



MINISTRY
DESIGNS

CHURCH WEBSITE

M A S T E R P L A N

**“IS YOUR CHURCH WEBSITE
DOING ITS JOB?”**

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IS YOUR CHURCH WEBSITE DOING ITS JOB?



Have you ever defined what that job is?

In this comprehensive guide, we're going to do all of that and much more!

Leading a church is an involved activity. It doesn't matter if you're operating a tiny, rural non-denominational ministry or an urban megachurch with a dozen campuses. Church leadership is always up to its eyeballs with things to do.

With so much going on, it can be hard to give much heed to a lowly church website. After all, your attention is soaked up with everything from counseling to caretaking, ministries to messages, prayer to payroll. Throwing in the need to create a website — and a site with little-to-no tangible benefits (on the surface at least) can feel like just another item on an infinite to-do list.

But I'm here today to challenge that notion. That's right, it's time to stop seeing your website as a problem. Instead, you need to look at your church's website as a valuable asset to your organization.

Let's start this transformation by considering what a website is — I know, it sounds obvious, but when you break it down it can be quite revealing. From there, we'll consider how a good site can help any church, great or small.

I also want you to be able to walk away from this resource with an utterly thorough understanding of how to design and maintain a good website (you'll learn more about what this means, keep reading).

Again, this isn't a straightforward, formulaic concept if only because of the vast diversity of needs from one ministry to the next.

Nevertheless, I've provided a comprehensive breakdown of the various factors that you can and should consider adding to your church's website. After that, we'll briefly run over some of the ways that you can promote your site to ensure that it's fulfilling its purpose as a valuable asset for your ministry.

Now, this is a very large resource, and I'm aware that pastors and church leaders rarely have time to sit down and consume huge quantities of information. If you don't plan on reading through the entire guide (or you're doing so in chunks), that's perfectly understandable.

Regardless, I would strongly encourage you to spend time and reflect on your current website.

I want you to learn from my 15 years of experience...

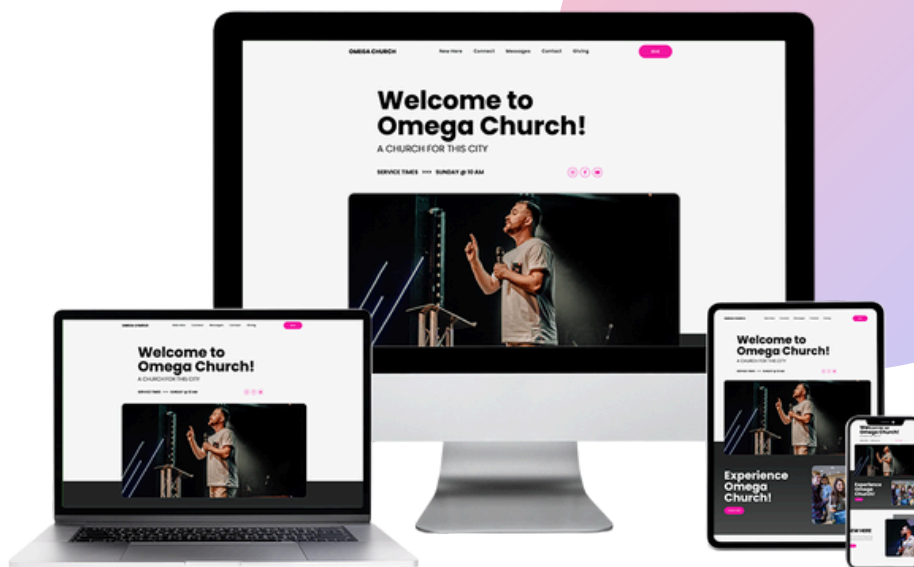
Over 15 years, my team and I have produced thousands of church websites and this guide is a culmination of everything that we've learned.

We've developed a church website framework called "Alpha," which defines the four most critical components of any church website.

We'll dive in a bit deeper later on, but for now you need to know that the Alpha Church Website Framework consists of the following parts and comes native within our [church website builder](#), Omega:

- ✓ **Discover** - People need to find your church online.
- ✓ **Like** - They need to like who you are as an organization
- ✓ **Trust** - They need to trust you!
- ✓ **Engage** - After those three things happen, they will engage with you.

WHAT ARE CHURCH WEBSITES?



I've been in the website business for a long time now. And not just that, I've been working on [church websites](#) for years. My company helps churches of all sizes maintain fast, functioning websites that don't become dated twelve months after their creation (as is sadly too often the case).

Over my time spent in this industry, I've discovered that the concept of a "church website" is often misunderstood. So, let's kick this off with a quick run through of what a website is and the needs that it should meet.

A church website is often seen as little more than a pretty digital decoration for your ministry. Much like the impressive flat-panel screens on the walls or the handmade backdrop you invested in for your next series, your site is another factor that sends the signal that you're a church that has its act together.

The truth is, though, your website primarily offers its value as a tool that provides information and enables specific actions. It serves multiple audiences, including congregants and potential visitors. It also reflects your beliefs and can work as a powerful kingdom-building tool.

Your church website has a job to do.



WHAT MAKES A QUALITY CHURCH WEBSITE?

Often we hear “that’s a good church website,” in fact, there are lists of them published all over the internet.

But what really makes a church website good?

The problems begin to arise when a church website isn’t used for its functionality. If critical information is missing — or even simply difficult to find — it can undermine the entire purpose of your site.

If a church website is supposed to be functional, the natural next question is: what things need to be present to make your site effective?

I mentioned earlier that you need to give your website a job, and like every job, it needs to have a job description.

I like to break down the factors that make a church website “good” into four distinct categories.

We call this the...

ALPHA CHURCH WEBSITE FRAMEWORK

The Alpha Framework is a sequential process that builds from one step to the next. If the first step isn't achieved, the next step simply cannot happen and your website is failing at its job.



Discover — Your Website

Discover is basically search engine optimization — commonly referred to as SEO — and can be an intimidating term. But all it really means is that your site is created with a focus on ensuring that people can find it. If your site isn't "discoverable" on its own, it's going to be hard to get much value out of it.

We'll cover more on SEO tactics toward the end in the section on promoting your website.

So keep reading...



Like — Your Church

Likeability is directly tied to the overall design of your website. If your church website is well designed, it will subconsciously provoke positive feelings about not only your website, but also your church.

Here's the thing... This part of the process happens in a split second for a first-time visitor.

It may sound a bit extreme, but the experiences they have, both negative and positive, really can make or break their future relationship with your ministry.

Likeability isn't just pretty pictures or using the right words. It involves the entire design and structure of your site. From navigation to the color scheme, orientation to picture choices, the design, and layout of your site are critical factors that can heavily impact its success or failure.



Trust — Your Community

If you have a great conversation with someone that you just met and it ends with them misleading you or aggressively asking for a personal favor, it doesn't equate to a net positive.

On the contrary, you're probably going to think twice before you engage with any other stranger for a long time to come.

A church website is no different. Your site is often your first opportunity to develop trust with those that can or already do attend your church. From proactively answering questions to setting up respectful giving and donation options, you want to ensure that your site is building rather than hindering the trust factor between your ministry and your community.

Listen, in today's world, people won't go to a restaurant, let alone a church, without trusting the information they find online about the business or organization first.

Not only do we have to build bridges, but we also have to be intentional about tearing down barriers.



