

Here are some trends to think about as you plan your social media content and strategy for 2025.

January is a great time to think about the year ahead and plan what's to come. With social media, there's always a new trend to try and new functionality being launched on different channels. But after a busy Christmas, it can sometimes feel overwhelming to know where to start! So, we've taken a look at all trends that we're seeing across platforms and are bringing you five ideas that we think could fit neatly into all the brilliant things you may already be doing on your church's social media channels.

There is one topic you may think we've missed: AI.

AI is now embedded into so many areas of our lives and the platforms we use. For example, search engines, smartphones and even washing machines - with platforms like Gemini, Chat GPT, Claude and many others leading in this space. We've written about AI on Digital Labs before, so take a look at blogs below if you want to find out more. Watch this space for a third blog on using AI for generating video.

- [Generative AI for text](#)
- [Generative AI for images](#)

In this blog, we're focusing on content we think could drive more engagement with your local community – engaging your churchgoers and hopefully inviting more people to join with you throughout the year.

What are you going to try? We'd love to see your posts! Remember to tag us on social media so we can see your exciting content.

Trend one: consider social SEO

While it might be natural for us to head to Google or ask Alexa if we have a question we'd like an answer to, an increasing number of people are using social media channels as search engines.

Senior Vice President Prabhakar Raghavan, who runs Google's Knowledge & Information organisation, said their studies found almost 40 per cent of young people use TikTok or Instagram when they're looking for a place for lunch – rather than Google Maps or Search.

YouTube is used in a similar way, so we're sure to see the other channels give weight to social SEO (search engine optimisation).

How to use this trend:

Think about 'keywords' in the posts you write – if you're inviting your community to mark or celebrate a certain day, have you used that in the copy? If you're running a course to help a specific group or on a specific topic, have you used those words in the text you're using to promote it?

For example: "faith activities for teenagers in Harrogate", "after school activities for teenagers in Harrogate" or "Christian youth events."

Remember to use alt text on any images you use to improve accessibility. Alt text simply describes the action in the image, for example: "Image of a group of people praying".

Wherever possible, use subtitles on videos you share – again to make them more accessible. You could use the autogenerated ones the platforms provide. Do not forget to natively add keyword-optimised captions to your videos – this helps people to find them when searching.

Trend two: employee-generated content

So you may have heard of user-generated content – brands using customers to promote their products – but businesses are now looking to staff to tell their story. As the desire for authenticity and transparency continues, using the real people running projects and programmes gives followers as insight into what engaging with an organisation would be like.

