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# **Online Church Ministry Best Practices**



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## Church's Online Ministry Best Practices Overview

The good news is that most church online ministries consist of a website (78%), and some social media (Facebook – 85%). However, this is not like the movie “Field of Dreams.” Just because you build it doesn’t mean they will come.

First, it is important that your current and future congregation can find you online.

Second, your online ministry needs to represent your church and help accomplish its goals. If your church is not able to produce an online ministerial experience somewhat representative of an in-person experience you are in danger of losing members.



If you do it right you can attract members beyond what is possible with in-person ministry alone.

These two principles should drive both your website and social media efforts. In short, get found, and represent!

## Register For Blog Updates

**The remainder of this article will focus on the Church Website, the Most Important Online Ministry Asset.**

## **Mandatory Functionality**

The site needs to be visually appealing, well-thought-out, and representative of your church's brand. However, before you get in touch with your creative side there is something you must consider and do first.

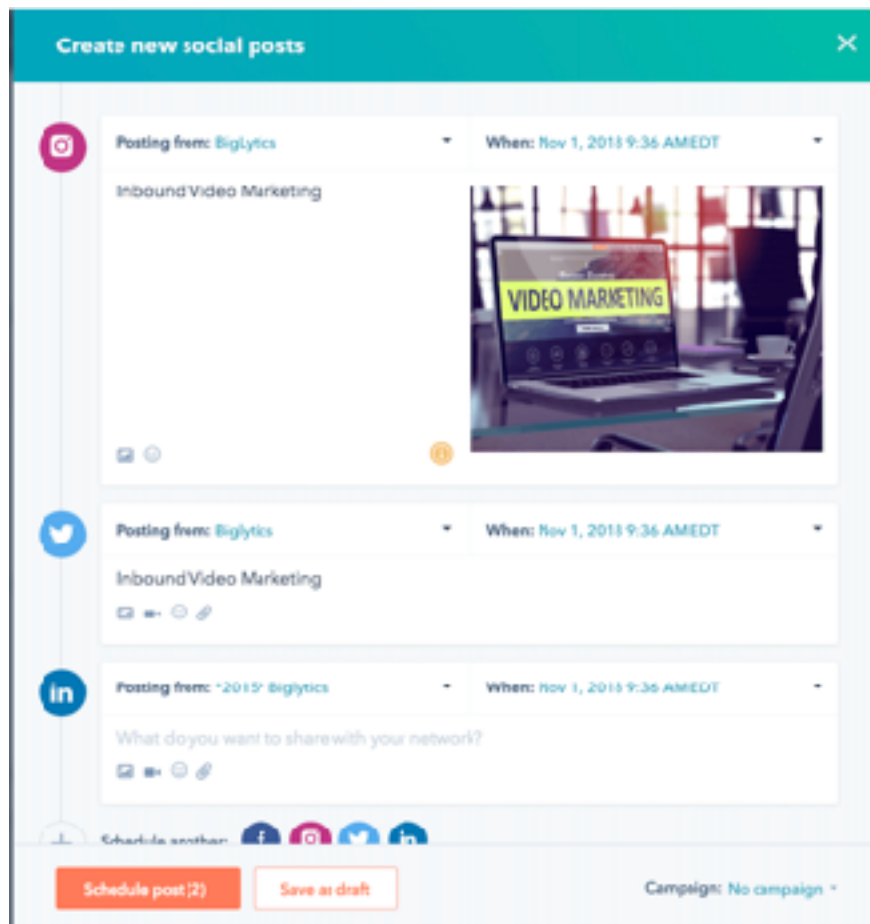
## **Online Research to Optimize Your Website For Search**

To be found you must first understand what your target audience is looking for when they use search tools like Google and Bing. Without getting too technical you want to make sure your website is [optimized for search engines](#).



1. **Keyword search** – [6 Keyword search tools](#) you can use to see what your target audience inputs into search engines when they are looking for types of churches.
2. Links, keywords, and high-quality content are all incredibly important for SEO success.
3. This may be a job that you may want to outsource. However, if you are brave in addition to the above, make sure the keywords are strategically placed. Understand the importance of URL's, image links, headlines, and active versus passive phrasing. We use WordPress and [Yoast](#) is an outstanding SEO tool we use that has free and premium editions.
4. There are some free tools out there, like SEOBook, 21 Free SEO Tools, and LunaMetrics, but some Church Management Systems (ChMS) solutions also offer features that can help you get better traffic, like integration with Google Analytics.

## Social Media Integration





We will cover this in one of our next articles. However, Social Media Integration is very important for medium to large churches. In fact, it is important to help small churches grow as well. Social media can help churches maintain connections with their own members, and visitors as well. Now you have another way to drive traffic to your site! However, it is also important to keep your sites updated! Updating the church's social media accounts should be as routine as updating the website.