Engage — Your Mission

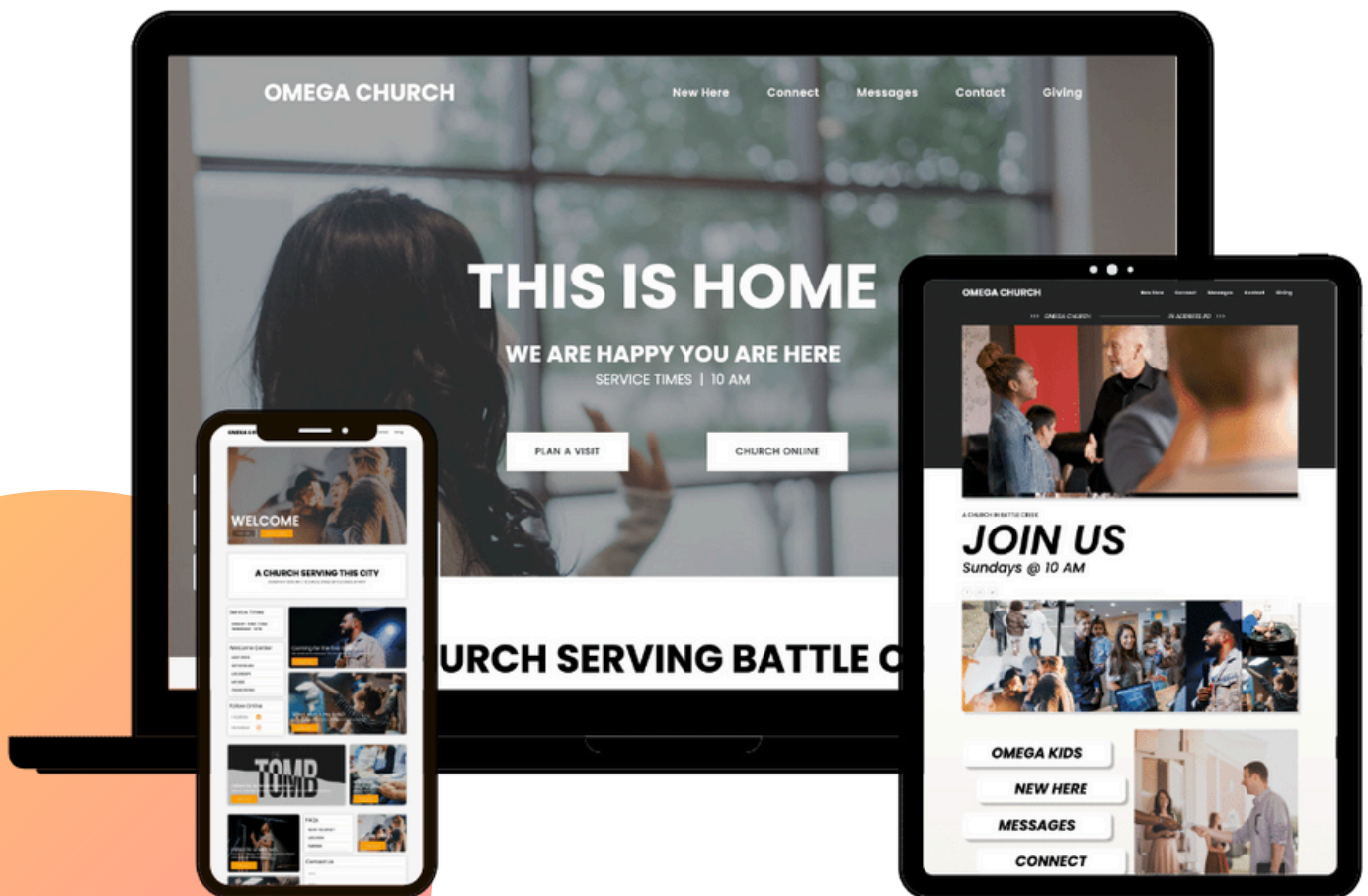
Finally, there's the good ol' call to action (CTA). CTAs are often associated with things like marketing and sales tactics, but you can also use them on your church website.

An effective site uses opportunities to spur individuals to action. This could include a "Plan A Visit" button on the homepage to encourage new people to visit — more on that in a bit. It could also include offering a safe and secure tithing option, explaining volunteer opportunities, or even asking someone to sign up for your newsletter or daily devotional. Whatever that specific call to action is, it needs to be clear over and over and over again.

The Alpha Framework—Discover, Like, Trust, and Engage—should be the top priorities for any church website. That’s why I’ve worked hard to create my company’s ministry-focused church website builder.

Our tool, Omega, enables churches to create websites that answer all of these key areas. It also adapts and grows with the ongoing needs of a ministry. It offloads the grunt work while ensuring that you create a site that is more than just an item on an overloaded checklist.

The result is an efficient and effective website that doesn’t just dazzle. It meets the needs of those who use it.



THE BENEFITS OF EFFECTIVE CHURCH WEBSITES



Alright, before we shift to focusing on the various elements that make up a good website, I want to spend a few more minutes going over the benefits that come from a good site.

This is important. Even if you've grasped the value that an effective site adds to your ministry, it's worth taking the time to understand the specific, tangible benefits that it provides. These can serve as valuable reminders of why you're putting the time and effort into your site over the long haul.

There are many, and I mean many, ways that a healthy website can benefit your church. That said, I'm going to highlight half a dozen of the biggest ways that a good site can pay dividends over time.

Church Websites Act as Your Online Hub

The organizational element of a good website is hard to overstate.

There is an endless procession of digital services available. From payment software to social media platforms and everything in between, it's easy for a ministry to find itself utilizing a plethora of digital tools. In addition, emails, texting, forums, and other channels are used to communicate information.

Your church website provides a single location where you can centralize all of this online activity. It's one easy-to-find place that people can use for a variety of

needs associated with your ministry. On top of that, you can rest in the fact that you unequivocally own your website content — which is a bit of a hazy area for places like YouTube or Facebook.

Christ Alive Church In Battle Creek, MI, has done an incredible job of this:

CHURCH FOR BATTLE CREEK

SUNDAYS AT 10:30 AM | 8938 BELLEVUE RD, BATTLE CREEK, MI 49014

NEW HERE
Looking for a church but not sure where to turn? We want to help you find a home. Click below to find out more and plan a visit.

MY KIDS
Have children? No problem, your kids will love it here. Christ Alive Church a ministry for your child no matter what the age.

MESSAGES
Want to listen to a message from Pastor Dan or just catch up on the latest series? Check out our Messages page.

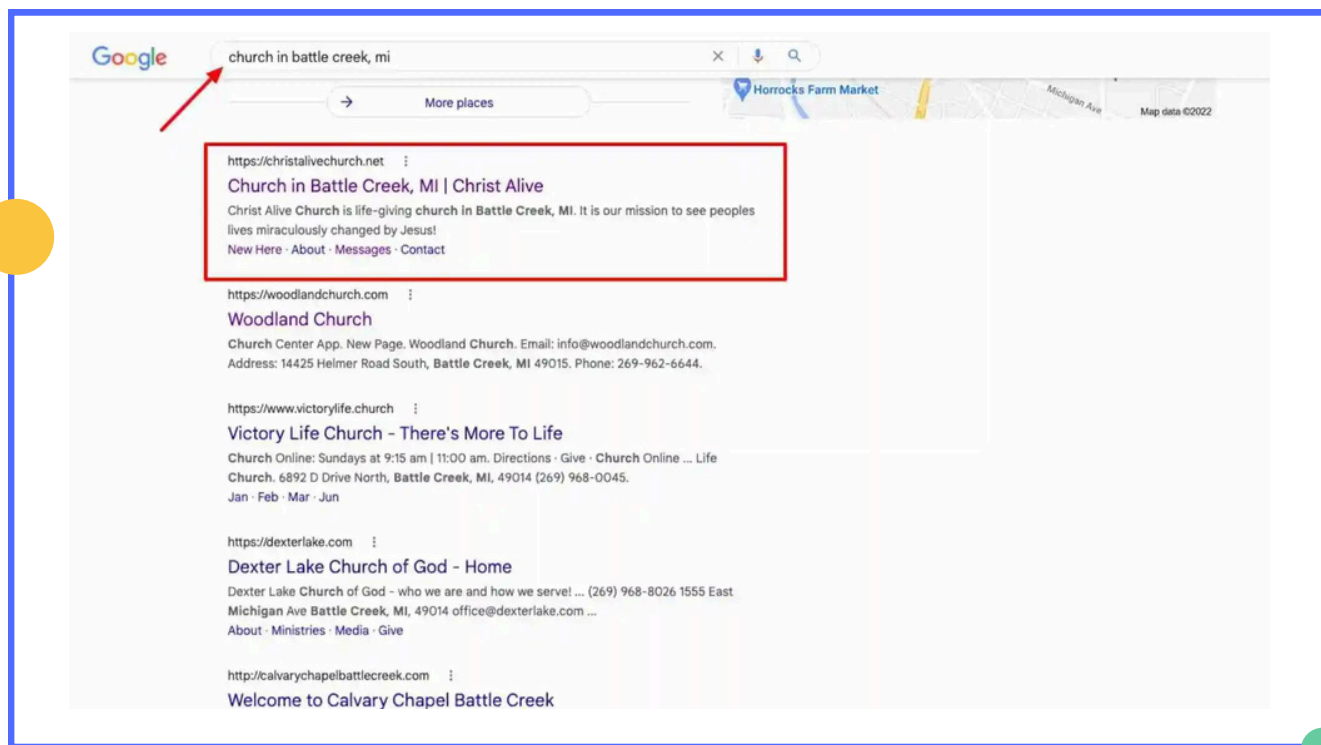
Church Websites Help Church Seekers Find You

If I've said it once, I've said it a thousand times. Church marketing may not be fun, but it's necessary. Now, that isn't a license to use dirty marketing tactics to get people's attention or lure them into your building.

Nevertheless, it's perfectly reasonable to promote your church to your local community. Signs in the front yard, outreach efforts at local sports events, and word-of-mouth marketing are all normal and widely accepted ways to spread the word. Even things like coffee and donuts on a Sunday morning are subtle nods to effective marketing tactics.

Your optimized and well-designed website is another way you can ensure that your local community is aware of your ministry and the services that you offer.

Back our example church, Christ Alive. If you're looking for them in Battle Creek, you're going to find them at the top of the search engines.



Church Websites Offers a “Virtual Tour” of Your Ministry

Along with helping with local brand awareness, a good website can also serve as an initial point of contact with anyone thinking of visiting. If your site is created thoughtfully, it can offer what amounts to a “virtual tour” of your ministry.

Your home page, which we break down in detail in the content section, is the “door” that welcomes individuals into your church experience. From there, you can use “about us” pages, “Plan Your Visit” buttons, FAQ sections, videos, and pictures. These elements show anyone interested in dropping in what they can expect when they arrive—Think “trust” from the Alpha Framework.

