

EPISCOPAL COMMUNICATORS MANUAL



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TEXAS EPISCOPALIAN

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CONVOCATIONS, PARISHES AND MISSIONS IN THE DIOCESE OF TEXAS

EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF TEXAS MAP



DIOCESAN STATISTICS	
Area:	49,489 Sq. Miles
2008 Members:	79,509
Missionary Outposts:	154

There are six dioceses in Texas: Texas, Dallas, Ft. Worth, NW Texas, WestTexas and the Rio Grande (which included parts of New Mexico). The Diocese of Texas (shown above) became the first foreign mission field of the Episcopal Church, USA when a missionary bishop, Alexander Gregg, arrived in the Republic of Texas in the early 1830s. Membership in the Diocese of Texas was 85,000 in 2007.

CONVOICATIONS

AUSTIN CONVOICATION

All Saints', Austin
Good Shepherd, Austin
Prodigal, Round Rock (fellowship)
Resurrection, Austin
San Francisco de Asis, Austin (mission)
St. Alban's, Austin
St. Christopher's, Austin
St. David's, Austin
St. George's, Austin
St. James', Austin
St. John's, Austin
St. Luke's on the Lake, Austin
St. Mark's, Austin
St. Matthew's, Austin
St. Michael's, Austin
Calvary, Bastrop
Epiphany, Burnet
Christ Church, Cedar Park
Grace, Georgetown
St. Peter's, Lago Vista
St. James', LaGrange
St. Mary's, Lampasas
Trinity, Marble Falls
St. Paul's, Pflugerville (mission)
St. Richard's, Round Rock
St. James', Taylor (mission)

CENTRAL CONVOICATION

St. Mary's, Bellville
St. Peter's, Brenham
St. Andrew's, Bryan
Epiphany, Calvert (mission)
St. Francis', College Station
St. Thomas', College Station
St. John's, Columbus
St. Philip's, Hearne (mission)
St. Bartholomew's, Hempstead
Holy Innocents, Madisonville (mission)
St. Paul's, Navasota
St. Francis of Assisi, Prairie View
St. John's, Sealy

EAST HARRIS CONVOICATION

Trinity, Baytown
Christ Church Cathedral, Houston
Lord of the Streets, Houston (special evangelical mission)
Palmer Memorial, Houston
Redeemer, Houston
St. Alban's, Houston (mission)
St. Barnabas', Houston
St. George's & St. Patrick's, Houston
St. James', Houston
St. Luke the Evangelist, Houston
St. Mark's, Houston
St. Paul's, Houston
St. Timothy's, Houston
San Pablo, Houston (fellowship)

Trinity, Houston
St. John's, La Porte
St. Peter's, Pasadena

GALVESTON CONVOICATION

Grace, Alvin
Holy Trinity, Dickinson
Good Shepherd, Friendswood
Grace, Galveston
St. Augustine of Hippo, Galveston (mission)
Trinity, Galveston
All Saints', Hitchcock (mission)
St. Thomas the Apostle, Houston
St. Michael's, La Marque
St. Christopher's, League City
St. Andrew's, Pearland
St. George's, Texas City

NORTHEAST CONVOICATION

St. John's, Carthage (mission)
St. John's, Center (mission)
All Saints', Crockett (mission)
St. Matthew's, Henderson
Trinity, Jacksonville (mission)
Christ Church, Jefferson (mission)
St. Paul's, Kilgore
St. Paul's, Leigh (mission)
St. Luke's, Lindale (mission)
St. Michael & All Angels, Longview
Trinity, Longview
St. Cyprian's, Lufkin
Trinity, Marshall
Christ Church, Nacogdoches
St. Philip's, Palestine
Christ Church, San Augustine (mission)
Christ Church, Tyler
St. Francis', Tyler
St. John the Baptist, Tyler (mission)

NORTHWEST CONVOICATION

St. Luke's, Belton
All Saints', Cameron (mission)
St. Martin's, Copperas Cove (mission)
St. Christopher's, Killeen
St. John's, Marlin
Christ Church, Mexia (mission)
St. Thomas', Rockdale (mission)
Christ Church, Temple
St. Francis', Temple
Holy Spirit, Waco
St. Alban's, Waco
St. Paul's, Waco

WEST HARRIS CONVOICATION

San Mateo, Bellaire
Ascension, Houston
Christ the King, Houston (mission)
Emmanuel, Houston
Epiphany, Houston

Holy Spirit, Houston
Hope, Houston
Santa Maria Virgen, Houston (mission)
St. Andrew's, Houston
St. Christopher's, Houston
St. Francis', Houston
St. John the Divine, Houston
St. Martin's, Houston
St. Stephen's, Houston
St. Thomas', Houston
Holy Apostles', Katy
St. Paul's, Katy

SAN JACINTO CONVOICATION

Christ the King, Humble/Atascocita
St. James the Apostle, Conroe
St. Aidan's, Houston/Cypress (mission)
St. Mary's, Houston/Cypress
St. Cuthbert's, Houston
St. Dunstan's, Houston
St. Stephen's, Huntsville
Good Shepherd, Kingwood
St. Luke's, Livingston
Holy Comforter, Spring
Good Shepherd, Tomball
Trinity, The Woodlands

SOUTHEAST CONVOICATION

Trinity, Anahuac (mission)
St. Mark's, Beaumont
St. Stephen's, Beaumont
Trinity, Jasper
St. Stephen's, Liberty
St. Paul's, Orange
Holy Trinity, Port Neches
St. John's Silsbee
St. Paul's, Woodville (mission)

SOUTHWEST CONVOICATION

Holy Comforter, Angleton
St. Mark's, Bay City
Christ Church, Eagle Lake
St. Paul's, Freeport
St. Timothy's, Lake Jackson
Christ Church, Matagorda (mission)
St. Catherine of Sienna, Missouri City (mission)
St. John's, Palacios (mission)
Calvary, Richmond
St. Mark's, Rosenberg
All Saints', Stafford
Holy Cross, Sugar Land
St. Mary's, West Columbia
St. Thomas', Wharton

DIOCESAN COMMUNICATIONS

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Houston, TX 77002-3504
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nsallaberry@epicenter.org

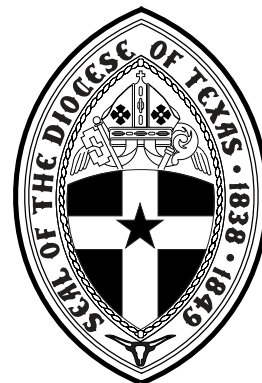
The Episcopal
Diocese of Texas

Diocesan Center
1225 Texas Ave.
Houston, TX 77002-3504
713.520.6444
800.318.4452
713.520.5723 fax

Austin Office
606 Rathervue Place
Austin, TX 78768 or
P.O. Box 1703
Austin, TX 78767-1703
512.478.0580
800.947.0580

Tyler Office
2695 S. Southwest Loop 323
Tyler, TX 75701-0753
888.579.6012

www.epicenter.org



DIOCESAN VISION

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are One Church within the Anglican Communion and The Episcopal Church.

All are sought and embraced in worship, mission and ministry in a spirit of mutual love and respect.



GET ORGANIZED



CENTRALIZE RESPONSIBILITY

APPOINTING A COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER

It is essential to centralize responsibility for church news under one person. The media need a contact point, a source, a person they can call quickly to get the information they seek, in a timely and consistent way. From the church's standpoint, this person should be someone able to speak with authority and knowledge about the church's varied activities.

WHOM TO CHOOSE

In many cases, there may be a person with particular expertise in journalism, advertising or public relations in the congregation who would be willing to take up the communications ministry of the church. Failing that, someone with enthusiasm and people skills is a good second. The newsletter editor or clergy-person shouldn't have to handle this task unassisted. Ideally, the communicator should be different from the newsletter editor.

SETTING GOALS

The clergy, vestry and evangelism committee should meet with the appointed communications minister and set objectives and goals (see sidebar) for the church, brainstorm ideas, identify people of interest in the congregation and decide how they want to be perceived in light of the Diocesan Vision Statement* and the congregation's vision and mission statement.

Communicators should have permission to place stories without getting approval each time from either the vestry or the clergy. In other words, everyone gets on the same page; then the communications minister is given the mandate to do the job.

A communicator's job can be as focused or as broad as each clergy/vestry decide. The goal is to build a relationship with city and neighborhood newspaper editors, television and radio assignment editors, so they will use your church or people from your church in stories that they are doing for the community as well as use the story ideas you provide.

