

As we head towards Christmas, we can expect that our digital communication channels will be busier than ever as we hold online services and events for our local and church communities. In this blog we asked the digital team to share essential updates for your social media, A Church Near You pages and newsletters to prepare them for new visitors this Christmas.

# Social media profiles

## Update your Instagram and Twitter bios

Your bio, the block of text under your username, is the first thing people see upon visiting your page. Christmas inspires many people explore church for the first time, so consider using language that's accessible to all and avoid any Christian jargon. You could include a line about your plans for Christmas or change your bio link to point to your Christmas services on [AChurchNearYou.com](https://www.AChurchNearYou.com) – just remember to change it once the season is over!

- [Update your Instagram bio](#)
- [Customise your twitter bio](#)

## Update your pinned posts on Facebook and Twitter

Think of pinned posts as an extension of your bio. Here you can provide more information about how your church will be celebrating Christmas – online and onsite (depending on restrictions), and give a little more information to those looking to worship with you. Again, remember to use inclusive language that anyone will understand.

- [Pin a post on Facebook](#)
- [Pin a post on Twitter](#)

## Review your Instagram highlights

Highlights are Instagram's answer to pinned posts. A much more creative resource, they allow you to save and group stories that your profile has shared. Why not create a story for each Christmas event, with timings and details of what it will involve – for example, many people may not know what Nine Lessons and Carols is. Save these stories into a highlight, making it easy for people to come back to.

- [Create Instagram highlights from Stories](#)

## Make a content calendar

Content calendars map out your social media posts according to date and platform. Christmas is likely to be your church's busiest time of year, so it's a good idea to plan your social media posts in advance. Your calendar could include anything from post ideas to full posts, including the

captions and images you'll use – whatever works for you. Making a content calendar allows you to keep track of what you want to say and helps make sure that you haven't forgotten anything.

## **Schedule your posts**

Save time and keep more sociable hours by scheduling your posts. Once you've planned your posts, there's no need to wait until their send date – all social media platforms allow you to schedule posts in advance, with options to edit them if needed. Go to Facebook's Creator Studio to schedule Instagram and Facebook posts, and click the calendar icon in the compose box on Twitter to schedule tweets. Check your insights to see the best times to post!

- [How to schedule on Facebook](#)
- [How to schedule on Instagram](#)
- [How to schedule on Twitter](#)

# A Church Near You

Are you an editor on A Church Near You? Learn how to create a login and edit your church pages [here](#).

## Christmas services and events

There are already thousands of Christmas events and services added to A Church Near You. Have you added yours? Millions of people will use the site this December. Help them to find you by using the tags! Make sure you tag your services with '*Comfort and Joy*', as well as '*Christmas*', '*Advent*' and '*Christmas carols*' or any of the other related tags as appropriate. This will ensure that visitors will find the kind of services and event's they are looking for. [Watch this video to show you how](#) to tag events and services.

*Last Christmas, the vast majority of editors who added their Christmas services and events to the site did so in under an hour – more than 90 per cent, and 23 per cent of those who added their services to ACNY saw more people attend their Christmas services last year.*

- [Create services and events on A Church Near You](#)

## Use tags

Remember, if you're offering online services, use the tags to promote this, such as '*live stream*' or '*prerecorded service*'. If you're streaming your live service through YouTube, visitors will be able to [watch this on A Church Near You](#). Remember to add the URL once you have scheduled your live service when adding the service to ACNY.

- [Tag services and events](#)

## Free resources

Visit the Resource Hub – a one-stop shop for free images, videos and Church of England logos and resources. This Christmas, you'll be able to download more than 60 Advent, Christmas and Epiphany hymns and carols. You can use these for free to help with your online services. You can also find Orders of Service for services and stock images to use on websites, social media and printed resources.

- [Visit the Hub and download free resources now](#)

## Create an invite video

Use our [video generator tool](#), available exclusively to A Church Near You editors through the Resource Hub, allows you to add your own text to a Comfort and Joy video. You can use this on your ACNY page, social media accounts and even for church screens! Remember to use the hashtag #ComfortAndJoy if you're sharing these films on social media. We'd love to see your personalised videos!

- [Generate your video now](#)

## **Customise your own Comfort and Joy graphics**

Try our brand new social media generator tool, which allows you to create Comfort and Joy graphics for your church's Facebook, Twitter or Instagram accounts in seconds. Choose what text you would like on these graphics. You could encourage people to attend your Advent or Christmas services, watch online events or find out more about how your church is celebrating this very different Christmas.

- [Generate your social media graphics now](#)

## **Give your page a Christmas make over**

Turn on the Comfort and Joy branding for your churches A Church Near You page. Not only will this give your page a Christmas makeover, but it will also make it easier for people to find your Christmas services.

- [Find out how to turn on the Christmas branding here](#)

# Newsletters

## Customise your newsletter for Advent and Christmas

Make sure you're using colours, fonts and graphics that reflect your branding over Advent and Christmas so that people feel the content is relevant to the season. If you're using our national campaign, Comfort and Joy, you can [find out more on our website](#).

## Keep your information looking ahead

Let people know about upcoming events and services in your regular emails. People want to know what to look out for and when to make space for special events and services. Make sure that you're telling people about these things across your email newsletters.

## Check your GDPR requirements

Ensure that you're only sending emails to people who have asked for them and make sure that the information you are sending them is in line with what they signed up for. It's important that your subscribers don't get fed up with receiving information that they don't want; it's also a legal requirement!

## A perfect time to update details

It's a great opportunity to ask people to update their details, depending on what data you store about your subscribers. If you're able to let people know what the exciting things you've got coming up, they're more likely to make sure their profile is up to date so they don't miss out.

## Think about the journey

Don't just send out individual emails separately. Think about the journey you want to take your subscribers on. For example, you might send your first email introducing your Advent and Christmas theme, followed up by some resources the following week, then an online service reminder for the coming weekend. Map out this journey on a piece of paper or on a computer so that you can see where the opportunities are alongside everything you are doing, to inform people about it all.

[Learn more about using Mailchimp for emails here](#)

Keep up to date with all things digital and join our Labs Latest newsletter.

[Subscribe here](#)

- **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



- **Everything you need to know about the Church Organiser**

05/04/2024



**Source URL:** <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/digital-labs/blogs/get-your-digital-channels-ready-christmas>