A Church Website Enhances Your Presence in Your Local Community

Most of the time, your website is seen as an outward-facing ministry tool that helps direct congregants and visitors alike inward toward your church. However, a good website can have a positive external impact on your community as well.

This is especially true if you have church ministries that aren't just related to Sunday morning services. A website can enhance the impact that food pantries, sports leagues, and other faith-based activities can have on your local community. It builds your brand awareness and helps those around you see the impact that you're having on their local neighborhoods.

We like to call this being the hands and feet of Jesus, and it's ok to tell people about it.

Plus it gives people share on social media when your doing something unique. You'll notice that person included direct links back to this church's website.



A Church Website Offers Easy-Access Services for Members

Along with outreach and brand building, your website can also streamline a lot of activities that your congregants engage in on a regular basis. You can upload church bulletins and sermon notes, provide live streaming access, and offer a way for folks to give online.

This doesn't just make things easier for your church's members. By making basic churchgoing activities more accessible and location independent, you encourage your congregants to actually interact with you, no matter where they are.

This can increase the amount of engagement that you receive as people are reminded and enabled to take action even if it isn't Sunday morning and they're physically "in the building."

A Church Website Creates a Digital Safe Haven

Finally, a good church website can be an online outlet for your staff, church members, and visitors to interact with one another in a safe environment. From support and spreading the word about ministry opportunities to comment sections and live streaming access, your website offers a digital safe haven that everyone can access without fear.

Social media sites and online forums are rife with trolling and inappropriate behavior. Depressing news outlets and all manner of temptations are easy to find. Your church website can offer a comfortable, predictable, and encouraging experience, whether someone is tithing, commenting, looking for information, or anything else.

The Impact of Not Having a Well-Made Church Website

I want to very quickly run over a couple of the biggest negative risks you're taking if you don't invest in your website. These apply to both having a poorly done site as well as not having a website in the first place.

Don't skip this section. Please. It's easy to look at benefits like those listed above and think "sure, those are nice, but we just don't have the time to invest in them at the moment."

But this section is different. It highlights how not having a good site is hurting your ministry ...like, now. This very moment.

Of course, none of this should cause anyone to panic. I'm not trying to stir up fear or cause hasty decisions. All the same, understanding the negative impact of a bad or nonexistent website has become an essential piece of knowledge for those operating a ministry two decades into the 21st century.

A Lack of a Good Website Makes You Invisible

You can have a great sign out in the front yard with a big font and good color. You might even have one of those message boards where you can post encouraging Bible verses or witty sayings each week for those driving by.

Once upon a time, this was all that was needed to get the attention of passers-by and encourage them to stop in for a visit.

Now, with grocery delivery, remote work, and video playdates, there are fewer and fewer reasons for people to leave their homes. Instead of spending hours on the road each day, most local community members tend to spend hours online.

If you don't have an online presence that is optimized and able to show up in search results, you might as well be invisible, even to those living within a mile or two of your front doors.

A Lack of a Good Website Kills Engagement

One of the subtlest impacts of a good website is the fact that it pushes people to take action.

For instance, a person interested in your church must decide what to do when they visit your website and are confronted with an invitation to plan a visit. A person staying home sick from church knows that the website offers a way for them to still participate in a live stream service. Those who forget to give their offering at church can still hop online and give through your site.

By creating a subpar site — or even having no site at all — you miss out on all of these opportunities to stir up activity in your local communities. You lose the impact that comes from online engagement from your congregation along with the interactions from those thinking of paying a visit.

We should never feel that a ministry needs to operate as part of the world. On the contrary, we're called apart by God to be a light in the darkness.

However, that doesn't mean we're supposed to eschew every possible worldly tool as if they'll somehow sully our holiness.

Think about it. We use soundboards and speakers, televisions and projectors, computers, electricity, construction, traditional marketing, and countless other "worldly" things to make our ministries run.

Building a quality church website is just another way to use the tools of the world for the good of the Kingdom. In this case, it's particularly relevant because it also enables you to answer a critical need: you can meet people where they are.

By building a website that functions well and offers important, accessible information, you send the message that you're able to minister to people in a manner that they understand. You're up to date with the times and are able to communicate and interact with your congregants in a way that they're comfortable with.

Alright, at this point we've thoroughly covered what a church website is, the elements that make a website effective, the benefits of a good site, and the drawbacks of not having one. Now it's time to dive into the specific pages and pieces of content that go into a great website.



A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE ON CHURCH WEBSITES



Hopefully, by now, you realize that a good church website is an asset for your organization. This mentality is a crucial first step. It takes an exhausting albatross around your neck and turns it into a powerful tool that can enhance every part of your ministry.

In the following section, I'm going to break down the nitty-gritty aspects that can make or break a website.

Now, as a disclaimer, creating a good website is an art as much as it's a science. There isn't a one-size-fits-all solution. On the contrary, with so much diversity in beliefs, church size, membership demographics, and so on, you need to find the elements that uniquely suit your site to your ministry's needs.

But again, if you filter everything that I'm about to say through our Alpha Church Website Framework, you're going to be on the right track.

Okay, now that that's out of the way, let's get started. We'll begin with some more nuanced elements that apply to your entire site. Then, we'll dive into several of the most important pages that make up the bulk of most effective church websites.

Sound good? Here we go.

Start With Your Audience

We're going to start with an area that can often feel like the icky marketing side of the deal: defining your audience. It's easy to feel uncomfortable breaking down your "target demographic" as you work on your site. After all, you're a kingdom-building ministry that is looking to attract anyone and everyone with a heartbeat and a need for the Lord.



But I'm not talking about targeting specific groups of people to the exclusion of others. What I'm talking about here is the need to identify the groups of people that are already attending your church or living in your community.

Think of it this way. If you worked in a nursing home, would you start blaring cutting-edge pop music over the loudspeakers? Of course not. You'd probably dig up some oldies but goodies that would resonate with the residents.

In this case, you're not excluding others. You're simply tailoring your activities to the crowd that you're working with. The same could be said for a concert, classroom, office, or any other gathering of individuals.

This also goes for your church, as well. As you consider your audience, focus on three primary areas:

Demographics

Where is your church located? A recent study I read said that people are turning to Google to find a solution to their problem within 5-10 miles of their house.

The same is true for your church. Draw a 10-mile radius around your church and do a demographic study. It's likely that your congregation demographic is going to be representative of your geographic area and you need to speak to them.

Potential visitors

The next group to consider are those who might visit your church.

Now, this can obviously apply to a huge number of people. Those passing through the area or in town for a visit could come on any random Sunday morning. With live streaming becoming more popular, your reach could extend across the nation and even the world, as well.

But in this case, you can reign things in and focus on the people living in your local community.

Again, ask poignant demographic questions that can help you better understand the kind of people living in your neighborhood.

What are their interests, cares, and concerns? How can you express the value of your ministry to them properly?

Other Ministry Connections

The third and smallest group to consider are various connections to your ministry. For instance, if you collaborate with another church, your site might get traffic from their leadership team.

Another example could be missionaries that you support who want to visit your website and see how things are going with your church. Your additional ministries can also generate third-party traffic. These visitors may not necessarily be interested in attending your church, but they'll still want to find certain pieces of information such as your beliefs or charitable activities.

Considering the different kinds of individuals that will most often patronize your website is a critical step in the website creation process. It ensures that you have the interests and proclivities of each of these groups in mind as you go along. This can help you accommodate all of their needs.

Navigation and Orientation

The next pair of items that I want to cover are two critical areas of logistical concern. Each of these can impact the usability of your site. Using them correctly can be the difference-maker that takes a site from unusable to highly effective.



Navigation

Website navigation is a huge topic in the website design world. You can create a drop-dead gorgeous website, but if it isn't easy to use, it can be completely useless. Think "Engage" from the framework.

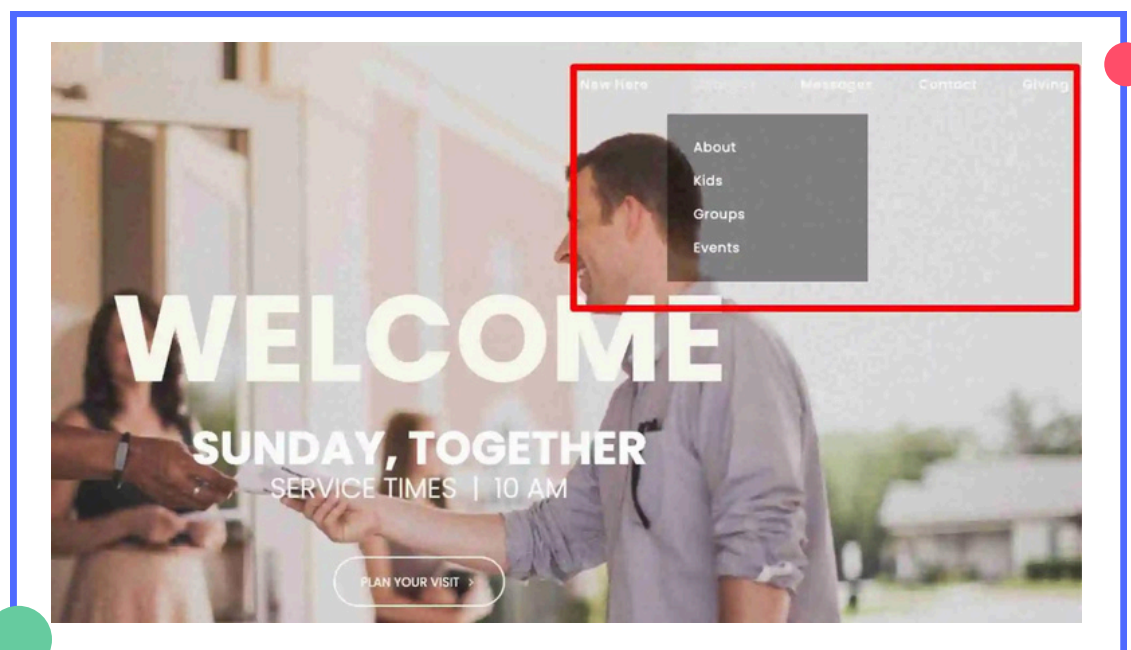
The way you set up the navigation for your site is a huge part of what makes it work for users. There are multiple factors to consider here.