ACCESS TO THE NEWS

In placing news and feature stories in the secular media, a communications minister will provide an important piece of the congregation's evangelism. As such, they should have access to the vestry, clergy and various organizational leaders to receive ongoing news of events, program and people of interest in the congregation. These church leaders can be instrumental in information being timely and therefore more newsworthy.

(continued on next page)

* We are One Church, reconciled by Jesus Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called by God through worship, witness and ministry, building the Kingdom of God together.

OBJECTIVES (SHORT-TERM)

- Set congregation's communications goals for reaching both the parish and the unchurched
- Establish line item in budget
- Identify program, people and activities to profile and promote
- Coordinate press kits, identify media prospects
- Establish ongoing relationship with media

GOALS (LONG-TERM)

- To make the Episcopal Church more visible and valued in the community
- To raise the public's understanding and awareness of the Episcopal Church
- To attract visitors and new members to the Church by sharing the benefits through the media
- To support membership

CENTRALIZE RESPONSIBILITY

TRAINING

Training is provided throughout the diocese at communications conferences, and the communications director is available to meet with you to discuss local initiatives, critique publications and assist establishing a strong communications ministry in your congregation.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER

- Meet with vestry/clergy to set objectives, goals and priorities.
- Touch base with internal groups (Altar Guild, Episcopal Church Women, Scouts, Christian Formation director, liturgy, events, youth, etc.) to let them know what your job is—encourage submissions from them, establish guidelines.
- Discuss funding for communications with the vestry (this effort can't happen in a financial vacuum).
- Build a press kit about the congregation and the church to use when meeting with media representatives.
- Make personal contact with local media—editors, reporters. Introduce yourself, find out what their deadlines are, what kind of stories they are looking for, how you can help them. (Give them a coffee mug with the church logo on it, full of chocolate, along with your press kit.)
- When appropriate, write a press release—be succinct, include fact sheet, send photo opportunities calendar. Make presentations in a timely and professional manner.
- Write thank you notes.
- Write thank you notes.
- Write thank you notes.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Letting people in your congregation know what is happening should be a priority of any church communicator. This means finding news and following up. It means getting to know your congregation, its leaders, its programs, its vision. This vision will help define and focus your news. Internal church publications should inform and help people network, inviting them into a fuller life of faith. Church publications should be well laid out and written to “speak” in the visual language our members are used to seeing beyond the church. Publications should be designed as a group, but more about this later.

KEEP YOUR PARISHIONERS IN THE KNOW

It is very important to inform the parishioners about your efforts. They are the lifeblood of the church. Without their support, you will be a one-person band. Let people know what you are doing through your parish newsletter, announcements during the service or in the bulletin and through pew sheets. Ask for story ideas.

MAKE SURE VISITORS ARE WELCOME

A strong welcoming program should be in place. All your hard work getting the unchurched in the door will go right back out the door if visitors feel unwelcome. See “Welcoming Strangers” insert. The communicator’s role, once the visitor has come to church, continues through publications the visitor sees in church.

DO YOUR PUBLICATIONS COMMUNICATE?

Assemble all of the publications your church produces. These include newsletters, bulletins, visitor’s cards in the pew and brochures about different ministries. With your communications committee, evaluate them with the following criteria:

- Is the message clearly communicated?
- Is the church language unpacked?
- Are phone numbers, addresses and name of your church on every piece?
- Are they attractive?
- Do they look like a “family,” i.e., Do they all “go” together?
- Are they printed or copied well?

These pieces speak for your church when a person cannot. They must represent you in your absence.

QUALITY GRAPHICS

Creating quality graphics does not always require a professional graphic artist. Computers are in most churches and homes these days. There may be a person in your church who enjoys doing layouts. Many software programs and templates exist to make this job easy.

Choose a typeface or logo to represent your church. Select one or two typefaces to use for text. Pick one color that you can use for printed materials, in addition to black. Keep these three elements in mind when you create the newsletter and/or brochures. Design your pieces so they can be copied, if the budget does not allow for printing.

Morehouse Group, an imprint of Church Publishing offers a variety of supply items used by churches and individuals for church-related activities. To request a free copy of a Church Supplies Catalog or to place an order, call toll-free at 800.877.0012 or check the Morehouse Publishing Web site: <http://www.morehousegroup.com>.

A FEW IDEAS FOR COMMUNICATING IN-HOUSE

- Get everyone in the congregation to display Episcopal Church shields on their cars. (Order from: Church Pension Fund at 800.223.6602, ext. 369.)
- Include in-house publications in visitor’s bags.
- Hang a bulletin board or buy an easel to use for posters advertising church events.
- Write articles for the newsletter informing parishioners of specific communication efforts.
- Create attractive pew sheets or bulletin inserts.
- Create a rack for ministry brochures. (See samples)
- Make sure parishioners have nametags they are willing to wear.
- Preprint color shells for your newsletter and your Sunday bulletins.
- Use one style of clip art in your publications. Limit number of typefaces in a single publication.
- Consider an e-mail newsletter to supplement the printed version.
- Use your Web site to encourage participation by writing about events.

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Communicating with the community in which a congregation ministers is critical to evangelism.

THE SECULAR MEDIA

Making and maintaining contact with local media should be an integral part of any church's activity, and that begins with the appointment of a designated communications person. The communications ministry will help you reach new members as well as raise awareness of the Episcopal Church's role in programs and activities throughout your community. It will also provide a source of pride for current members.

Like all good business relationships, one with the news media must be built on a personal level between the communications person and a reporter or editor. One individual should be named spokesperson for your church, and all news media contact should be with and through that designated person.

It is the news media's business to cover the activities of their community. These activities include religion, outreach programs, feature stories and much more. Editors, television and radio assignment editors all understand their audiences. You and the unchurched people you seek to reach are part of that audience.

There is a convergence of interests between those looking for material to inform their audiences and sources who can supply that material. The media are happy to have your input, although they will not use everything you offer or apply the same criteria in discerning significance as you do.

What then, is news? How do you recognize it, develop it and present it? We prepared this book to help you do just that. We used various industry guides and manuals, added some specifics for the church and are confident that, with this information, you will be well prepared to position your story in the local media.

You need the media so you can be informed and so you can inform. The time to have your first encounter with the media is before you need them. They need you as a consumer and as a source of information.

OFFICIAL ARTWORK

EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF TEXAS

SHIELD

available on the diocesan website under Resources/Media at <http://www.epicenter.org/edot/Media1.asp>

EPISCOPAL CHURCH SIGNS

may be ordered from:
Episcopal Parish Services
P.O. Box 1321
Harrisburg, PA 17105
800.903.5544
online at: www.episcopalparishservices.org

OFFICIAL EPISCOPAL SHIELD

is available at: www.episcopalchurch.org/imageshop

CAR WINDOW DECAL

is available from the Church Pension Fund at 800 223-6602, ext. 369.

PRESS KITS

When working with media, you want to make their job as easy as possible. One way to do that is to provide them with background information.

INFORMATION

A press kit is a folder of information that provides a comprehensive picture of your church. Once developed, this kit need only be updated with a new fact sheet and biographical information on the rector/vicar and/or senior warden. Any new services, programs or activities should be added as well.

Begin with your basic visitor's information packet. Add a few things to make it specific for the media. This will be your public relations tool. It doesn't have to be elaborate or expensive but should consolidate all the facts about your congregation.

A PRESS KIT SHOULD INCLUDE:

- Introductory letter. See page 12
- Fact sheet about your church (when established, how many families attend, etc.; see sample). See page 13
- Brief history of the church and programs it has conducted that touched the community, with a photo of the church.
- Information on the Episcopal Church (a brochure is sufficient, available from the diocese in English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese).
- Bio and photo of the current rector/vicar and the communicator's name and phone number (include home phone.) Note: include a paragraph on how to address clergy: i.e. the Rev. Margaret Smith (not Rev. Margaret Smith). See page 14
- Calendar of time-sensitive photo opportunities (like Blessing of the Animals, Burning of the Greens, live re-enactment of the Stations of the Cross or an Easter Egg hunt for preschoolers.) All these give editors ideas for seasonal photos. See page 15
- Copies of the most recent two bulletins or newsletters (include the youth information).
- Any publication you prepared when searching for a new rector.
- Reprints of any newspaper coverage you have received (i.e., a photo of the Blessing of the Animals or an article about a parishioner.)
- A list of parishioners and their phone numbers who have expertise in certain areas and have agreed to be available for comment. (This could include an oil company executive, doctor, mother of triplets, city government official, etc.)

(continued on next page)

HAVE A PLAN...