## Responsive Layout

Ensuring that you have a responsive layout (mobile-friendly) means it will render to match devices such as smart-phones and iPads, etc. Additionally, it will help you show up better on search engines (it's an



important part of their algorithms). Your congregation might be more likely to look at it if it's as easy to view on their computer screens as on their mobile devices.

# Church Calendar



The image shows a church calendar for November 2020. At the top, there is a header with a red "Print" button, a logo featuring a basket of fruit with the word "November" below it, and the year "2020". Below the header is a table with columns for the days of the week (Sun, Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat) and rows for each day of the month. The calendar lists various church events, including worship services, staff meetings, prayer meetings, and special events like Thanksgiving. Some events are marked with a "Zoom" icon, indicating they are being held online. The calendar is designed to be a helpful tool for church members to stay informed about upcoming events.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 ALL SUNDAY WORSHIP 7:00pm 1st Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 10:00am 2nd Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 11:00am 3rd Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 Zoom 1:00pm 4th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 4:00pm 5th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 6:00pm 6th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4	2 8:00pm 7th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4	3 8:00pm 8th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4	4 10:00am 9th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 6:00pm 10th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4	5 8:00pm 11th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 Zoom	6 10:00am 12th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 6:00pm 13th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4	7 8:00pm 14th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 Zoom
8 10:00am 15th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 1:00pm 16th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4	9 8:00pm 17th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 1:00pm 18th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 Zoom	10 8:00pm 19th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 11:00am 20th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 Zoom	11 10:00am 21st Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 6:00pm 22nd Church Morning Devotion: PS 4	12 8:00pm 23rd Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 Zoom	13 10:00am 24th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 6:00pm 25th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4	14 8:00pm 26th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 Zoom
15 10:00am 27th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 11:00am 28th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 Zoom	16 1:00pm 29th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 4:00pm 30th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 Zoom	17 8:00pm 31st Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 11:00am 1st Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 Zoom	18 10:00am 2nd Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 6:00pm 3rd Church Morning Devotion: PS 4	19 8:00pm 4th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 Zoom	20 10:00am 5th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 6:00pm 6th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4	21 10:00am 7th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 Zoom
22 10:00am 8th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 1:00pm 9th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4	23 1:00pm 10th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 Zoom	24 8:00pm 11th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 11:00am 12th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 Zoom	25 10:00am 13th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 6:00pm 14th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 Zoom	26 THANKSGIVING 10:00am 15th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 Zoom	27 10:00am 16th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 6:00pm 17th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4	28 10:00am 18th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 Zoom
29 10:00am 19th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 1:00pm 20th Church Morning Devotion: PS 4	30 1:00pm 21st Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 Zoom				31 10:00am 22nd Church Morning Devotion: PS 4 Zoom	Church Office Hours Monday - Thursday 10:00am - 12:00pm

The number one reason your members will visit your site is to stay abreast of what is happening at the church. Things like church events, ministerial meetings, prayer meetings, etc. are all included in a church calendar. A good calendar will easily manage recurring and one-off events. The calendar needs to be updated weekly.

## Online Donations

A good online donation function will enable one-time and recurring payments. It will also enable designated payments to different events and funds. One of the great advantages of online donations is that even if the member isn't in the church they can still make their donation with recurring payments.

A screenshot of a web-based giving interface. At the top, it says "Give:" followed by a large "\$ 0.00". To the right, there's a "To:" dropdown menu with "Tithe - What I give back for t..." selected. Below this, there's a checkbox for "Recurring Giving" which is unchecked. Next to it are two dropdown menus: "Every Week" and "Monday". Further down, there are three input fields: "First Name", "Last Name", and "Email". Below these fields are three payment method buttons: "Card" (with a green checkmark icon), "Bank" (with a bank icon), and "Pay" (with a Google Pay icon). At the bottom of the form is a large grey button that says "Give \$0.00" with a lock icon on the right. The footer of the interface says "Powered by Tithe.ly online giving".

## Optional Functionality

Depending on the size of your church, the makeup of your congregation, your church's online evolution, and your goals you may or may not need these functions.

## Church Directory

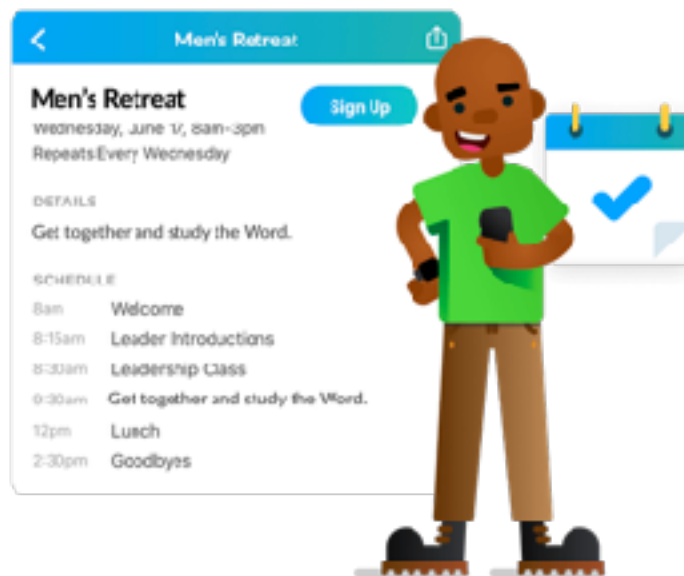
Providing a member directory accessible online can be very helpful for your church. You can often integrate your online directory with your