For instance, as you create pages, make sure to provide links to additional resources. If you mention that you do something "because of your beliefs," use that opportunity to link to a statement of faith on your blog or resource page.

With all of that said, in my experience, the main pages that your website needs to have linked on your navigation from left to right are as follows:

- Home
- New Here
- Connect
- Messages
- Contact
- Give

Here's an example:



Put links and CTAs that point to important pages on your site in easy-to-find places, too. For instance, a pop-up or a hero banner — that is, a call to action that comes out of the side of the screen — can make it extra easy for visitors to find the “Plan A Visit” page.

However you choose to do it, make sure to prioritize the navigation element of your website to ensure that its users can find whatever they need without trouble.

Orientation

Along with the navigation element, you want to consider how your site is laid out. The orientation of your website’s contents can, once again, define if someone has a pleasant or miserable time.

Think of times that you’ve visited a website and found that you feel overwhelmed or confused by how everything is laid out. If you want your church website to shine, you need to consider this subtle yet important aspect of website design.

Two areas to focus on include lists and content placement.

For lists, always remember that people read from left to right and top to bottom. So, if you’re laying out something like a menu, make sure that the most important items are on the top and to the left.

In addition, I tend to recommend prioritizing visitor content in your orientation strategy. You don’t want to ignore the digital needs of your congregation, but the truth is, your church members won’t mind the need to dig a little further into your site to find a donation button or your latest newsletter update.

Visitors, though, well that’s another story. If a visitor comes to your site and they don’t understand what they’re seeing, they’ll take off within seconds. Even worse, if they’re immediately confronted with something like a request to donate or tithe, it could put a bad taste in their mouth right from the get-go.

Instead, put things like service info and “Plan Your Visit” buttons to the left and at the top of your menus.

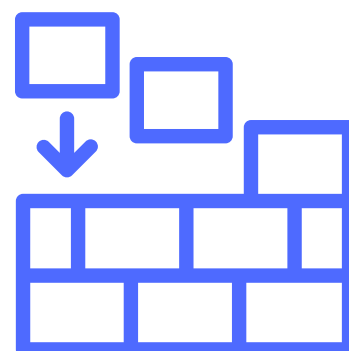
When it comes to the layout of your website pages, once again it’s wise to be thoughtful about how this will help or hinder the user.

Try to use things like scannable formatting (i.e. plenty of headers and small paragraphs) to make the content skimmable. In addition, be informative while also being as concise as possible. The average website [visitor will likely read as little as 20%](#) of your site’s content as they skim along. Don’t overwhelm them with too much to read, or they’ll completely miss the important stuff.

In other words, don’t add fluff to your text. At the same time, don’t get wordy or complicated unless you’re on specific pages, such as a blog post where you’re going in-depth on a theological question.

Lay the Foundation With The Basics

Finally, before we get to the individual pages, let’s go over a handful of the foundational website basics. You’re going to want to have each of these lined up before you dive into creating your site.



If you already have a site, that’s okay. You’ll still want to take this part seriously.

If you want to improve things, it’s worth going over the website basics every once in a while. Reviewing a list like the one I’ve provided in this section can help you ensure that you’re implementing everything correctly and your site is doing what it’s supposed to.

Now, like it or not, when you consider your website, you should focus on your church branding tools. As I’ve said many times before, the idea of your “church brand” is easy to shrug off as a worldly marketing technique.

But before you move on to other areas of the guide, remember, we're not talking about tricking people into thinking your church is something that it's not. Your church's brand should be designed to reflect the genuine personality of your congregation.

Are your current ministry branding tools effectively demonstrating what your brand is? Does your website, in particular, operate as a clear and obvious extension of your ministry?

That's where the basics come into play. If the rudimentary branding tools are in place and doing their thing, you can rest in the fact that, at its core, your website is set up for success.

Tools that you can use to infuse your site with your church's brand include:

- ✓ **Domain name/URL:** The name of your website address is important. Make sure you choose something that is easy to remember and clearly connected to your church. That way, whether someone is typing it in by memory or searching it on Google, they'll know when they've found the right site.
- ✓ **Logo:** Your ministry logo is a great way to tie all of your online content together. It provides consistency, whether you're giving driving directions, posting a sermon, or anything in between.
- ✓ **Color scheme:** Along with your logo, you also want to choose a basic set of colors that you can use throughout your website and online content. This can be any combination — I've literally seen every color used in church marketing. The important thing is that you stay consistent over time.
- ✓ **Tone and voice:** The tone and voice of your church brand are important. This doesn't mean you need a giant book of grammatical guidelines. However, make sure your online content sounds similar to the way you lead the church — and has the same feel that your congregants have when they interact, too.

- ✔ **Images:** Apart from photos, if you use other visuals on your site, make sure to prioritize consistency and quality. If you use tacky or hack-job images, it can impact the professional feel of the content. Try to find a good graphic designer for your images as well as a professional photographer for your photos.

As a quick aside, you don't have to apply this extra-careful photo and image sourcing philosophy to all of your visual needs. You can use stock photos for things like social media posts and backgrounds for worship lyric slides.

Just make sure you're still getting them from an affordable, high-quality source, like our very own Ministry Designs library of free [church graphics](#).

Church Website Content 101

Alright. I know it took us a long time to get here, but I promise you it was worth the roundabout journey. At this point, we've set the stage, reviewed the basic building blocks of a church website, and considered the audience that we're writing for.



It's now officially time to go over the individual content pages of your website. If you already have a site, I suggest you do three things.

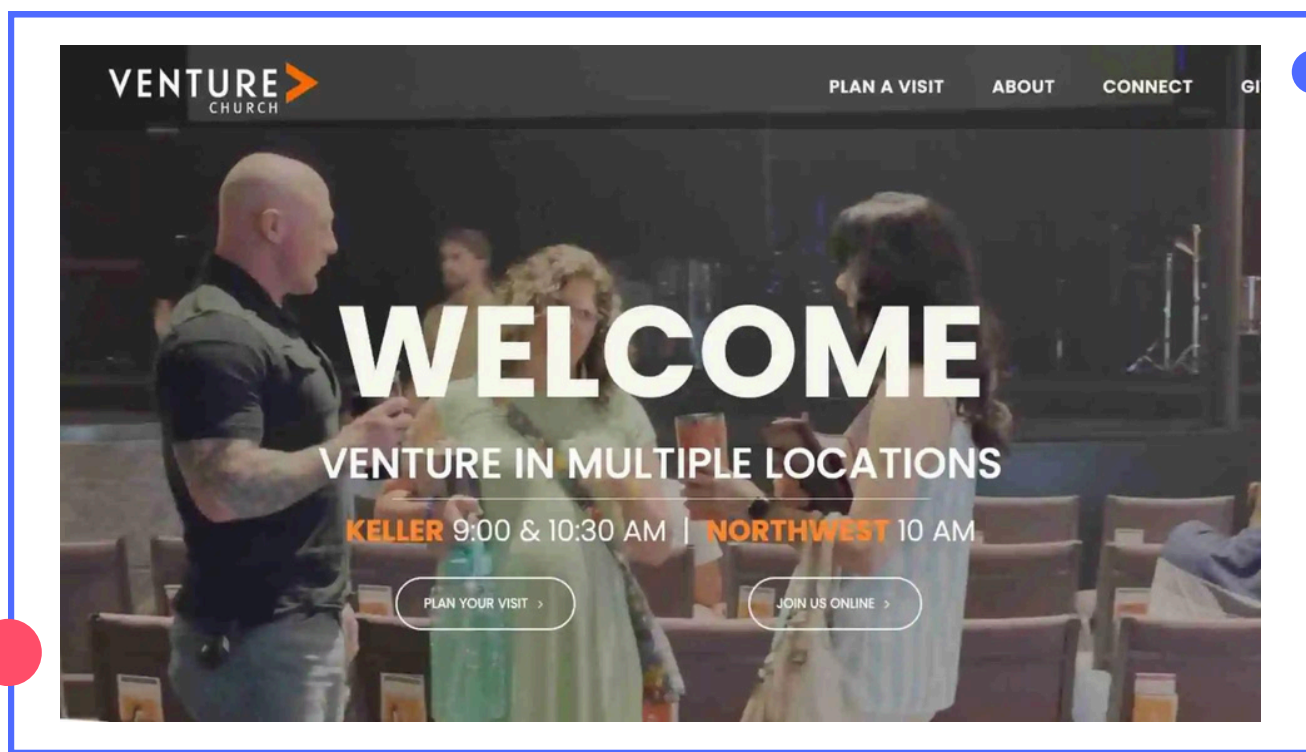
Open up your church website, if you have one. If you can, try opening it on both a computer and a mobile device. That way you can follow along and compare my recommendations to your existing pages in multiple formats.