Pick the three most important benefits. These will be your goals.

Decide who is your target audience. For most congregations it will be those people in their neighborhood who do not already attend church. This includes many segments of the population:

- Young families
- Seniors
- Families with teenagers
- Singles
- Young adults
- Business community
- Medical community
- University community

There are many more.

A quick look outside your door will help define your potential members.

PRESS KITS

STORY IDEAS

A press kit without story possibilities is seldom enough to generate much interest. Propose a few interesting topics that show the church's and congregation's relationship with the community. Suggest several parishioners with interesting backgrounds to profile.

DESIGN AND DISTRIBUTION

Your press kit is a reporter's first opportunity to meet your congregation. Make it visually appealing and well organized. Put the church name on the front of the folder. Contact name, address and phone number should appear on all the enclosed materials. Include a cover letter with it that introduces you and explains why stories about the church are of interest to the public. The cover letter also identifies you as the resource person if the reporter has further questions. Establish a working relationship with the reporter by following up with a phone call or an invitation to lunch.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Do you need to send a press kit every time you send out a news release?

A: No. News releases should stand alone. A press kit should be provided on your first encounter with the reporter. It gives them background information and a starting place. You may also make one available when a reporter wants to do a story on some aspect of your ministry.

Q: How often should I update the press kit?

A: Assuming your visitor's information is up to date, changes need only be made when there is a change in personnel or programs.

Q: How many press kits do I need?

A: Only several, unless you are planning an event and anticipate inquiries, then as many as ten may be needed for media people.

PRESS KITS

The first page of your press kit is your fact sheet. Preferably no more than one page, the fact sheet is a concise review of your church's important data. It should include:

- Name of church, address, phone, fax, e-mail and Web site
- Number of members
- Summary of mission (3-4 sentences)
- List of clergy and senior or bishop's warden with titles
- Year founded
- Any honors received from community
- Tell how it is connected with the wider Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion
- Name and title of person for reporter to contact

Give a brief history of the church, mentioning major programs and ministries that have affected the immediate community.

You may add a form of the paragraphs below at the end of your Fact Sheet or any Press Release to help reporters with some of the Episcopal jargon.

Editor's Note: When writing about the bishop it is proper on first reference to use "The Right Rev. Don A. Wimberly" and on subsequent references, "Bishop Wimberly." Please note that Don is not short for Donald.

When referring to a clergy person, man or woman, first reference should be "the Rev. Kelly Smith." The adjective 'Rev.," short for Reverend, should not be used along. "The" always precedes "Rev."

When referring to members of this church please know "Episcopal" is an adjective, "Episcopalian" is a noun. It is incorrect to refer to Episcopalians as "Episcopals" or to refer to the Episcopal Church as "the Episcopalian Church."

Contact: Sally Walters, Communications Minister
713.555.1345 (office)
713.555.1346 (home)
713.555.3100 (fax)
swalters@neocom.net

FACT SHEET

St. Morris' Episcopal Church
634 S. Main Street, Neederville, TX 77777
210.555.1212, 210.555.1213 (fax), e-mail: www.stmorris.net

Founded: 1904
Members: 250 members
Ministries: Food Pantry, after-school program, Meals on Wheels
Clergy: The Rev. Stacy Warden, rector
The Rev. Annabell Starr, associate rector
Sr. Warden: Bob Buford

Brief History

St. Morris' was the first Episcopal church founded in Neederville after the turn of the century. Among its founding members were State Senator Wallace Turnbull and Neederville Mayor Allen Swinson. The founding vicar was the Rev. Elias Gregg. He began meeting with nine members in the living room of his home at 214 Main Street before the current church was constructed in 1907. The Rev. Stacy Warden is the fifth clergyperson called to St. Morris' and arrived in 1991.

The windows behind the altar were made in the Tiffany studio and shipped overland by coach. The altar was designed and hand carved by Neederville's Walter Buckwalter, known nationwide for his fine craftsmanship.

For 95 years, the congregation of St. Morris' has been involved in the Neederville community, giving aid during natural disasters and providing social services to the needy and to the local jail population.

St. Morris' has been honored on several occasions by the State of Texas for its help in hurricane relief efforts and by the local Chamber of Commerce for service to the local food pantry.

Ed. note: When referring to a clergy person, man or woman, first reference should be "the Rev. Kelly Smith." The adjective "Rev.," short for Reverend, should not be used alone. Referring to members of this church please know "Episcopal" is an adjective, "Episcopalian" is a noun. It is incorrect to refer to Episcopalians as "Episcopals" or to refer to the Episcopal Church as "the Episcopalian Church." Thank you.

###

Begin by compiling a list of daily newspapers, television and radio stations (specific shows), suburban and college newspapers (Example of a church fact sheet. One could be written for any organization within a church.)

PARISHIONERS LIST FOR REFERENCE

St. Swithins, Austin
2435 Main Street
Austin, Texas 78790
512.345.9878

Mabel Scott	anthropologist (ret.)	800.555.1345	msscott@aol.com
Thomas Bradley	poll watcher, teacher	409.390.5678	bradpoll@aol.com
Candy Cooper, PhD	Astronomy professor, A&M	409.576.9987	star@sbc.net
Richard Reeves	CPA, Attorney	512.345.2356	cpa@pdq.net
Kurt Knapp	potter, 86 years old	512.342.5676	pot@yahoo.com
Gen. Travis Smith	US Army, (ret.)	409.234.1212	tscol@webmail.com
Chiwa Ngungane	Nigerian tribal chief	409.3432.5422	chingu@yahoo.com
. . . add others			

(These people can provide voices of faith for other, secular articles. This helps reporters have a list of potential people to call to localize an otherwise national or international story they might receive from wire services.)



The Episcopal Diocese of Texas

Date

Mike Rider
Religion Editor
Baytown Banner
123 Main Street
Baytown, TX 79899

Dear Mr. Rider,

Enclosed please find a press kit on the Episcopal Diocese of Texas with information about our upcoming bishop's election. I have included the background information, bios of the six persons standing for election, an explanation of the election process as well as the history of our Cathedral where the election will be held.

One of the nominees is a member of your community. I would be happy to meet with you to discuss possible story ideas around this election and provide you any other information you might need. The Episcopal Diocese has more than 50,000 members in the Houston area alone.

We have two churches in your city, several more in the surrounding communities. All are involved in a number of ministries that touch many people in the Baytown area, either through their financial support of a program, their volunteer status or as a recipient of a program.

Recently, a parishioner of one of the churches left her job to become a full-time missionary near the Mexican border, providing medical attention to a large group of people who previously had none. Another is a chaplain at the refineries.

There are many similar stories and I would like the opportunity to discuss things in which you might be interested.

Please call at any time. My direct number is 800.318.5643.

Sincerely,

Wm. Hilton
Communications Director

(Example of a cover letter to go with a press kit)

St. Swithin's Episcopal Church

2435 Main Street ▪ Austin, Texas 78790 ▪ 512.345.9878

The Rev. David Bond is a native of Janesville, WI, and is the rector at St. Swithin's, Austin. He received his BS in physical education from the University of Illinois. He was an All-American swimmer and still participates in swimming events whenever possible. Before entering seminary, Bond coached high school sports.



He received his M.Div. from Virginia Theological Seminary in May 1984 and was ordained to the diaconate in June 1984. He was a member of Holy Spirit, Chicago during his youth, and as an adult was a member of St. John the Divine, Houston where he worked in youth ministry.

Bond likes to write about culture and religion when he's not swimming, running or windsurfing. Bond and his wife Bea have two children and have been married for 27 years.

Bond is available for interviews and comments on current events.

(Example of rector's bio sketch. Nothing too long)

Annual Event Calendar

St. Swithin's, Austin

2435 Main Street ▪ Austin, Texas 78790 ▪ 512.345.9878

January

- 6 Epiphany-Three Kings make an appearance during the service
Burning of the Christmas Greens takes place outside the church building as candles are lighted in the dark by each parishioner from a main candle.
Youth group making sub sandwiches for sale for Super Bowl Sunday-fundraiser for mission trip

March

Ash Wednesday
Speaking series features Archbishop Desmond Tutu

April

Earth Sunday-a celebration of the environment and God's creation
Holy Week

- Maunday Thursday-altar is stripped and service includes foot/hand washing
- Good Friday-Stations of the Cross where choir and congregation walk in the steps of Jesus as he went to the Cross.
- Saturday-Easter Vigil service begins at 7:00 p.m.
- Sunday-6:00 a.m. Sunrise service, Festival Eucharist
- 9:00 a.m. egg hunt for children on church lawn
- 9:30 a.m. family service

June

- 6-9 Vacation Bible School, an ancient marketplace is created in which children will interact to learn Bible stories
Youth mission trip to Navaholand, Utah. Return on 15th and will be available for interviews

September

Rally day-all ministries are featured, everyone wears Hawaiian shirts
Annual AIDS awareness dinner and auction

October

St Francis Day-Blessing of the Animals, hearing and sight-impaired service dogs and police and fire department service animals are invited. Local vet gives vaccinations at no charge.

