set up membership approval](#)
- [Set up membership questions](#)
- [How to remove or block members](#)

## Group rules

Set the tone by creating group rules and remind members to respect each other.

- [Learn about Facebook group rules here](#)

## Moderating comments

At times, there may be posts or comments within the group that go against the group rules. Moderate comments and posts by:

- Pressing the **three dots** beside the comment or post to **delete, mute or remove the author**
- [How to report content or profiles on Facebook](#)

If necessary, you may want to also remove the author of the post.

- [How to remove individual group members](#)

Learn more about [managing conflict in a Facebook Group here](#).

## Reporting content to Admins or Moderators

As an admin or moderator, you'll receive a Facebook notification when someone reports a post to you. This feature lets group members highlight posts for you to review for any reason (for example: inappropriate or offensive posts).

To see member-reported content:

- From the **Group** go to the left menu and select **Member-Reported Content**
- Choose to **keep or delete** the post or **Remove or block** the member who created the post.

Learn more about [managing conflict in a Facebook Group here](#).

## Group privacy

A group can be set to **public** - non-members can see all posts, or **private** - only members can see posts. Choose which is most appropriate for your group.

- [Set the privacy](#)

## GDPR and safeguarding

Members within the group may share personal details such as photos, life events or prayer requests. It may be helpful to remind all members to respect each other's privacy by including this in the [group rules](#) or posting a reminder.

Follow GDPR guidelines and do not share photos or videos posted within the group without asking permission of the owner.

If anyone within the group makes a safeguarding disclosure, or you are concerned about another's comments or posts, contact your church's safeguarding officer or Diocesan Safeguarding officer for advice on how to respond.

## Reporting content

If you want to report a post that goes against Facebook's [Community Standards](#) (example: nudity, hate speech, violence) take these steps:

- Go to the content you want to report
- Use the **Find Support or Report link** to report it.

## Helpful articles

- [Facebook safety guidelines](#)
- [10 tips for running a successful Facebook Group for your church](#)



# Instagram

## Administrating

The legal age to create an Instagram account is 13 years.

At least two people should have access to the Instagram account, so that the inbox can be seen by two people, by sharing the username and password with them.

- [How to switch between two Instagram accounts](#)
- Use a church email address, not a personal email, as the contact for the account. This is where a password reset will be sent.
- [Learn how to add an email here](#)

## Moderating

Moderate comments on posts by deleting or reporting. There are times where you may prefer to stop comments on an individual post too.

- [Delete an Instagram comment](#)
- [How to report Instagram user accounts here](#)
- [How to turn off comments on a post](#)

## Sharing images and video online

Follow GDPR guidelines and make sure you have the correct permissions to post photos and videos or use copyrighted material. There is more advice on this in the Safeguarding and GDPR section on this page.

## What to do if your account has been hacked

If you are worried your Instagram account has been hacked, report this to Instagram.

- [Report a hacked account](#)
- [Security tips to keep your account safe](#)

## Read about safety on Instagram

- [Instagram safety guidelines](#)
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## Twitter



## Administering

The legal age to create a Twitter account is 13 years.

At least two people should have access to the Twitter account so that the inbox can be seen by two people. Simply share the username and password with another trusted person.

- [User account information](#)
- [How to log in and switch between two Twitter accounts](#)

Use a church email address, not a personal email, as the contact for the account. This is where a password reset and notifications will be sent.

- [Learn how to add or edit an email on a Twitter profile](#)

## Moderating

You cannot delete tweets or replies from another person's account, however, some moderation tools can help.

- [How to hide a reply to your tweet](#)
- [Block, mute or report accounts](#)
- [Choose who can reply to your tweet](#)

## Contacting the church

Anyone can tag the church's Twitter profile in a public tweet, however, only accounts that you follow, or those you have previously contacted, can send you a direct message.

- [Learn more about direct messages](#)

## Sharing images and video online

Follow GDPR guidelines to make sure you have the correct permissions to post photos and videos. There is more advice on this in the Safeguarding and GDPR section on this page.