If you don't have a site already, you can still do a modified version of this exercise. Find a few good church websites from your denomination or the style of church site that you want to emulate. (I offer a few good sites at the end of this resource, as well.) Then you can see how well they do or do not apply the information that we cover here.

I also suggest opening a document or getting out a pen and paper — whatever suits your fancy — to take notes as you go along. There are a lot of web pages to review, and you don't want to lose track of potential improvements as we move from one page to the next.

Once you're set up, come back to this point and we'll dive in with the most critical page of all: the homepage.

"Home" Page



Venture Church Home Page

Everyone knows about the homepage. After all, it's the most consistently viewed page on your entire website. A huge amount of your traffic goes through your homepage on its way to other areas of your site.

As a prime bit of digital real estate, your home page naturally plays a critical role in the success or failure of your church website. It's where you make your first impression and others form their initial opinions about your church.

And make no mistake, this is a really big deal. It takes as little as 27 seconds for someone to formulate a first opinion. The first few things that they see about an individual or a place can set the tone for the rest of their relationship with that entity. Think about “Like” from our framework earlier.

That’s why your homepage is so important. You want to put your best foot forward. You want visitors to immediately resonate with what they see. You want them to feel warm, welcome, safe, and in control.

If a website visitor is confused or unable to connect from the get-go, it’s going to undermine your site’s ability as an outreach tool.

Homepage Content

Okay, so what are you supposed to include on your homepage then? That’s the million-dollar question. And I’ll tell you right now, there isn’t a single, clear answer out there.

Everyone has their own opinion on what you should put on your homepage. What’s more, the specifics tend to change depending on the kind of site that you’re running. For instance, an e-commerce site will probably prioritize things like sales funnels and shopping menus. Naturally, a ministry won’t have the same content front and center.

In the case of a church, there are a few things that you’re going to want to consider including on your home page, such as:

- A “Plan Your Visit” button
- The geographic location of your church
- Service times and other critical related info
- Live stream viewing directions
- And at least seven photos of smiling faces!

We’ll go over each of these items in greater detail in a bit. However, they all deserve consideration for homepage treatment.

Other Homepage Factors

Along with specific information, there are a few other factors that you want to keep in mind throughout your site, but especially on the homepage.

For instance, it's important that you create engaging, dynamic content. Your site should compel people to take action as soon as they arrive. This could be asking them to click a button to plan a visit or open a link to watch your latest service. Whatever the case, you want to engage with website visitors or chances are they'll take a quick glance and bounce.

This is also the prime place where you want to keep your church's image in mind. Big, flashy graphics and stock images of massive groups of people worshiping aren't the best options for a small church. You want something that will truly reflect who you are as a congregation. That's why it's important NOT to use stock photos for this part of your church website. If your homepage has stock photos, the very first thing you need to do is get some real photos.

Select images that are honest and warm. I personally love to see church websites that open up with a professional photo of a service or meeting right in the sanctuary of the church itself.

This gives a website visitor an immediate feel of what it will be like if they visit your church. They'll be able to see your congregation's demographics, dress code, and demeanor. They'll get an idea of the layout of the building and how inviting it might be.

Even your existing congregants can benefit from an image of your congregation in worship. It can remind anyone who hasn't visited in a while what they're missing out on every Sunday morning.

Another area to consider on the home page is how you communicate your brand's essential information. I'm talking about things like your beliefs and opinions.

Now, I'm not saying you should use your homepage to go through a giant breakdown, 95 Thesis style, about everything that your church believes in. That's the kind of document that you should post on a church blog or in a resource section.

However, brief and concise bits of information can be very helpful. What denomination are you? Do you have a specific Bible verse or philosophy that sums up your ministry?

One good way to address this area is by asking yourself a question, "What areas of your ministry are you assuming others will know about when they come to your website?"

Whatever you find you're assuming, take steps to include that information — right on the homepage if you can. If it's something lengthy, put a teaser on the homepage and then link to the rest of the info somewhere else on your site.



Homepage Layout & Navigation

When it comes to the layout of your home page, don't just plop things down wherever you want. Take the time to seriously consider where each thing goes. This should include:

- Choosing a small amount of hyper-relevant information to appear immediately above the fold as soon as your site loads.
- Laying out primary calls to action in places where they can easily be found.
- Setting up an easy-to-use menu with understandable terminology.

Regarding that last item, it's also important to orient your site's menus using a visitor-first philosophy. As I touched on earlier, simply make sure to list your menus in order from visitor-focused items on the left to congregant-focused items on the right.

This may seem counterintuitive. After all, you want to take care of your congregation — and trust me, in most cases I agree. But once again, there are important reasons to invert the order in this situation.

You want to ensure that someone who isn't familiar with your ministry is able to find what they need as soon as they arrive on your website. If you expect them to dig through a jumble of pages to locate certain information, you're going to lose them. In contrast, you can expect a little more leg work from your church members when they visit your website.

It's also important to consider what you're putting where when you prioritize visitor content. For instance, most church congregants are going to visit your site because they're looking for something like a church directory, contact information, or to give financially through an online portal.

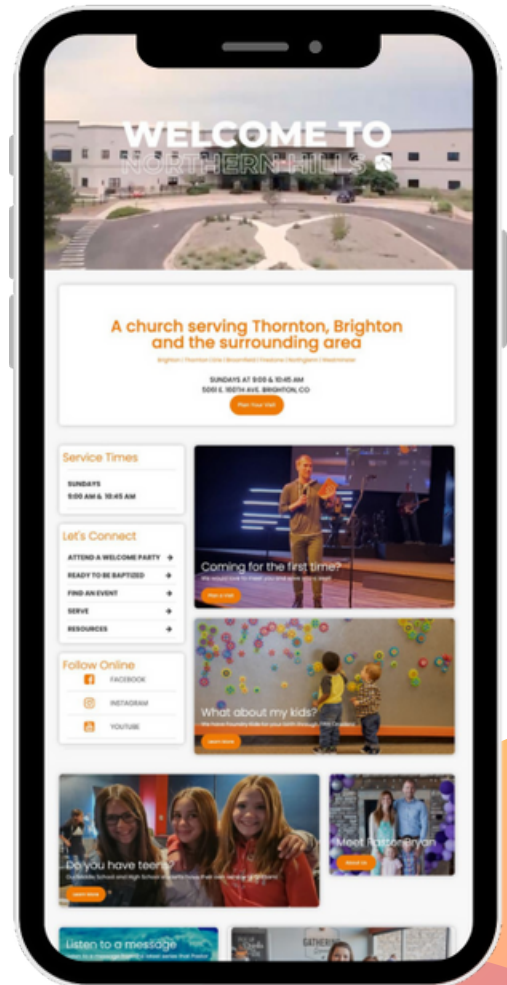
Things like personal information and requests to donate should never be front and center on your site. They make people uncomfortable. It's as simple as that.

Brevity On The Homepage

The last thing I'll say about the homepage is that you want to keep things as brief as possible. I know, that sounds hypocritical after listing so many things worth including on the page. But it's true, nevertheless.

The key here is focusing on the right topics without using your homepage for exposition. In other words, touch on essential things like planning a visit or giving but only use the opportunity to briefly point toward a more thorough breakdown on the subject on another page.

So, to summarize, when you're vetting your homepage, start by identifying the important areas that you want to address for visitors and congregants alike. From there, consider where you should put each piece of information to ensure that it will help the right people. Finally, review your homepage and make sure that you're being direct, concise, and clear with each piece of information.