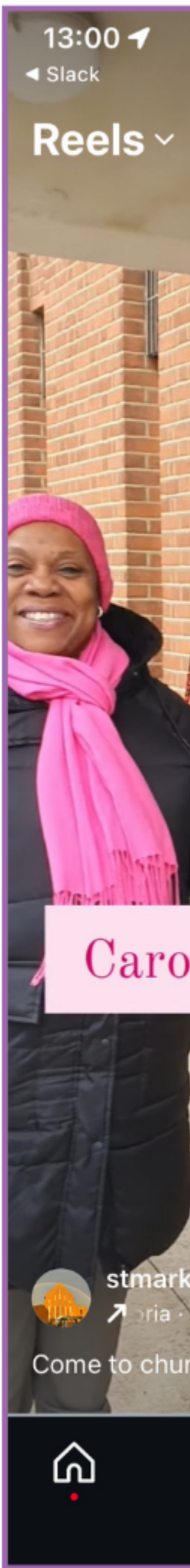
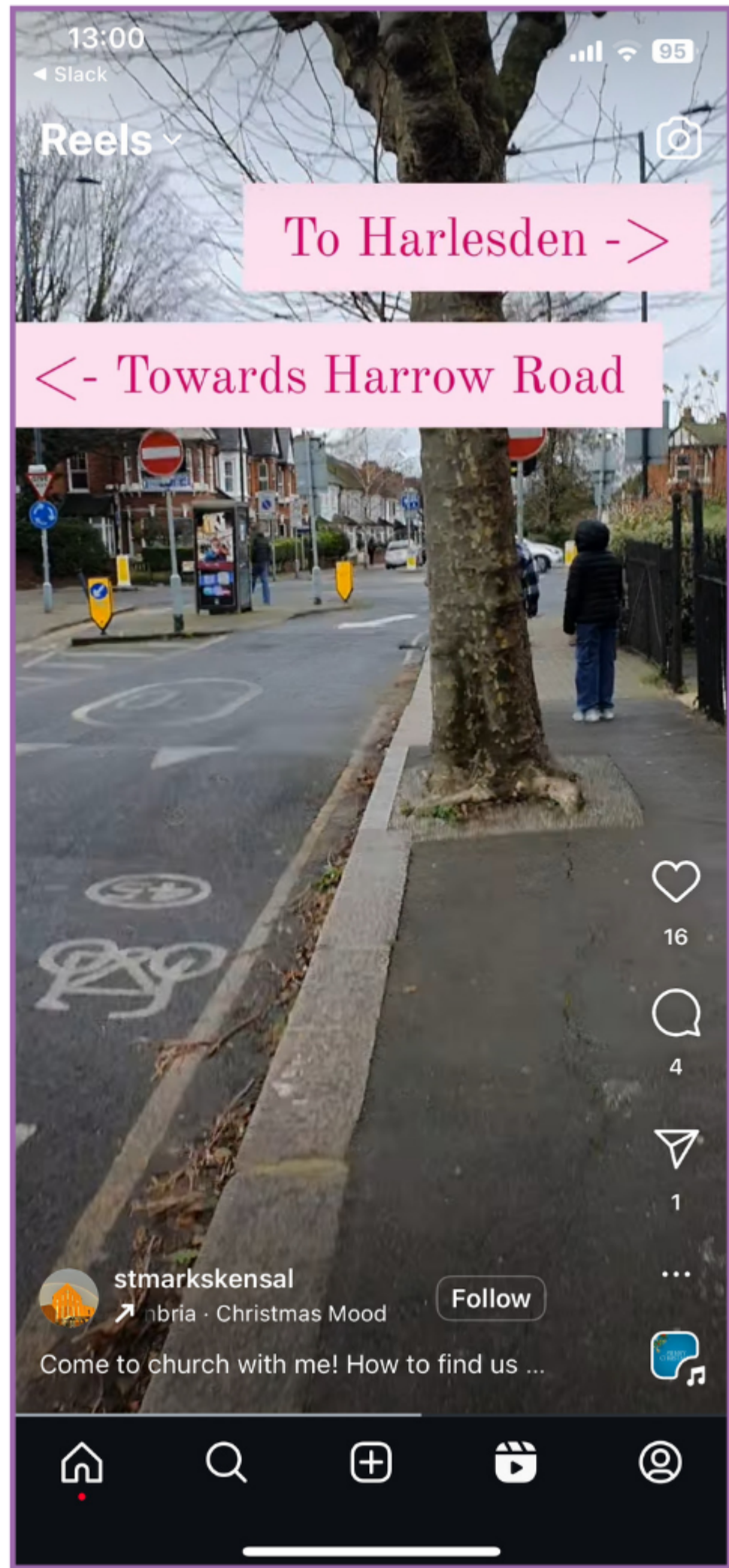
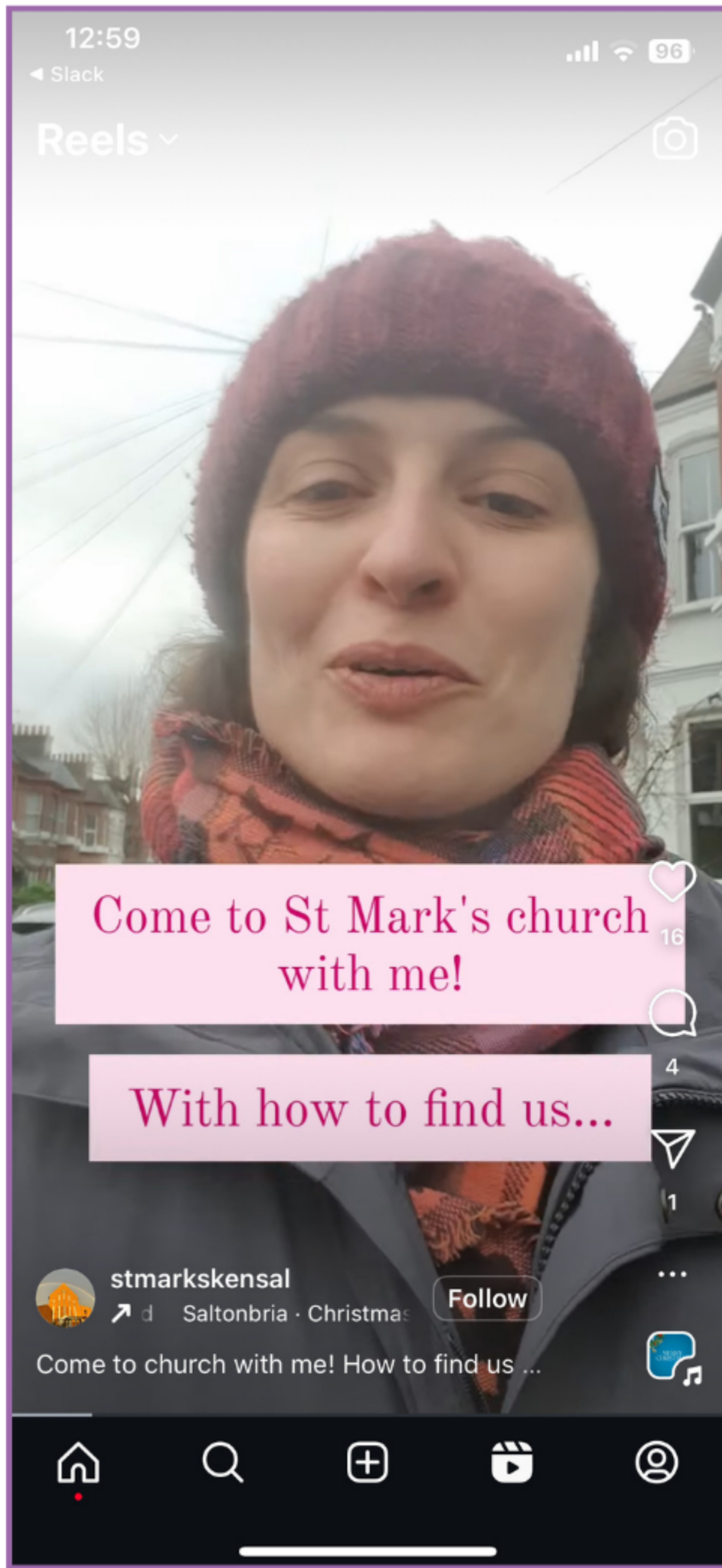
How to use this trend:

How can your clergy, lay leaders and volunteers feature in your social media content?

Could you organise a 'day-in-the-life' of your vicar, filming themselves working in the parish, visiting the local school or preparing for a service?

You could think about featuring a volunteer who's running an upcoming event, asking them to record a short video about what's planned and what new visitors might want to know if they came along – what to wear, where to meet, how long it will last, etc.

[Have a look at this great Instagram Reel](#) we saw shared this Christmas, making it simple for people to find a local Christmas service.



Trend three: telling the real stories of your community

This one is not new, but is still effective in building connection with your community online.

You might hear a lot about the appeal of ‘influencers’ in encouraging users to take action – but user-generated content puts the focus on your local community. Real people telling real stories about how your church may have helped them, events or services they’ve enjoyed or how they found bringing their child along to the toddler group.

With religious literacy in the UK low, we cannot assume that everyone has the same level of knowledge about church. A huge number of people in your community may not have engaged with a church before, or know what really happens if they were to come along. By showing them people they can relate to, talking simply about the brilliant local work you do might just give them the confidence that your church is somewhere they could consider visiting.

How to use this trend:

Encourage your leaders to be on the lookout for stories to tell. It’s easiest to film on a phone: ask people if they’d be willing to speak for around 30 seconds about their experience at an event or service.