November

Chili festival and bazaar, benefits homeless ministry

December

Advent wreath making-families make the wreaths that mark the weeks leading to Christmas.
Wrapping party for gifts to children with parents in prison
Christmas Eve service times

(These are only examples but think of things that would make a good visual image for media to cover)



THE MEDIA



IDENTIFYING THE MEDIA

Begin by compiling a list of daily newspapers, television and radio stations (specific shows), suburban and college newspapers and newspaper supplements in your area.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Become familiar with the publication before you set up a meeting. Names of the editorial staff are listed on the newspaper's masthead, and you may call the paper to ask who customarily deals with church news. At radio and television stations, ask for the news director or whoever deals with church news or community events. Note all deadlines and editorial requirements from reading publications. Make a list of the contacts' names, phone numbers, addresses and e-mails. This will be the list for your future press releases.

WEEKLIES

When making contact with local media, it is most important to pay attention to the local, neighborhood newspapers—usually the weeklies, circulated free in many communities or in the neighborhood sections of a larger newspaper. With small editorial resources of their own, they are particularly happy to have good stories of interest to their community.

College FM and cable television stations may have talk shows in which your clergy, or others from your congregation, may participate. Local cable systems sometimes use church items in community service announcements.

TYPES OF MEDIA

NEWSPAPERS

Know who writes about religion or community interest items. Call the city editor or news editor and ask if you are not sure.

COMMUNITY PUBLICATIONS

A church's most effective avenue for communication is the community-focussed publications because they are so local. These include special interest magazines, neighborhood newspapers, neighborhood editions of the city paper.

TELEVISION

Note reporters (as opposed to anchors) who typically cover religion or community news. Call the assignments editor if you are in doubt.

RADIO

Call the station's assignments or news editor if you have a story idea or want to meet with a reporter. Many radio stations have talk shows or public affairs programs and might consider an interview if they think you have something interesting to say to their audience.

APPROACHING THE MEDIA

Face-to-face meetings are important in gaining mutual confidence. Much will be gained if you ask their interests and their needs. So, when the press kit is ready, call the media contact and ask for a brief appointment to introduce yourself and deliver your press kit. If you can't get an appointment, mail the kit with a friendly, straightforward cover letter. Then follow up by phone and ask for an appointment to discuss ways in which you might be of help to the media contact.

Even when you don't get an appointment, it is critical that you follow up periodically.

WHAT TO ASK

Learn how they treat church news, how much advance notice of events they need, what kind of things they are interested in covering themselves, how they handle photos, etc. Ask how they like to receive news releases or stories (fax, disk, e-mail). Take notes. When you leave, tell them you will be in touch when you have something newsworthy.

FOLLOW UP

Write a follow up thank you note saying you enjoyed meeting them, and thank them for all the information — or drop off a mug with the church logo, full of Hershey's Kisses or M&Ms, with your name and number.

CONTACT TIPS

- Identify yourself by full name, organization, title and a quick explanation of why you are calling.
- Be courteous and attentive.
- Have all your facts at hand. If you don't know the answer to a question, tell them you will find out and get back to them. Follow through.
- Highlight the new and unusual.
- Be brief.
- Don't talk "off the record," and keep in mind that what you say may be interpreted as "official policy."
- Don't thank a reporter for running your story; compliment the presentation.
- Never question why your story wasn't run; there will be other opportunities.
- Never bypass reporters by seeking coverage through their advertising department or other sections.
- Never bypass reporters by seeking coverage through their advertising department or other sections.
- The best time for reporters at dailies and broadcast stations is at the start of their day, before deadline pressures begin to build. With weeklies, it is the day after publication.

RECOGNIZING A GOOD THING



WHAT'S NEWS?

The ultimate question to ask yourself when trying to interest the news media in a story: "Who cares?" followed by "So what?" If your answers to these two questions meet at least two of the characteristics and considerations listed below, you may be able to interest a reporter in your story. Think about who is the beneficiary of your event/program, who is the audience, what does it offer to the unchurched, how it furthers your church's vision.

PUBLICITY IS A FOUR-LETTER WORD

Publicity implies free advertising — someone wanting something for nothing. There is a warning posted in many newsrooms, "What they want you to print is publicity; what they don't, is news." The communicator's job should be considered one aspect of reaching the unchurched through publishing newsworthy information about church activities and programs in which others might take interest.

Names are important to use in reporting any of the above. An old newspaper maxim still holds true: "names make news."

All church appointments merit being reported to the local news media, especially major appointments such as a new rector or new assistant. Don't overlook appointments such as a new organist, ECW president, senior or junior warden, etc. A brief paragraph listing new vestry members following the annual meeting is warranted when these are community members. If they don't publish the information, don't be discouraged.

If a building program might have meaning to a larger audience, use it. The dedication of a new youth building is more than the bishop coming to say a prayer. It means that you are doing something so well that you needed a whole new building just to hold it! Tell that story!

Don't report meetings and programs that are only for church membership. In writing about events or programs of broader interest, time is of the essence. The reporting will run close to the event or not at all, and remember publication remains at the discretion of the editor.

Feature stories are not so time sensitive and may be filed for future use.

WHAT IS NEWSWORTHY?

A newsworthy story must have one or more of the following characteristics:

- New (rector, building, youth program)
- Timely (i.e. seasonal stories or relief efforts following natural disaster.)
- High emotion (response to human suffering)
- Controversy (Pandora's box)
- Extraordinary (use your imagination)
- Useful (seminars, Vacation Bible School, community programs, etc.)

OCCASIONS FOR NEWS COVERAGE

- Sponsoring an event or program
- New church programs or new approaches to worship
- Providing social services to the community
- Holding an open house (rally day) or health fair
- Announcing a seminar or speaker
- Celebrations on major holidays such as Christmas and Easter
- New construction, church improvements
- New appointments-brief
- Visits by well known or unusual outside personalities
- Recognition for unusual congregational service (50 years in the choir, for instance)
- Ecumenical cooperation in local programs, both religious and secular
- Church activities intended to meet specific community needs
- Local angles to national religious issues of current interest
- Ministry within the community

WHAT'S NEWS?

ADD TO THESE CHARACTERISTICS THE FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS:

- Your story must be of interest to a large group of local readers, viewers or listeners.
- Television demands a “visual,” something that lends itself to colorful or attractive video footage to accompany the story (think: Blessing of the Animals, Burning of the Greens, Palm Sunday processions, live Nativities or Stations of the Cross, volunteers reading with children in after-school program or packing up relief supplies).
- Most print publications want a photo or the opportunity to take a picture to accompany the story (see examples above).
- Radio likes to be able to interview someone, either live or on tape.

A NEWS HOOK

Every news story needs a news “hook.” It is what the story hangs on — the justification for running or airing the story now and not some other time.

Example: Several years ago one of our priests ran in the Houston Marathon and took pledges for the victims of Hurricane Mitch. The local television station was notified and asked if they would like an interview. Woman priest, largest storm of the century, new angle for a marathon story...hook, line and sinker! Houston's Channel 13 interviewed the priest as she was preparing to begin the race. She had been prepared with some interview tips, and when all was said and done, she had a spot on the 5, 6 and 10 p.m. news — a cool woman priest, Episcopal Relief and Development—the Church couldn't have paid for that much advertising.

When an issue is an ongoing debate in your community, your rector can make a public statement about what the Christian Church, yours specifically, feels about it. You can send a statement as a news release. The war in Iraq, hate crimes, reality TV, etc. — all provide an opportunity to declare your own church's particular concern with current situations and questions.

TIPS

- Localize your news. Point out the relationship between your church, the community and the news item.
- Mail news releases at least seven days before each publication's or station's deadline. Fax them again three days before deadlines.
- With print media, contact the reporter, the news editor, the religion editor or the features editor.
- With the broadcast media, contact the assignments desk for news/features; for talk shows contact the program producer.
- Phone print reporters or editors between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Do not phone broadcast stations within 30 minutes of a news program.