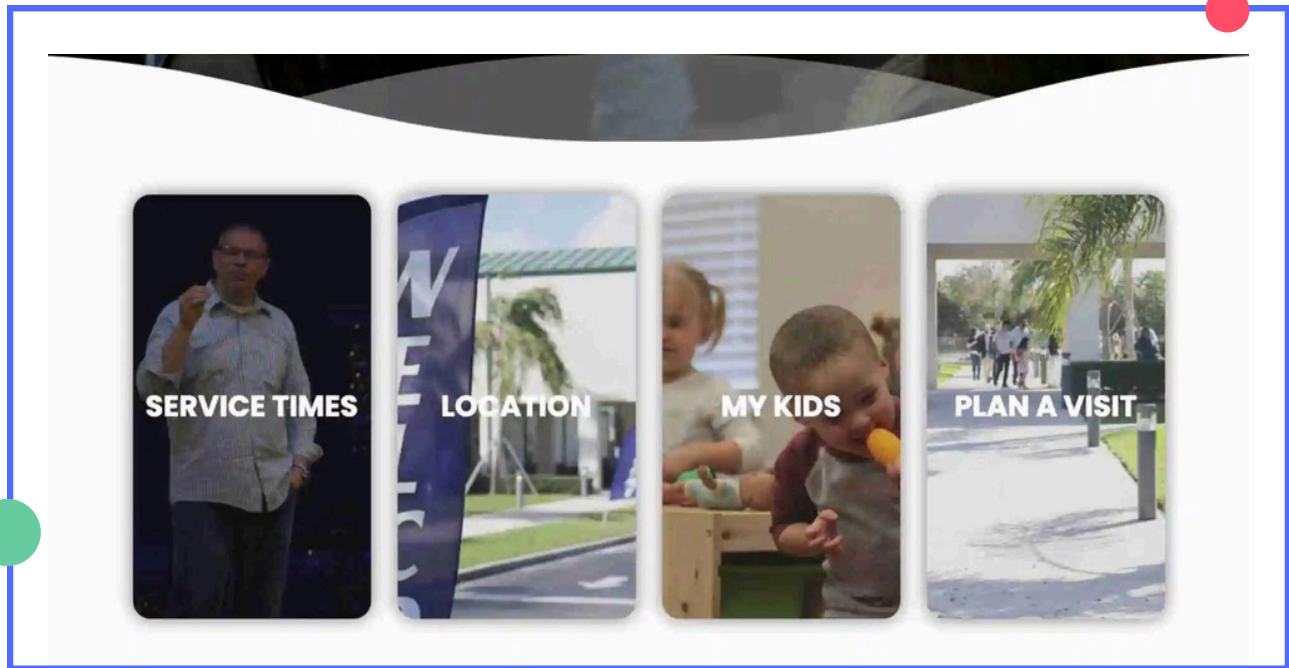


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"New Here" Page



[Cross Bridge Church - New Here Page](#)

The new here page is one of the most important pieces of information that you're going to include. It really needs to be a logical and sequential process of a visitor coming into an understanding of your church.

I'm going to point us back to the "trust" portion of our Alpha Framework.

On this page, you want to be proactive about answering questions a new visitor might have.

Here are a couple of questions to get thought processing going:

- Where do I park?
- What do I do when I get inside?
- What happens with my kids?
- Are my kids safe? ... Side note (this is critical... Most parents care more about your volunteers being CPR certified than they do about you having a play place.)

"About Us" Page

The next section we're going to break down is commonly referred to as the "about us" section of a site. However, in the context of a church website, this often includes an additional focus on things like staff members and other ministry details.

It's tempting to use this section as an information dump. Lengthy blocks of text are common to find. However, I'd challenge you to once again think concisely as you formulate your about us page.

Remember, the goal here isn't to overwhelm website visitors with mindless minutiae about your church and its leadership. You want every piece of information to be interesting and relevant.

Another good question to ask yourself as you write your about page is, "How will this information help someone who attends or is thinking of attending the church?"

If there's a clear reason to include a piece of information, by all means, stick it in there. Just make sure to go over each section with a fine-tooth comb to make sure everything has a purpose.

Now, let's break down the three main sections that tend to populate connect pages on most church websites.



Church background

The most common element that you'll see on an about us page is a description of the church itself. This can include several important factors, such as:

- When, where, and why your ministry got started
- What denomination you belong to
- A statement of faith
- Vision and mission statements

This is an area where you can get deeper into doctrinal and spiritual elements. However, I still strongly recommend that you avoid getting too wordy. If you find that you can't summarize your beliefs in a couple of paragraphs, opt to break it down further in a different setting like a blog post or podcast episode.

2

Bios and Profiles

This section typically includes detailed narratives, photographs, and possibly multimedia content that highlight the personal stories, backgrounds, and contributions of church members, leaders, staff, volunteers, and sometimes even attendees. The goal is to create a more personal and relatable connection between the members of the congregation and to provide a platform for individuals to share their faith journeys and experiences.

- **Individual Biographies:** Detailed accounts of individual members' lives, often including information about their family, occupation, interests, and, most importantly, their spiritual journey and relationship with the church.
- **Leadership Profiles:** Biographies of church leaders, pastors, and staff members, outlining their roles, responsibilities, and background in ministry. This helps congregants and visitors understand the people guiding the spiritual direction of the church.
- **Ministry and Committee Members:** Profiles of individuals involved in various church ministries and committees, showcasing their dedication and involvement in specific areas of the church's mission and activities.
- **Testimonies and Reflections:** Personal stories of faith, conversion, and experiences with the church community. Testimonies can be powerful tools for conveying the impact of faith on individuals' lives.
- **Photographs and Multimedia:** Visual elements, such as photographs, videos, or audio clips, accompany the written content to provide a more comprehensive and engaging representation of individuals.

Including a Bios and Profiles section on a church website contributes to a sense of community, transparency, and connection. It allows members and visitors to learn more about the diverse and unique individuals that make up the church, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation for the shared journey of faith within the community.

3

Ministries

Your about us page is a great place to include some information about your church's various ministries. There are a few different ministries that you can focus on here:

- **Church ministries:** The most obvious option is to talk about the ministries that are directly connected to your church. From Sunday school, children, and youth to mid-week Bible studies and local charity work, let people on your website know what your church is doing with its resources.
- **Affiliated ministries:** This is also a great place to talk up some of the ministries that you're affiliated with. A great example of this is a local charity that you aren't directly responsible for but work with on a regular basis.
- **Support ministries:** You can also list ministries that you support as a church body. For instance, many churches support missionaries and other non-profit organizations. Including them on your about us page is a great way to shine a spotlight on these entities.

When it comes to ministries, actions speak louder than words. Nevertheless, it's worth including a few words about the activities and charities that your church supports on your about us page. This is an ideal place to emphasize your ministries and how they are physically manifesting your church's heart and kingdom work.

At the risk of sounding like a broken record, remember to keep these ministry sections brief. For entities that you work with, explain what they are

and then link out to their websites. If they're ministries that are native to your church body, consider setting up their own pages on your website, and add them as a subsection of this section in your menu.

You can use this additional space to discuss why they exist, what they've accomplished, how they integrate into your mission and vision as an organization, and how to volunteer for them.

"Plan Your Visit" page

This next section is one of the most important areas of your entire site. Why? Because, as you are probably sick of me saying by now, your website is one of your chief marketing tools.

There are many sections of your site that can serve your church members. From giving to live streams to sermon notes, bulletins, and other info, there are plenty of ways that your congregants can benefit from a website.

Even so, often those who are going to get the most out of a website like this are going to be the visitors. We've already touched on a few areas where this applies.

For instance, if someone who has never been to your church visits your site, they should be able to get a feel for what it's like to attend a service or other church-related event. They can find information about your staff, pictures of your building, details about your theology, and even directions to get there.

However, the most important area of your site, as far as visitors are concerned, should be your "plan your visit" page. If you don't have a plan a visit page or you've never heard the term before, I'll briefly break it down.

A plan your visit page is basically a page where you gather all of the information that can be helpful for a new visitor to know. Plan your visit pages often go by other names, like “I’m New,” “New Here?” or simply “Visiting.”

Usually, a button or clickable link is placed on the homepage, the menu, or both locations, inviting newcomers to, well, plan their first visit. Occasionally the plan a visit content itself is put right on the home page, but I recommend putting a link there and then keeping the rest of the information organized in its own section.

Once they’re on the plan your visit page, a potential visitor should be walked through a series of steps that prepare them for a visit.

Now, I’ve seen all sorts of information included on a plan a visit page. Everyone includes some things and not others. They also tend to prioritize the information differently, as well.

I’ll leave it up to you to decide what you think visitors will want to know before they stop in. However, I’ll give you two challenges as you sort that out:

First, remember that this content is typically for someone that you’re still in the process of convincing to visit your church, so stay inviting, informative, and brief.

Second, consider asking recent visitors to your church what information they would have looked for when planning their first visit. Then, use this to inform how you structure the page.

With all that said, let’s go through a brief rundown of some of the items that you can typically find on a plan your visit page:

- **Length of service:** How long should a visitor expect a service to last? Is there a strict schedule or a more relaxed end time?
- **Typical attire:** How do people tend to dress when attending your church? Is there a dress code?

- **Kids programs:** What will happen to visitors' children when they arrive? Will you have a safe environment ready for them?
- **Style of worship:** What is the kind of music that your church tends to play? Do you do things like raising hands?
- **Basic beliefs:** Are there any fundamental beliefs that you think are important for someone to know before visiting?
- **An FAQ section:** Are there common questions worth answering? What about other things like testimonials or holiday service times?

You can list all of this info right on a page using text, pictures, videos, or a mixture of all three. You can even pull together an e-guide that someone can download and keep on their device as they get ready.

Your plan your visit page should be the most pulled together part of your website after your homepage. It's the area where you want to make a great impression that accurately reflects your church.

As you decide what to include and where to situate each item, just remember the goal: to give your church some personality. If your about us page is confusing rather than enlightening its readers, it needs an overhaul.

As a last note, remember that this info is equally used by both church members and potential visitors. Make sure to create the content with both groups in mind.

"Messages" page

One of the most fascinating portions of any church website is the part that breaks down a Sunday service. We're talking about some very unique content that is exclusive to church websites and church websites alone.