member database. Sometimes you can even allow members to update their own profiles, which is a great time-saver! And of course, this is just another way to make it easier for your congregation to stay connected.

## Event Signup

A good event signup functionality can enable you to better manage sign-ups, payments, and planning for events. This can save a lot of time and hassle.



## Church Blog

This is probably one of the easier secondary functionalities for your church website. It can really help your congregation keep up with church events, dive deep into scripture, ask and get answers to biblical questions.



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2020

## Be A Part Of The Parks Chapel Holiday Shoutout!

BYRON SMITH UNSUBSCRIBE COMMENTS

Share Your Season's Greetings With The Parks Chapel Congregation As we enter the winter of the COVID-19 pandemic it has been 8 months since we have had the opportunity to greet, hug, or simply shake hands with our fellow worshippers. But we make do with the blessings we have. So we are providing everyone with this opportunity to give a shoutout to one another. Make a cell phone or computer video. Get your cell phone out & have one of your kids do it for you. Say Merry Christmas! Tell us how.....

[Read More >](#)

### CATEGORIES

AME Leadership   Black History	(19)
Christian Walk	(8)
Church	(8)
Church Events	(5)
Encouragement	(12)
Faith	(5)

The big challenge with a blog (as with other social media) is making sure someone actually updates it! You can post different kinds of content such as messages from the pastor, mission updates, event announcements, etc. You can also categorize the different blog posts for visitor's convenience.

## Online Sermons



## Sermons To Address Your Spiritual Needs

[parkschapelamesfv.org/sermons-3/](https://parkschapelamesfv.org/sermons-3/)

HOME ABOUT MINISTRIES **SERMONS** LIVE STREAMING CONTRIBUTE PRAYER BLOG

# Sermons

TAGS

AME Leadership book Bible School **Bible Study** Black History Month blog  
book car **choir** Christ creation Christmas Walk christmas church  
Church Elders creation crisis cycling Devil devotion devotes **Gift** God Good  
Forgiveness of Sin Good Friday gospel music home **Holiness** Jesus Leadership  
**live stream** men **online ministry** prayer reconciliation reconciliation  
salvation Satan sin temptation the bible worshipers **Worship** words of God

AME Leadership book Bible School

**Bible Study** Black History Month blog

book car **choir** CEHS Christian Christmas Walk  
christmas church Church Elders creation crisis  
cycling Devil devotion devotes **faith** God Good  
Forgiveness of Sin Good Friday gospel music hipster  
Holiness Jesus Leadership **live stream** men  
online ministry prayer reconciliation  
responsibility salvation Satan sin temptation  
The Bible Tributes **Worship** Words of God

**ParksChapelAmeSfv.org/Sermons-3**

There are two major components of providing online sermons for your church website. One way is hosting recordings of your sermons on your website. This could mean audio, video, or both. Having an online sermon archive not only lets members watch and rewatch sermons that they weren't able to see in person, but lets visitors get a better understanding of what it's like to be at your church. The sermons can be organized by series, speaker, topics, tags, etc. to enable visitors to find what suits their particular needs on-demand.

A second way of making your sermons available online is streaming them. With the COVID-19 pandemic, this is a very popular way to provide online church service. After the pandemic, this will continue to be a great way to reach current members who aren't able to make it to church on Sunday mornings, like the elderly or hospitalized.

## Church App



There's no clear-cut answer as to whether or not your church really needs an app. For smaller churches, it may be overkill. For large or multi-site churches it may be more appropriate for their needs. The benefits of a church app are that you can have all the information in one place. You might also find that if your website is fairly complex, having an app with its own mobile-oriented system of navigation is easier to use than a mobile version of the site.

However, a lot of the functionalities of an app can be addressed by other services such as social media.

## Prayer Wall

A good prayer wall will enable the church to post notice of who needs prayer. Additionally, visitors should be able to post their own prayers, view others, and comment to let those in need of prayer know that they



are praying for them.

This is not an exhaustive list of all the functionality you may require to create and maintain a great website. Our next article will focus on the different pages you may want to include on your website and what each should include.

For any questions please contact me:

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