[Here’s a post by Bradford Cathedral](#) telling the stories of their community:



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Trend four: videos aren't going anywhere

As you may have gathered from the previous trends we've shared: short-form video is still king.

This is of course driven by platforms like TikTok (with more than 2 billion global users) and Instagram – but across the board, engagement with video content is high.

With attention spans getting shorter, videos featuring personal stories or that offer users the chance to learn something new are well received.

And vertical videos have a 90 per cent higher completion rate (users who watch right to the end) than horizontal ones.

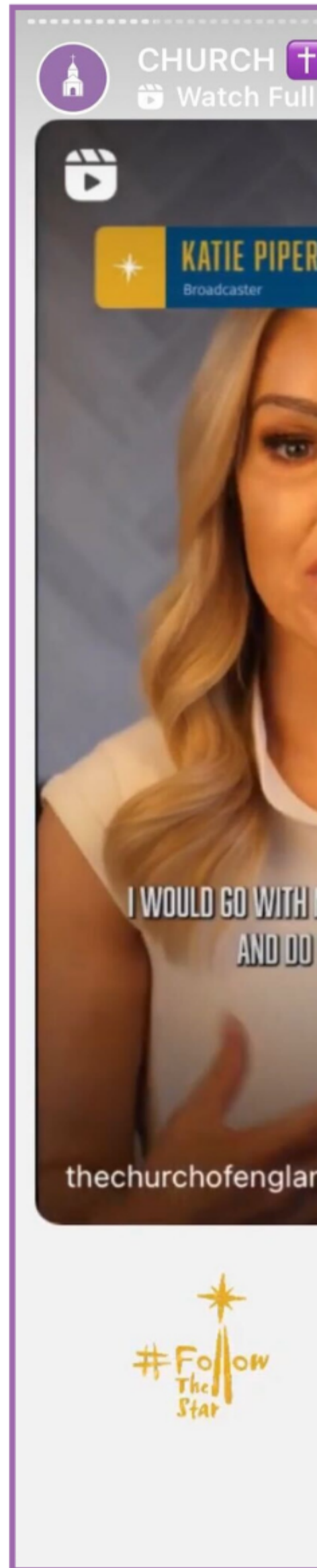
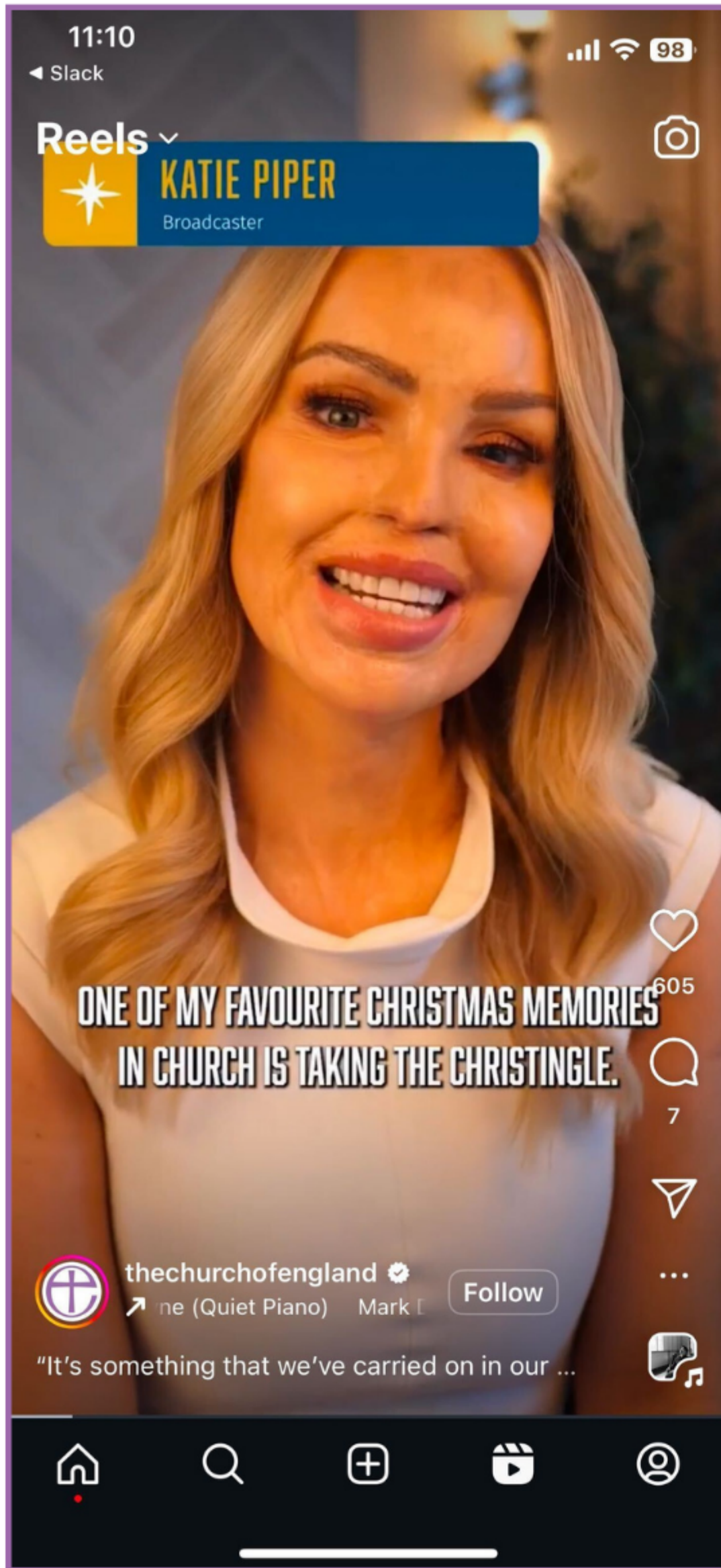
How to use the trend:

While video could help you reach more people in your area, this will only happen if it offers value – make sure each video has a clear purpose!

Are you inviting the community to a service, explaining something about your building or worship, or going behind the scenes to follow one of your team around for the day, with a series of short videos, to help people get to know more about you?

Find out more about using your phone to create video content in our Digital Labs blogs [here](#).

[This video](#) features Katie Piper talking about her personal experience of Christingle services, and invites viewers to comment with their own memories too. You can see below the video shared as a Reel and then also as a Story, alongside a question inviting interaction.



Trend five: using trending themes

2024 was the year of gratitude and [#hopecore](#) – with a move towards slowing down and appreciating the world around us. And 2025 sees more of this, with many social media users rejecting consumerism and ‘hustle culture’ for slower living. These are very easy trends for us as a church to lean into, and share moments of worship, reflection and prayer.

Recent research we carried out to learn more about the people we’d love to engage with nationally on social media shows that the environment and sustainability is another topic that the public are interested in – and something the Church has a lot to talk about nationally with major initiatives – along with brilliant local examples of looking after our planet with stewardship.

As the impact of climate change dominates the news, the focus on the environment will continue into 2025, so the topic is one to consider with your social media content.

How to use the trend:

If you’ve made switches across your building to reduce environmental impact, could you showcase these in a video or carousel of images to show the practical work being done? With polls being favoured by the algorithm on Instagram, you could ask people what else they’d like you to try as a church, or encourage comments to be left on your Facebook post to increase engagement.

Reflective services could be what those in your community need with the busy world around them – are you inviting people to come along on social media?

And if you’re thinking about ways to communicate with your community about hope, keep an eye out for more news about our Lent campaign for 2025 – this year’s theme is [‘Living Hope’](#).



Prayer posts on the Church of England's social media channels continue to be engaged with really well by our followers. Have you tried these?

You could think about gratitude and ask people to share what they're thankful for, or even ask your community to record short prayerful videos sharing what they're thanking God for each week.

- [Create a Custom Living Hope Social Media Graphic for Easter](#)

27/03/2025



- [Creating a social media policy for your church](#)

20/03/2025



- [How to encourage digital giving at Easter](#)

12/03/2025