Most of this content can be found in three areas: pages that cover worship, sermons, and live streaming. You can split this info up into individual pages or

have them all in one area. You can also include them on a “Plan my visit” page or organize them in their own section of your site — or both.

Worship Info

Let’s dig a little deeper by breaking down your worship info. Worship is a major part of any service. Not only that, but the style of music and song choices can really make or break an individual’s experience.



Use your website to explain various aspects of your typical worship service. Talk about things like the style of music that you tend to gravitate toward. Address the overall volume, too.

Do you have variations of music for different services? You may even want to include a quick statement of your ministry’s official beliefs as they pertain to praise and worship.

Sermon Info

The other half of the worship coin is the sermon. Teaching and preaching are the heart and soul of any service, and they deserve some attention on your site, as well.

Apart from live streams, which we’ll cover in a second, there are several other aspects of your sermons that you can include on your website.

This starts with sermon notes and outlines. These can be very helpful, especially if you upload them ahead of time so that they can be used in real-time during a service.

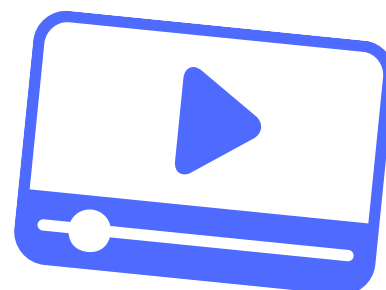
On top of that, you can add things like an audio copy of each sermon as well as transcripts. There are plenty of software options out there that can quickly extract a text version of a sermon for anyone who prefers to read.

While the church is and always will be a geographically driven activity, we live in a day and age where accommodating the needs of those who aren't physically present has become necessary. Pandemic or not, there are a growing number of reasons that individuals can't physically be in attendance on any given Sunday morning.

It's important that you make an effort to accommodate these individuals on your website. You can also use your site to add additional sermon-related notes. This is particularly useful if you're doing a series and you want to keep all of your sermons, transcripts, audio, and third-party resource recommendations in one place.

Live Streaming

The place where both the sermons and worship elements of your church website come together is with your live stream. There are plenty of reasons to have a live stream these days, but just because you set up a feed to your service doesn't mean it's going to do the job. Live streams can be finicky. Hosting platforms like Youtube and Facebook can flake out on any given Sunday.



That's why your website is an ideal place to host a link to your live stream. This gives you a few crucial advantages:

- **First**, you aren't beholden to anyone else for your content. Social media sites will often flag videos for random reasons, even if you technically have the right to use music and other content. By hosting it on your own website, you retain full control over your live stream content.
- **Second**, you have a safe repository to keep all of your live stream videos. It's easy for live stream content to become buried on a social media platform. When it's on your website, you can keep it in order, listed neatly by date or some other criteria.

- **Third**, you have some good fallback options. For instance, if you can't get a stream to go live on a particular Sunday, you can record it in-house and then upload the video to your site after the fact.

If you're nodding your head in agreement, but you aren't sure what there is beyond Facebook and YouTube, never fear. There are plenty of professional live streaming options available. These offer crisp, clear videos that can be embedded right onto your website wherever you feel is most appropriate for your visitors.

My last word on Sunday morning website content has to do with organization. If you don't keep your resources well-organized, they are going to quickly become more hassle than they're worth.

Make sure to set up clear protocols for each area of your site. No matter who's uploading a particular bit of sermon audio or setting up a live stream, have them include basic-yet-critical things like the date, the name of the speaker, and possibly even a brief description of their sermon.

You may also want to group your content into subcategories. This could be something as simple as organizing things by month or year. It could also be based on sermon topics or each series. Whatever you choose, make sure to create a system that will help your site users find what they need.

"Contact" page

The homepage is a portal that gives visitors access to your entire website. The about us page helps people learn about your ministry. However, it's the out-of-the-way "contact" page that functions as one of the most important action-oriented pages on your entire site.

This is the page that helps people take action when they want to, you know, visit your church. This can come in several forms, which is why there are multiple pieces of information that are critical to have on your contact page.

Directions & Locations

The world may be driven by technology and many aspects of life have gone online. But attending church remains an enjoyably in-person affair — as it should.



That's why including directions and the location of your building on your contact page is always important. In fact, it's so important, you should try to include your address on every page of your site if you can.

Put it in footers and headers as a clickable link. Include it on your homepage, add it to your menu options. This isn't just for easy reference. It can also impact your local search engine rankings... but I digress.

When you create your contact form, make sure that your church's address is front and center. This should come with any important arrival instructions, such as where to park or if there will be people directing the traffic.

If you want to go a step further, sign up for your Google My Business listing and then embed a Google map right onto your contact page.

Another great flourish is adding a picture of the front of your building. This is directly applicable to paying a visit and — like including the inside of your sanctuary somewhere on your homepage — it can give people an idea of what to look forward to if they pay a visit.

Contact Information

Next up, we have the tried and true content of a "contact" page: your church's contact info. As is the case with directions, there are many different things to keep in mind when forming your contact info section.

For instance, you want to consider including:

- Your complete address for physical mail
- Any phone numbers associated with your ministry
- Email addresses for your church
- Social media links
- Contact info for your individual staff members

The goal here should be to provide multiple channels of information. This opens up more than one door to help you reach people where they're most comfortable. Someone may avoid calling but is willing to send an email. An individual may want to check out your congregation on Facebook before paying a visit. You get the idea.

Make sure you're accommodating the communicative needs of others as often as is reasonably possible — especially on your contact page.

Another way to go about assembling the content for this page is to create a contact form. This can offer an easy, simple way to reach out to your office. It can also double as a connection card option, offering fields for people to fill out if they have prayer requests, testimonies, or questions about your ministry.

Other Contact Page Considerations

Before we move on, there are a couple of other contact page considerations I want to throw out there.

First, you may want to use your contact page to create an online directory. This can be a great way to help your congregation stay in touch.

If you do this, though, be aware that you're putting other peoples' information up on your public website. It's important that you get their permission first. You can also make your directory private (i.e. provide some sort of password or another way to access it). Even then, though, I still recommend getting permission before including people.

Second, I want to add that the lines of communication that your contact information creates make a difference.

For instance, if someone fills out a generic contact form, it should go to your main office. However, if they want to share a prayer request, you may want to make sure it goes to the pastor or someone who will be able to properly handle sensitive communications.

"Giving" page

Directly opposite the "plan your visit" page is the "giving" page. While the former is directed toward new visitors, your giving page should be targeted toward those who already attend your church.



Not surprisingly, your giving page should not be front and center on your site. This will send all of the wrong signals when somebody drops in for a visit.

If the first thing that they see is a request for money, it's going to put a bad taste in their mouth. On the flip side, if someone comes to your site looking to give, they're not going to mind going through a couple of extra steps to ensure that you get their gift.

I recommend putting a "giving" option on the far right of your menu. As I mentioned earlier, people read from left to right. Make sure to put something like a plan your visit button first thing on the left. Then drop your giving option on the opposite end of the menu.

That button should lead to a page dedicated specifically to giving, tithing, fundraising, and other donation details. It's worth having an entire page for this because of how many ways you can give at this point. Text-to-give, PayPal, and check-mailing info are just a few of the options out there.

Set up each giving channel and then use your website giving page to collect them all into one space. Include crystal clear directions, too. You don't want to

pour cold water all over someone's desire to give by making the path too difficult.

At the same time, try to stick to the point. Use clear CTAs, and be concise. Include important things like ways to designate donations, but don't use this space to start breaking down why it's important to give. Save that for Sunday morning ...and your resources page, which we'll cover in a second.

The one other thing that you might want to add here is any public financial data you might want to share. Further down on your giving page can be a great place for things like budgets and annual giving information.

The last thing I'll mention here is that this is as good a place as any to stress the importance of security on your church website. Start with solid third-party tools that you can count on to process funds. Then use a quality church website builder to collect donations. That way, your online financial activity will stay updated and safe from cybercriminals at all times.

"Events" page

Event pages follow the same principle as your service time content, but with a distinct difference. In most cases, service time content will be filled with recurring, ministry-related activities.

In contrast, event pages tend to focus on one-off, isolated events. I'm talking about things like:

- Baptisms
- Church barbecues
- Fundraisers
- Guest speakers and related activities
- Cross-over events with other ministries

There are many events that churches participate in over the year. Some of these are fun while others are serious. Some are important while others are low-key.

As is the case with things like staff profiles, you can handle events in different ways. You can list them all on a single page or you can create an individual page for each event your church participates in. If you do the latter, I recommend linking to each of these on a primary “church event” page.

Having a single location for your events can do wonders with event marketing. It gives you a predictable link where your congregation can go to get further information. In addition, if you promote an event on social media, Google Ads, or other marketing channels, you can point everything back to the same page. Then, if something changes or you need to update info, you can do so in one centralized location.

An event page can also be a great place to house things like promotional images, maps, and calendars. Again, this keeps everything in one easy-to-access location.

As a final note on event pages, this can also be an ideal place to include information for volunteering. This can be a general “contact to volunteer” option. You can also detail specific volunteer opportunities and instructions for each event, depending on how detailed you want to be.

Promoting Your Church Website

Once you’ve built a complete website, you’ve done the bulk of the setup work. But you aren’t quite done yet. You still have to think about how you’ll promote it.