OP-ED OPPORTUNITIES

Some papers run opinion pieces opposite the letters to the editor and other editorials. These are done by prearrangement. An editor will call someone qualified to speak to the subject at hand and commission a 500-700-word commentary. Or a suggestion will be offered, and the editor will take it up. There is not significant compensation for this other than the chance to be heard and provide a voice of faith in the news.

One thing you might do for local editors and broadcast assignment editors is to make a list of those persons in your congregation with expertise in particular subjects with their phone numbers. Prior permission to pass their names along should be sought. This list is a great help to editors when they are looking for a quote on a timely subject and will allow parishioners to be the ones quoted when different stories arise. . . just one more piece in the network.

A communicator might also telephone his or her contact at the newspaper, offering a contribution or outlining a viewpoint to be presented. Once published, a person is likely to be called back, since the writer's credentials are established. This is the person to whom the media returns when informed commentary is sought quickly, as so often happens.

Another venue is broadcast editorials that are occasionally run on some stations. It is possible to suggest a subject to the station when you know you have someone with something to say. If the station agrees, you have the chance to shape its approach.

Television and radio talk shows are also outlets for opinion. Serious, roundtable-type programs are available in every community and offer appropriate forums in which to appear. Local cable programming may also offer these type shows. It may be easier than you think to get the clergy on a talk show. Guests cancel at the last minute all the time, and having suggested a subject of current interest and a speaker can get you a call back when you least expect it. The only caution is that your speaker must be prepared on the subject. The rewards of exposing a Christian view on any subject usually outweigh the perils of broadcasting.

Provide a voice of faith
in the news

Reality shows provide a great opportunity for op-ed pieces. The Bachelor/Bachelorette is a great opening to address our need for one another and a discussion about the "Sacrament" of marriage - great teaching opportunity.

DEADLINES

If you want a good relationship with the media, you need to know and understand their deadlines. The goal is to be as responsive as possible. Be available when a reporter calls. Most often, if a reporter is looking for comment, their article or broadcast segment is scheduled for that day's deadline and the reporter doesn't have much time. If they are looking for comments, you may have them contact your clergy person or have the clergy get right back with them.

Timeliness is all-important in dealing with print and broadcast media. If you can't be timely, don't waste your time or theirs. Deadlines are deadlines. Pass that line, and you have no story.

If you don't have an immediate answer to the reporter's question, say you will find out, ask the deadline and then do your best to make that deadline. If you have a legitimate reason for not being able to meet that deadline, call back and report that you have not been able to get the answer.

Be honest. Release only verified information. Do not speculate. Get facts straight. The reporter wants the correct story — do what you can to help. Meet their needs with courtesy, information and timeliness.

LEAD TIMES

Lead times are as important as deadlines. On your first meeting, find out what kind of lead-time the media needs. Magazines have the longest lead-time, broadcast the shortest. Weekly supplements run by some newspaper — a good outlet for feature stories — may need several weeks.

Mark everything "For Immediate Release." Do not put future release dates on anything you submit. Even if you have something that may cause a stir — a declaration your rector may make on a controversial local issue — inform your media contacts ahead of time, furnish an advance copy if it is available and then let them decide how and when to use it.

Don't nag or call to find out when an item will run, and don't complain if it isn't used at all. Just hope for better luck next time. It might be time to refill the mug with chocolate.

NEWSPAPERS

Many dailies have a 4 p.m. dead-line, but features are typically printed ahead of national and local news.

COMMUNITY PUBLICATIONS

Deadlines for these publications are all over the calendar. Some are weekly, biweekly or monthly. These deadlines are not as critical as with a daily newspaper, radio or television station. Contact each one or look on the masthead (where the publisher, editor and address are listed) to get their deadlines. Community publications are great outlets for your news releases; especially since you will be sending them information specifically related to their readership. Again, know the publication, the type of stories it uses and its audience.

Think about how your story will benefit the reader.



TELLING THE STORY



NEWS RELEASES

Once you have deemed something newsworthy, write it immediately. News releases should be typed, double-spaced, on one side of the paper only, with wide margins, the pages numbered and stapled, with the church's name on top of each page:

St. George's / page 2

Use church letterhead for the first page. Date the release and indicate that it is for "Immediate Release." The communicator's name should appear here too, with a telephone number to call for further information.

June 19, 1999
For Immediate Release
Contact: Jane Scott
409.520.6444

At the upper left-hand side, write a one or two-line sentence summarizing the release. Use newspaper headline style — a succinct summary (not cutesy). The newspaper will use its own headline anyway.

St. George's welcomes retired veterinarian as new rector

Some papers rewrite everything; others don't have enough staff. You should compose the text as if it were going directly into print. Every news release, however brief, should contain the Five Ws: Who, What, When, Where and Why (sometimes How is pertinent). Even the simplest of announcements should contain these essentials.

Most of the time the Five Ws should be stated in the first paragraph. Use a couple of shorter sentences rather than trying to cram all the information into one. Amplify the statements in the subsequent paragraphs, beginning with the most important information and ending with the least important. This will help if the editor uses your release and cuts it for space considerations. The part that goes is the least important. Try to keep your press release to 200-250 words.

Remember this: 95 percent of readers do not read past the headline. Ninety-five percent of those who do, don't read past the first paragraph. Get the most important or most interesting material as high up in the story as you can.

(continued on next page)

TIPS FOR WRITING NEWS RELEASES

- Get all the facts and report them in order of importance.
- Write in straightforward language; tell the story quickly, simply and clearly.
- Omit superlatives, judgmental adjectives and jargon.
- Write your story as an observer — in the third person.
- Use quotes where possible.
- Keep it short — one to two double-spaced, typewritten pages.
- Review for errors; accuracy is paramount.
- Use full names and complete addresses.
- Don't be chatty or reflective.
- Do not pack church language.
- Don't preach.
- What's news? If you have an idea and don't know, call the reporter and ask.

NEWS RELEASES

BOILER PLATE:

Create a paragraph about your church and the congregation that sums up your ministry and vision and that can be added to the end of every news release or feature story.

Example: St. Mathias' Episcopal Church was established in 1874 near downtown Austin. A church home to 250 families, St. Mathias has after-school programs, senior citizen support ministries and outreach to those in prison. Traditional and contemporary services welcome a diverse community. For more information, call 555.312.2345 or visit our Web site at www.stmathias.org.

You can also add this:

Ed. note: When referring to a clergy person, man or woman, first reference should be "the Rev. Kelly Smith." The adjective "Rev.," short for Reverend, should not be used alone. Referring to members of this church please know "Episcopal" is an adjective, "Episcopalian" is a noun. It is incorrect to refer to Episcopalians as "Episcopals" or to refer to the Episcopal Church as "the Episcopalian Church." Thank you.

FACTS

Check your facts. Check your facts. Check your facts. Make sure your phone numbers, dates and times are correct. Be sure you quote sources correctly, verify spelling of names, give first names or both initials with men, and use women's given names (not their husband's). Give exact times, with a.m. or p.m. indicated and the day of the week as well as the calendar date for coming events.

QUOTES

The importance of using quotes in a news story cannot be emphasized too strongly! There are few stories that are not enhanced with direct quotes, even if only a single statement by someone involved. Obviously, the more lively and provocative the statement, the better. Don't editorialize in your news release. Let the quote carry the interest or color the details for you.

SUBMIT PHOTO POSSIBILITIES WITH NEWS RELEASE TO BROADCASTERS

Broadcast media regard news releases as source material or suggestions for stories the station might choose to cover. Keep in mind that television is looking for lively and colorful action. With your press release, submit a list of photo possibilities. You may do this with a separate memo clipped to the release. In case of radio, you may submit a suggested public service announcement with the press release. These should be no more than 75-100 written words — less if possible.

News Release

March 8, 2008
For Immediate Release
Contact: the Rev. Patrick Skinner
713.222.2593
pskinner@christchurchcathedral.com

Christ Church Cathedral teams with PBS for “By the People” Townhall meeting

On the eve of one of the most important elections in recent history, 2000 people will gather in 20 different communities for a nationwide townhall meeting. Selected audiences will discuss how nominees should address the issues facing our national and economic security. In cooperation with MacNeil-Lehrer Productions and Channel 8 KUHT, Christ Church Cathedral will serve as the Houston host for By the People.

One hundred individuals, selected in a national polling process to represent a broad cross-section of the Houston metropolitan area, will meet at the Cathedral on Saturday, October 16. Portions of these townhall meetings will be included in a PBS broadcast that will highlight the issues raised during the citizen discussions.