## What to do if your account has been hacked

If you are worried your Twitter account has been hacked, report this to Twitter.

- [Report a hacked account](#)
- [Security tips to keep your account safe](#)

## Read about safety on Twitter

- [Twitter safety and security](#)
- [Twitter community guidelines](#)

### YouTube



## Administrating

The legal age to create a YouTube account is 13 years.

For others to log in to the channel you do not need to share the account details with them, instead, invite them to manage the channel from their account. This is safer than sharing the password.

- [How to add or remove access to your YouTube channel](#)

## Moderating

Moderate comments on your videos by organising, deleting or turning off comments

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[How to moderate comments](#)

- [How to report inappropriate comments, videos or accounts](#)
- [How to turn off comments.](#)

## Sharing images and video online

Follow GDPR guidelines and make sure you have the correct permissions to post photos and videos or use copyrighted material such as music.

More information on live-streamed and pre-recorded video, licences, GDPR and safeguarding can be found [here](#).

## What to do if your account has been hacked

If you are worried your YouTube account has been hacked, report this to YouTube.

- [Report a hacked account](#)
- [Security tips to keep your account safe](#)

## Read about safety on YouTube

- [YouTube Community Guidelines](#)

## Additional resources

- [Learn more about YouTube](#)
- [Guide to getting started with live streaming](#)

### WhatsApp Groups



## Administrating

- The legal age to use [WhatsApp is 16 years.](#)
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Users must download the app to join a WhatsApp group

## Moderating

WhatsApp groups can have any number of admins to share the responsibility of looking after the group.

- [Add or remove admins from a WhatsApp group](#)

Add information to your groups such as name, profile picture and description. These can be used as a mini notice board to highlight important information.

- Restrict who can change these details by [editing group details](#).
- Who can send messages in the group - admins only, or all members? [Change message settings](#).

If members of the group breach WhatsApp community guidelines you can report these contacts to Whatsapp and remove them from the group.

- [Add or remove someone from a WhatsApp group](#)
- [How to report contacts who are breaching WhatsApp community guidelines](#)

## Invite others to the group

Group members can be added directly from your phone contacts

- [How to add members from contacts](#)

Alternatively, share the group link so that others can join.

- [How to find and share your Whatsapp group link](#)

Once created, this link can be shared with anyone, so only use this feature with trusted individuals and do not post publicly online. Instead, invite people to contact you first before adding them to the group.

## Read more about safety on WhatsApp

- [WhatsApp Community Guidelines](#)
- [WhatsApp Safety Tips](#)

### A Church Near You (ACNY)

## Administrating

ACNY allows up to five Administrators per church.

Every church should have one Administrator, the vicar. **Administrators** can edit all aspects of the page and can approve others as editors.

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## [Administrators, Editors and Publishers](#)

- [How to become an Administrator](#)

**Editors** can help edit the church page, but cannot approve others as editors. This is the role of the Administrator.

- [Learn how to become an Editor](#)

If there is no vicar at the church, please contact the team through the [Editor Help Centre](#) for support.

## Contacting the church

Inbox messages can be seen by Administrators and Editors. Add the church contact email address to the **Get in touch page** to receive inbox message notifications.

- [How to update the Get in Touch page](#)

## Safeguarding

Every church should have safeguarding information on its website and A Church Near You page. Approved text to include on your homepage can be found on A Church Near You by editing the homepage and scrolling to the **Page content** section.

- [How to edit your homepage](#)
- [Add safeguarding information to your page](#)

## Additional resources

- [Attend a Digital Labs webinar on A Church Near You](#)
- [Contact the Editor Help Centre](#)

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[Subscribe here](#)

- **How to Design a Church Logo, Even If You're Not a Designer**

01/05/2024



- **Images and copyright: A guide to using images online legally**

19/04/2024



- **How to make the most of Instagram to reach your audience in 2024**

12/04/2024



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