

The Church of England has more than doubled its monthly reach on social media this year, from 1.2 million in 2017 to 2.44 million in 2017/2018.

Our social media profiles are helping us to explain the work of the Church and share the Good News of Jesus Christ in a way that just wasn't possible before.

Engagement on the Church of England Instagram has quadrupled over the last 12 months, and the majority of people we reach on this platform are under the age of 34.

Our campaigns to mark the key events in the Christian calendar saw a significant increase in size, with the reach of our Christmas campaign



While we are working to increase the number of people who can access our content, we're also trying to ensure that these engagements from our regular churchgoers, and those who might not be connected to a church, align with our digital priorities: digital evangelism, digital discipleship and promoting the common good.

We don't just want these campaigns to increase our digital reach, we want these digital campaigns to encourage people to visit their local, worshipping communities.

Through research we carried out after this year's Christmas campaign, we were thrilled that those who followed the campaign and read our Advent and Christmas reflections felt that their faith had been strengthened by the content.

One respondent said: "It has brought me closer to God and made me determined to get back to church," while another said: "Thoroughly enjoyed the reflections, it gave me an opportunity to sit and spend time with God. Thank you."

For Lent and Easter, the Church of England launched a discipleship campaign, running daily reflections (produced by Church House Publishing and made available in both print and as emails) and explainer graphics for days such as Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. The campaign reached more than a million more people in 2018, up to 3.54 million from 2.5 million in 2017.

Evaluation of the campaign showed that 78 per cent found the #LiveLent reflections very helpful or extremely helpful in bringing them closer to



This was the first integrated campaign the Church of England ran, with print and digital working together to make the content accessible to as many people as possible. This year's campaign, Lent Pilgrim and Easter Pilgrim, will build off the success of this.

### **Church of England website**

In the first year of the Digital Team, research was carried out to identify who was using the Church of England website and what content they were looking for.

Based on the results, we were able to redesign the site with a focus on those who are exploring faith, giving them information about what it means to be a Christian, how to develop their faith and how Christians today live out their beliefs.

Since launching last November, there have been more than two million new users on the site.

### **A Church Near You**

A Church Near You is our church-finder tool and is at the heart of each of our campaigns to lead people into a local church.

Traffic to A Church Near You doubled in Christmas 2017 compared to Christmas 2016. This increase came one month after the site was totally redesigned – for the first time in seven years – so it was fantastic to see this investment pay off.

Each church in the Church of England has a page on A Church Near You, and they can claim these pages and personalise them by adding services and events, images and information about the accessibility of the church.

Since then, we have launched phase two, which allows churches to use the site as their website for free, so we are hoping traffic to the site this Christmas will increase again as more churches are using the site to advertise their services and events.



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Dioceses and local churches have been crucial to the success of the digital output we have produced in the last year, with the way they have shared our content, joined in with the digital campaigns and got behind the hashtags.

By this December, we will have trained 1,000 local churches in social media and websites, and it's great to see how the local church is using digital in a strategic way to reach people in their communities who they may not have been able to reach previously.

As we prepare to begin the #FollowTheStar campaign in the next few weeks, we are not only hoping to increase the number of people who engage from our last Christmas campaign, but also to have better equipped our churches with resources, which then encourage more people to try a Christmas service or event this year. Ultimately, that's how we measure our success.

**~~View the 2018 digital report~~**





Our social media presence  
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