The day will include small group discussion on the topics of economics and foreign policy. An afternoon panel discussion will center on the questions raised during the small group time. These questions will be posed to people from both of the major political parties as well as experts in economics and foreign policy.

The day’s proceedings are open to the public, and anyone interested in observing is invited to attend. Participation in the small group discussions will be limited to those individuals selected in PBS’ random process. Please plan to arrive at the Cathedral at 8:30 a.m., Saturday, October 16, if you would like to observe. If you have questions, or would like to register as an observer, please contact the Rev. Patrick Miller at 713.590.3309, or by e-mail at pjmiller@christchurchcathedral.org.

Christ Church Cathedral is located at 1117 Texas Ave., Houston, TX.

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News Release

For Immediate Release
March 8, 2008
Contact: Carol E. Barnwell
713.520.6444 or
713.703.2652 (cell)

Downtown churches include service animals in annual blessing.

Two Episcopal churches in Houston have included service animals in their annual observance of St. Francis Day pet blessing events. Both the canine unit and the mounted horse patrol have been invited to participate with seeing eye dogs and a myriad of house pets from iguanas to guinea pigs. The usual dogs and cats are also invited on October 12, 2003 at 4:00 p.m., Christ Church Cathedral, 1117 Texas Ave., and Trinity Episcopal Church, 1015 Holman.

Clergy, vested in white robes, will hold services outside on the lawn. The animals will be sprinkled with holy water and blessed for their love and service. Treats will be served to both two-legged and four-legged participants. El Orbits, performing in animal costumes and singing animal-themed songs, will provide the music.

Information on St. Francis or an interview with the clergy is available by calling Carol E. Barnwell at 713.520.6444 or emailing cbarnwell@epicenter.org.

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FEATURE STORIES

Your church's activities are of importance to editors and broadcast people because they are chronicles of community life. You can help reporters by providing features that brighten their pages and enliven their broadcasts.

In writing features, time is not of as much essence as with a news release. You can bend but not break the five Ws (refer to "News Releases.") You don't necessarily have to include all five in the first paragraph and can use something else to "hook" readers — for instance, an anecdote or some startling statement of fact — then get to the Five Ws further along in your narrative.

These stories take time and research to develop and more skill than a regular news release. You may want to give the reporter a story idea and let them write or cover it with their own reporter, photographer or camera crew. Or you may provide the finished product for them. Whichever you decide, your efforts will eventually be rewarded.

Your round-table discussion with vestry and clergy is a good place to brainstorm feature story ideas as well as possible news stories.

One of our clergy had a front-page story about his hobby of windsurfing. Another parishioner, a sculptor, received beautiful coverage on the Stations of the Cross she made for her church. Another church received recognition when it paid to have an old gymnasium floor refinished and opened it for community groups to use.

The beginning or ending of a building campaign can be an occasion to reminisce about the church's roots in the community and how many ways its presence has affected the community. You may be able to resurrect some fascinating detail from the church archives with old engravings or period photos. The appointment of a new rector offers the possibility of bringing into the story some of his or her predecessors. This is especially true in small towns.

Don't overlook an amusing or offbeat incident that may occur in connection with some church activity. Church news doesn't have to be "serious" all the time.

Feature stories on the church's involvement in community service can be ecumenical in nature. This will help your piece not appear to be publicity for one church but more general news. You may be the catalyst who brings the story to the media's attention.

Charity drives, efforts to help homeless people or at-risk children, clergy involvement in social justice issues, the establishment of day-care centers for children, counseling services for youth are all good topics to cover. They furnish good photo opportunities as well.

IDEAS FOR FEATURE STORIES

- Look around the congregation for members with unusual skills or talents, backgrounds, or achievements. Personal profiles, or opinions offered out of personal experience on some current topic are good story material.
- A retired military person meeting on the situation in Kosovo.
- A doctor who helped on a mission trip following a natural disaster.
- Parents of teenagers talk about being active in their children's lives.
- A nurse's or doctor's perspective on spirituality and healing.
- A parent's experience with adoption.
- Someone's clown ministry to local at risk youth.
- A program to teach English as a second language, or other community outreach that touches others besides Episcopalians.

INTERVIEWS

If you have arranged an interview for your clergy person or someone else, help the reporter do his/her preparation by providing background information prior to the interview. This might include a fact sheet, a biography, a brochure or a list of possible questions. Make sure your interviewee has all the answers. Know the message you want to send, say it, repeat it concisely for clarity and quotability, give an illustrative anecdote and then say it again.

If you have been approached by a reporter, ask questions about the story; its angle, the context of your comments, who else is being interviewed, deadline, etc. Anticipate probable questions and practice responses before the interview.

Broadcast interview reminders

Television and radio interviews afford the opportunity to address an audience on a more personal basis.

Your voice is your most important tool — begin with high energy and strength in your first statement. You have the opportunity to convince the listener that you know what you are talking about and are happy to be there.

Appearance and body language are important when taping a television interview. Although it can be intimidating, know what you want to say and make it concise. If you ramble, you will end up on the cutting room floor, and your shortest sentence will be used on the air.

If your rector/vicar is unavailable or unable to comment, try to suggest alternative sources the reporter might call and supply them with information about the project or program with which the interview is concerned; i.e., if interviewing a runner of the marathon who is raising money for the Episcopal Relief and Development, provide a fact sheet with phone numbers for the ERD.

If your rector is being interviewed about an after-school program established by your church, give the reporter a fact sheet with all the pertinent information ahead of time, so he/she knows what questions to ask.

Coach your subject to give short, succinct answers, especially to broadcast media. This improves the chances of comments being used. Never go “off the record.” Anything that is said may be used, even after you think the recorder/camera is off.

Tips

- Use of a tape recorder is common. It increases your chances of being quoted correctly.
- Be up-to-date on current events and news that relate to the Church.
- If you don't fully understand a reporter's question (or need time to gather your thoughts) ask them to repeat or clarify the question.
- Anticipate contrary points of view.
- Plan your points and make them early.
- Remember you're a guest and an authority.
- Be brief.
- Speak in language everyone understands (avoid words understood only by members).
- Refute untrue statements immediately and politely. “That's not quite true. Let me explain...”
- Don't repeat the negative.
- Be sure the reporter knows where he/she can reach you in case additional information is needed.
- Never ask to review or edit the reporter's copy or request changes before publication.
- Don't complain about minor slips in an otherwise accurate story.

INTERVIEW TIPS

BEFORE AN INTERVIEW:

- If the reporter wants an immediate phone interview and you feel unprepared, you might offer to call back in so many minutes – this will give you time to make a few notes.
- Choose a face-to-face meeting to minimize potential miscommunication that can occur in a telephone interview.
- What are the two key points you would like to make? Focusing on just a couple of ideas will help you control the interview.
- Think about the questions you hope won't be asked, then decide how you might answer them.

DURING AN INTERVIEW:

- Sincerity and energy translate well.
- Make your one or two key points early, and repeat them at the end of the interview.
- Use simple language, and try to speak in short sentences. Avoid jargon and acronyms.
- If you don't know an answer to a question, say so. Guessing can create trouble for you later.
- Accentuate the positive; avoid repeating a reporter's negative phrasing.
- Calmness, directness and brevity are your best defense against hostile questions. Defensiveness and argument are not.
- Take a second or two to think about your answer. Rapid responses can appear rehearsed.
- It's safest to stick to facts; opinion and speculation can backfire.
- Answer only one question at a time. If a reporter poses several questions, choose one you want to address.
- You are not required to answer the question that was asked. Reporters often frame their questions to bring out the conflict in a story. "Bridge" responses allow you to make your point your way:
 - "Yes, and I want to remind your readers/listeners/viewers that ..."
 - "Maybe, but the real issue is ..."
 - "No, but what's important for your readers/listeners/viewers is ..."
 - "I don't know, but what I do know is .."
- Use one or two one-liners that people will remember, and phrase them in complete sentences so they can be directly quoted.
- You may also restate the question in your response to give the interviewer a complete quotable sentence.
- Use of facts or statistics are great, but it's better not to use them if you are unsure of their accuracy. Stating your source gives you "expert" status, which reporters seek.
- Assume everything you say to a reporter – even in a social situation – may appear in print or on the evening news.

(continued on next page)

INTERVIEW TIPS

- Avoid “no comment” answers, which suggest that you are trying to hide something. A better response is to say:
- “I’m not the right person to answer that.”
- “I don’t want to speculate on that.”
- “I don’t have an answer for you.”
- “I’ll have to think about that. Can I get back to you?”
- When you’ve said everything you wish, you may end the interview instead of allowing the reporter to do so. A good way is to recap your main points.
- Give the reporter your phone number and encourage a follow-up call if needed for clarification or additional information. Ask for the reporter’s phone number and e-mail address.