Now, technically, you can leave a well-built church site sitting there and it will still serve at least part of its function. After all, if your congregation knows that it exists, they can visit it at any time to gather information. They can also use it as a resource when recommending that someone else visit your church.

But if you want to get the most out of your church website, you also need to treat it as a marketing tool. And not just any marketing tool, either...

Think “Discover” from our Alpha Framework.

I never grow tired of stating the fact that your church website is your number one biggest piece of marketing collateral.

As far as marketing is concerned, your website is more important than word-of-mouth marketing. It's more important than paying for search ads to promote a specific event. It's more important than having a guest speaker fly in or hosting a community event. Heck, it's more important than your sign out front.

Now, I know what you're thinking, “but how can something as small (and annoying to maintain) as a church website be that vital to getting the word out on our ministry?”

I'll tell you why. In fact, I already mentioned it at the beginning of this resource. It's because your church website has the power to meet people where they are. Everyone looks things up on their phone nowadays.

Think about it. If you hear a tip about a great restaurant, you look up things like reviews, prices, and hours of operation before you pay a visit. Where do you go to get that information? On their website.

If you hear about a great coffee shop where you can work, chances are you hop onto their website to see if they have things like free Wi-Fi, good seating, and a quiet environment.

Even if you're just looking for directions, you often need to visit a company's website to figure out how to get there. Even if you find that info on Google, there's a good chance that the search engine found the information — drum roll please — on your website.

Your website can serve so many different functions. This gives it an unusually important role in spreading the word about your ministry to your local community.

So, before we finish, I want to briefly run over a few of the best ways to maximize the impact that your website can have as a marketing tool for your ministry. Here are seven different marketing tactics that you can use to use your website to market your church:

1 **SEO**

Search engine optimization (SEO) is a huge part of marketing your church. And the best part is, a lot of your SEO efforts can take place up front and then continue to deliver traffic to your website for years to come.

SEO includes activities like making your site mobile-friendly, including keywords and links, and cleaning up your URLs. As a geographically focused organization, you also want to tap into local SEO things like including your address on multiple pages and claiming and filling out your Google My Business Listing.

2 **In-Church Promotion**

This one is pretty self-explanatory. If a website has traffic, it's going to show up in more searches. One of the best ways to build that traffic organically is through promoting your site in church.

From referencing resources to live streaming, look for ways to get your congregants to visit, utilize, and refer people to your website.

3 **Church Directories**

Church directories are a huge way to enhance the marketability of your ministry's website.

There are many church directories located across the interweb. Applying to be listed in these is a great way to beef up the legitimacy of your website. It can also lead to a steady stream of traffic from the listing sites themselves.

4 Social Media

Everyone uses social media. Your website is a great hub for information, but if you want to connect with the people themselves, you need to adjust your online activity to include social media.

Use social platforms to interact with those in your congregation and the local community. Set up a page where you can drop links to your site, make announcements, and the like.

5 PPC Marketing

Occasionally, you may find that you have an urgent need to get the news out about something quickly. If you're trying to promote something like a summer barbecue or Christmas pageant, you can use pay-per-click (PPC) advertising to add an extra boost to your outreach.

Create an event page for your site with details about the event. Then promote that event via Google, Facebook, and other PPC channels. On a helpful side note, [Google is willing to give you \\$10,000 a month](#) in free advertising.

6 Email Marketing

An email list is powerful. It gives you a group of people who have opted in to hear what you have to say.

Even as a non-profit ministry, an email list is a great marketing tool. You can let people know about events and announcements ...and then direct them to a page on your site to learn more.

Setting Things Up for The Long-Term

Once you have things humming along nicely, you need to put some thought into setting up your site for the long-term. This starts and ends with keeping your website content current.

When it comes to the information itself, you have to find a way to make updates regularly. Schedule it into the calendar. Task someone with the job of checking over the site consistently.

However you do it, make sure your site reflects the current state of your church. Remember, old content is misleading and looks lazy. It's going to do more harm than good.

In addition, make sure that you keep the back-end of your site up to date. If left unaddressed, a website can become difficult and even dangerous to use.

If you're using a site builder like Omega, the good news is that we've got this covered. We do most of the heavy lifting, whether you're talking about something as serious as cybersecurity or as flippant as website design trends.

Building A Site Fit for Your Ministry

There are plenty of ways to build a quality church website. The important thing is that you take each step of the site-building process seriously.

Don't treat it as a to-do list item that you have to get done or just another chore on an endless list of responsibilities.

Instead, remember the good that your site can do. It's a resource, an outreach tool, and a way to keep your congregation informed and engaged. If you can approach your site with that kind of attitude, you're much more likely to end up with a church website that operates as an effective part of your ministry.

Using Your Website to Connect

Let's dive into the essence of Connect: building meaningful relationships within your church community. It's all about strengthening the bond between members and regular attendees. You want everyone who walks through your church doors to feel a genuine connection, to feel like they belong. That's what we're aiming for here.

Think of your church like a thriving ecosystem. Your members are the backbone, quietly working behind the scenes to keep things moving forward. If you're only focused on bringing in new faces and not nurturing those existing connections with members, you're missing out on a vital part of the equation. It's about creating a culture where newcomers seamlessly transition into long-term members, where everyone feels valued and connected.

Your members play a crucial role in shaping this ecosystem. They're the ones who can vouch for your church's culture, sharing their experiences with visitors. That's why Connect is so important. It's not just about maintaining a healthy community; it's about actively engaging with both members and newcomers, guiding them through their journey with your church.

Think of Connect and Grow as the two wheels of your church's ecosystem. They work hand in hand to propel you forward. By investing in Connect, you're fueling your growth wheel. Your website becomes a hub for building trust and showcasing the essence of your community through member testimonials and social proof.

But Connect isn't just about online interactions. It's about creating real-life connections through events, sermons, and group activities. These moments of connection not only foster trust but also serve as opportunities to engage with visitors, inviting them into the fold.

The key to a thriving Connect wheel lies in involving your members every step of the way. When they understand the vision and feel empowered to share it, they become your strongest advocates. It's a bottom-up approach, starting

with leadership but extending to every member of your congregation. Your members are the face of your church to visitors. Their stories, photos, and experiences serve as powerful testaments to what your community is all about. By prioritizing connection, you're not only creating a welcoming environment but also laying the foundation for long-term relationships. Ever been to a church where you felt like just another face in the crowd? Where there was a lack of warmth and genuine connection? It's a common experience, but it doesn't have to be the norm. By prioritizing Connect, you're ensuring that every person who walks through your doors feels seen, heard, and valued.

So, how do you strengthen your Connect wheel? It starts with embracing transparency and communication. Your website becomes a central hub for keeping members informed and engaged. From event calendars to small group sign-ups, it's all about providing opportunities for connection.

Ultimately, Connect is about more than just building relationships; it's about creating a culture of engagement and belonging. By leveraging the power of Connect, you're not only enriching the lives of your members but also laying the groundwork for a vibrant, thriving community.

Methods to Connect

Building a culture of connection within your church community isn't always easy, especially if it's something new. Here at Ministry Designs, we've been partnering with churches worldwide for nearly 15 years, and we've noticed a common challenge: introducing change in established routines. But fear not, we've got practical methods to help kickstart this journey towards a more connected church.

Let's dive into some actionable steps you can take right away. First off, leverage your platform. When you're up there on Sunday morning, your congregation is all ears. It's the prime time to rally them towards action. Whether you're the leader or speaking on behalf of the pastor, use this opportunity to encourage engagement with your website. Direct their

attention to upcoming events, registrations, or resources available online. Visual aids like slides can guide them to where they need to go. Teach your members how to share information effectively. Whether it's through text messages, emails, or social media, empower them to spread the word about church activities and initiatives. Keep them in the loop with regular updates and encourage them to stay connected online.

Membership classes are another fantastic avenue to introduce the importance of connection. Take the opportunity to outline your church's communication channels, involvement opportunities, and how members can engage with the community. Plant the seeds of connection early on in their journey with the church.

Speaking of communication, text messages and emails are invaluable tools for staying connected with your congregation. With high open rates and direct reach, they're perfect for sharing updates, resources, and invitations to events. But don't just stop there; funnel them towards your website where they can explore further and engage more deeply.

And speaking of websites, make yours the central hub for all things church-related. Use QR codes on physical handouts to seamlessly guide people to your website for more information. Well-designed handouts catch attention and serve as tangible reminders of church events and initiatives. And remember, every piece of communication should ultimately lead back to your website.

The #1 Church Website Course



- ✓ More Visitors
- ✓ Increased Connection
- ✓ Greater Effectiveness
- ✓ Less Time Wasted



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We would love to serve your church!

Our goal every day is to serve the churches we partner with to the absolute utmost of our ability. Your ministry truly is our ministry, so when you succeed, we succeed.

Ministry Designs was created to provide churches with the absolute best online resources available on the market, and to serve side-by-side with churches all across the world. After more than 10 years of service, we still find ourselves pursuing that goal every day, and we would love for you to join us.



Our team is ready to answer your questions

Looking for help moving forward with your church's online presence? Reach out to us to learn more about our tools and the services that we provide.

(269)795-6861

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