AFTER THE INTERVIEW:

- Immediately send an e-mail note that includes spelling of difficult names and restates your primary points. Include your phone number and times that you will be available.
- Call if you think of a clarification or additional point later.
- Respect deadlines. Return phone calls promptly.
- If you’re misquoted in the resulting story, contact the reporter directly, but if the error is minor or just not quite the words you would have chosen, you may think twice about reopening the conversation.

Interview tips compiled by: Sharon Rasmussen, Diocese of East Tennessee

ON-CAMERA INTERVIEW TIPS:

- Dark clothes look best on TV. Blue shirts are better than white. Avoid wearing checks, small patterns and insignias.
- Note whether the backdrop is appropriate.
- Ask the reporter beforehand what type of questions to expect so you can prepare your responses.
- Look at the reporter, not the camera.
- Speak clearly and slowly in short phrases.
- If you are asked to “chat” while the cameraman shoots “B” roll (non-interview footage, cutaway shots, etc), be aware of your body language. If you are still wearing a microphone, your comments are fair game.
- If a reporter asks a negative, difficult or unexpected question, you don’t have to answer it. If you want to answer, take your time. A moment of silence is not a bad thing. Media-savvy politicians on TV often don’t answer tough questions - they simply restate their own message.
- Interviewees who show interest, energy and responsiveness are better perceived by the audience.

Religion News/Story Idea Form

Please Print or Type. Notices cannot be taken over the phone.

SPONSOR: _____

DATE and DAY of event: _____ TIME: _____

TITLE OF EVENT: _____

PLACE (including FULL ADDRESS with street, number and city):

SPEAKER'S FULL NAME: _____

SPEECH TOPIC OR PROGRAM: _____

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (you may attach additional information)

COST: _____

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL: _____

Signed: _____

e-mail: _____

DAYTIME PHONE: _____

EVENING PHONE: _____

(Example of a story idea or event form from the paper)

COMMUNICATING IN A CRISIS



MANAGING A CRISIS

WHAT IS A CRISIS?

- “A stage at which all future events affecting a person or organization will be determined. It is a major turning point resulting in permanent drastic change. It is far more crucial than most emergencies.” –Philip Lesly
- “A significant business disruption which stimulates extensive news media coverage. The resulting public scrutiny affects the organization’s normal operations and also could have a political, legal, financial and governmental impact on its business.” –Inst. for C.M.
- “A situation that puts your organization’s values on trial in the court of public opinion.” –Wm. Curry

In times of crisis, you will likely see the soul of your organization, as well your own, exposed for better or for worse. You’ll see, sometimes suddenly, weaknesses that need attention both in yourself and your organization. And you’ll lay awake nights searching for strengths and strategizing about how you can build upon them.

The best time to plan for a crisis is before you have one!

LIFE CYCLE OF A CRISIS

The typical life cycle of a crisis begins with the event, quickly moves to investigative coverage and eventually to blame-assignment, public reaction, reminders and disinterest. Your objective is to get from the event to disinterest as quickly as possible. The longer that full and complete facts are not forthcoming, the longer the situation continues to be unresolved, the longer the crisis will be kept alive. The longer the crisis lives, the more damage that will be done.

COMMON COMPONENTS OF CRISES

- They arise suddenly.
- Information and key leaders are not always available when you need them.
- Every crisis provides its own opportunity to position your organization in the way it wants to be understood. This opportunity comes very early in the game.
- All crises tend to impair judgment and clear thinking.

(Most of the material presented here is drawn from the book *Not if, but When*, published by United Methodist Communications)

CRISIS MANGEMENT PLAN

Permanent Basic Team:

In the diocese: Bishop, Communications Director and Canon to Ordinary or other Diocesan Ministry Staff as needed and one or two congregational leaders. Only one person should be the designated spokesperson.

In the parish: Rector, Communications officer, Sr. Warden and other staff or congregational leaders as needed. Only one spokesperson should be designated.

Expanded Diocesan Team might include as needed:

Legal counsel, financial officer, dean or other regional administrator, communications committee, representative from a public relations firm, or media professional, other support personnel as required.

Whoever comprises your team should be available 24 hours a day during the entire life cycle of the crisis by phone, fax, e-mail and in person.

Do not assume team members know their responsibilities. Make specific assignments. Prepare a list of duties and actions expected of each team member. Make sure every member of the team understands who is responsible for what. Establish a clear chain of command and an agreed-upon approval process for action and the dissemination of information.

THE RECTOR OR BISHOP

- 1) Assembles the team and sets the plan in motion when a crisis occurs.
- 2) Assists in anticipating the intermediate and long-range impact of the crisis.
- 3) Provides final decisions based on input from the crisis management team.
- 4) May serve as spokesperson in some situations.

THE COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

- 1) Manages the organization's message - is responsible for crafting a clear, concise, constructive and credible message.
- 2) Often chosen to be the primary spokesperson to inform others of the crisis, including clergy, laity, the general public, the media and others.
- 3) Relates to the media with input from the crisis management team, anticipates and meets the needs of the media.
- 4) Corrects inaccurate or misleading reporting immediately.
- 5) Oversees all copying and faxing.

CANON TO THE ORDINARY OR SR. WARDEN

- 1) Assigned to keep in touch with family of victim or congregation involved.
- 2) Manages logistics of the crisis - screens and logs calls.
- 3) Tracks schedules of all team members - knows how to reach them all at all times.
- 4) May serve as alternate spokesperson.

LEGAL COUNSEL

- 1) Provides input on liability and regulatory concerns.
- 2) Reviews all statements and news releases for legal implications.
- 3) Should understand that a loss in the court of public opinion can be more devastating than a loss in a court of law. During a crisis a legally correct decision may not be the best solution to the problem.

(continued on next page)

CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

WHAT YOUR CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN SHOULD INCLUDE

The optimum time within which to respond to a crisis is within the first 90 minutes. The longer you take to respond, the bigger the chance that public opinion will be swayed by others. Having a predetermined plan will enable you to respond quickly. A good plan is characterized by the following standards for response to any crisis:

- Openness, accessibility, availability and willingness to respond
 - Truthfulness - Honesty without conditions
 - Responsiveness to all constituencies
 - No secrets - behavior, attitudes, plans, strategic discussions are unchallengeable, unassailable and positive
- 1) Objectives - clear statements that clarify your response strategies
 - 2) A List of Possible Crises that includes scenarios from all of the following categories:
 - Natural disasters
 - Criminal or legal action
 - Violent acts, demonstrations, death or violent injuries
 - Personnel crises
 - Positive crises
 - Perceived crises
 - 3) Choice of spokesperson(s) and alternate(s).
 - 4) Staff Assignments
 - 5) Outline of your decision-making process
 - 6) Media Guidelines and up-to-date list of phone numbers, emails
 - 7) Prioritized list of various audiences to whom information must be disseminated.
 - Each list should include identified means of communicating with each list (office or home phone, fax, e-mail, Internet, 1-800 numbers, hotlines, home and office numbers).
 - Primary list with all contact information for persons who “need to know” immediately. This includes employees/staff, law enforcement. Others are key clergy and lay leaders, and those most directly impacted by the crisis.
 - Secondary list of those who need to be informed shortly following the initial event. This may include deans, priests, wardens, national church personnel, Episcopal News Service, etc.
 - Current Media Contacts, both print and broadcast, in regional and local media.
 - Other lists might include non-Episcopal clergy in the affected area, public officials (board of health, social services, fire, police, city, county and state emergency management agencies, insurance agents, etc.)
 - 8) Plans for computer backup and storage of files.
 - 9) Plans for informing and training staff about the crisis plan.
 - 10) Office Space. Designate a strategy room for the media response team’s use. A Media room. If needed, how could you provide sufficient phone, fax, computer capabilities? How might you provide media work room? Press conference space?

CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

- 11) Outline a notification process for family and friends for use when there is loss of life or injury. Name the crisis team member(s) who will keep in touch with them.
- 12) Media Relations: Assess your current media relations. Do you need to know and make friends with current media personnel? Building a working, trusting relationship rarely occurs in the midst of a crisis.
- 13) Practice: Your plan should include times when crises are simulated so that the plan can be practiced.
- 14) Regular meeting: Team should meet to anticipate and discuss possible crises and how they might be avoided or minimized.

HOW TO BE AN EFFECTIVE SPOKESPERSON:

Be fast, factual, frank, fair and friendly

- Respond to inquiries within 90 minutes.
- Honor deadlines.
- Do not say anything to a reporter that you do not want to appear in print or be heard on the air.
- Get to the point. Avoid church jargon. Avoid humor - it is often misinterpreted. Be direct, clear, concise. Remember the media is always seeking a sound bite. When you have made your point, stop talking. Simple statements are less likely to be edited. By being honest, understandable and positive, you will help your organization's side of

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YOUR OFFICIAL STATEMENT

A carefully crafted statement released promptly is your best ally. The Diocesan Office will provide this in issues concerning clergy.

Include basic facts and steps that are being taken by your organization. Do not exaggerate or speculate. Be accurate, but don't trivialize or use inflammatory phrases.

Say what is necessary, but nothing more. Avoid giving too much personal detail. Instead use terms like severe family crisis and emotional stress. Avoid church jargon, as it is often confusing to the general public.

Brief the entire staff about the terminology being used.

If a media representative calls, respond to their inquiry quickly, but release the information to all other media ASAP. In situations regarding clergy, refer media to the diocesan office.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

the story be heard and remembered.

- Remember: There is no such thing as “off the record.”
- Do not allow yourself to be intimidated or controlled by a reporter. If asked several questions at once, select the most important to answer first. Be sure to get your points across. If a question is rephrased, simply answer, “My response is the same as before.” Then restate exactly what you originally said, word for word. If you are interrupted in the middle of your response with another question, wait for the reporter to finish and then say, “As I was saying in response to your previous question.” Do not be put off guard by flattery or praise. This is a technique some reporters use to set you up for a tough question. If the reporter makes an inaccurate statement simply correct the inaccuracy and state what is true. Reporter: “We’re hearing that more than 25 youth were trapped in the bus and burned alive.” “At this point I don’t know the total number of people who were injured or may have died. We do know there were 45 teenaged youth on board the bus, along with seven adult chaperones.”
- Do not reveal personal or professional confidences. This could lead to legal difficulties.
- Do not respond to hypothetical “what if” questions. In other words, don’t speculate. Politely say you don’t know what would happen “if.” If you’re asked, “Why would a priest do such a thing?” respond by saying, “I don’t know. I wish we did have all the answers, and I hope we soon will.”
- When answering unfriendly questions, listen for hot-button word that might trigger a negative response, words like irresponsible, reckless, sexual misconduct, rip-off, bias, prejudice, liberal, conservative, bureaucrat, insensitive, etc. Do not repeat such words in your response. Be friendly, yet professional. Maintain eye contact. Avoid defensive statements like, “Where did you get that information?” It’s okay to pause before answering to collect your thoughts. This is often interpreted as your being thoughtful and is far better than stuttering about while trying to collect your thoughts.
- Do not play favorites. Any information that goes to one contact during a crisis goes to all.
- When questioned about a prepared statement, do not rephrase or restate it, simply repeat phrases from the statement.

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CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

- Provide background information, including photos and biographical information. This helps with understanding and accuracy and conserves your time. Official positions of the church can be faxed, delivered or mailed. Reporters may ask for your personal interpretation and opinions - stick to the official party line.
- Anticipate calls from reporters and plan ahead. Reporters often want to localize national news stories by contacting a local authority or official.
- Whenever you are meeting with the press, dress and groom carefully. Medium and dark colors are best. Avoid narrow stripes, checks and plaids. Wear your glasses, but remove lapel pins.
- Understand the media and do all you can to meet their needs without compromising your own integrity or that of your organization.
- The way in which you say something determines whether the listener will choose to hear your message. Strive to be friendly, conversational and relaxed.
- Choose two or three key points you need to make and pick a catchphrase like “in-depth investigation,” “compassionate, yet fair” for each. Labels are irresistible to reporters and often end up in headlines. Never ever label a point you don’t want used.
- Anticipate reporters’ questions, both the obvious and those that strike fear in your heart, even if it is impossible for any reporter to have enough information to even pose the questions. Develop responses. In some cases you will have to state that such matters are confidential, but that you will tell them all that you can without violating church policy. In other cases your response might be, “We don’t know that yet. We’re looking into it,” or “We hope that isn’t the case, but we are determined to discover the truth.” or “We don’t know what the outcome will be, but I’ll be available to talk with again once we do know.”
- Reporters most often determine their lines of questioning by noting your level of discomfort. If you maintain a conversational, informal tone, you can help to determine the course of the interview.
- Be aware of your body language and the surroundings in which the interview is taking place.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST

- 1) We have a written crisis management plan.
- We update it annually and every time personnel changes.
- We have tested it to be sure it works.
- 2) We know who our spokesperson(s) would be.
- We have an alternate spokesperson.
- They know how to handle difficult questions from the media.
- We are sure they will be credible and convincing in a media face-off.
- A spokesperson is available 24/7.
- 3) Our crisis management team can be reached during non-business hours.
- 4) We know the possible reactions if a lawsuit against the diocese was made public by an employee.
- We know how to explain and account for this so the diocese would receive the least possible negative impact.
- We have taken action to minimize the chance of this occurring.
- 5) We have prepared an exhaustive list of possible crises and have determined what would be said and by whom.
- 6) We have a prompt approval plan in place to handle sensitive information during a crisis.
- 7) We have a procedure in place to inform clergy and lay leadership about crises before they hear it from the media.
- 8) We have learned from crises we've experienced as well as those experienced by other dioceses and faith traditions.
- We know what crises cost in time, resources and reputation.
- We know what we would do differently for better outcomes.
- We adjust our management plan based on experience and information learned from others.



PHOTOGRAPHS



TAKE YOUR BEST SHOT

Good photographs are worth a million words. Bad ones aren't worth much. In television, pictures enhance any story and improve chances for broadcast.

So, where possible, provide pictures with your press release, indicating on the release that there is a photo to accompany the story. Many times, a good photo with an extended caption will be used when a story would not have been. Submit both at the same time to avoid confusion and allow the editor to judge the story and picture as a package. A color print is sufficient, most of the time. Black and white film is harder to take, takes longer and is more expensive to process.

Taking good photographs requires real skill. Photojournalism, the art of telling a story in pictures, requires even more. Clear focus, good light and framing to direct attention to the persons or activity you are emphasizing in your news release are essential.

With people, concentrate on faces and upper body. Full-length shots are a waste and leave the faces too small to mean much when reproduced. Putting someone in the foreground of a building gives scale to the structure; that person can also be pointing out the architectural features your press release is describing.

“GRIP AND GRINS”

Avoid poses with one person shaking hands with another or receiving a check. Don't line everyone up staring at the camera but try for a more natural pose, even if you have several people stand, talking to one another, and all they are really doing is counting while you click away.

Exercise some imagination, such as showing the outgoing rector introducing the new rector to the pulpit or a parishioner. If the church bazaar is offering a handmade quilt, photograph someone sewing on it. Focus on one or more children for Sunday school photos. Having several people in a shot is better than 10 or 20.

FILM IS CHEAP

Shoot lots of pictures because people get more relaxed as the photo session moves on. Your prints should have a glossy finish. A matte finish gives the photo an out-of-focus look when reproduced. Photos gain definition when reduced and lose it when enlarged. If you have a choice, send in a larger print, the paper can reduce it to fit their layout. Don't expect to have your photo returned unless it is valuable (such as an archive photo) and then make prior arrangements to get it returned.

PROVIDE A FULL CAPTION WITH NAMES FOR EACH PHOTO YOU SUBMIT

Tape or paste the photo to a sheet of paper and put the caption on the portion that folds down. This way, the photo and caption can be seen together. Type it out so the names will be spelled correctly. Identify everyone and tell what they are doing, from left to right and front to back order (when necessary.) Explain where, when and why they are together, what they are doing or hope to do. This is essential even though it may be a repeat of information in the press release.

Include the photographer's name for a possible credit line.

TIPS

- Make sure faces are at least as big as a thumbprint.
- For most occasions, use 200 Kodachrome color print film.
- When possible, take photos outdoors, using natural light.
- Make sure faces are showing. A photo of people's backs is uninteresting.

TAKE TIME TO NOTICE THE SETTING

- Don't shoot a photo with the sun behind your subject.
- Avoid blank walls and hallways.
- Shoot away from windows that will cause a flash in the photo or reflections of unwanted subjects.

PHOTOGRAPHS: DO'S AND DONT'S



DO! This photograph was not posed! The subjects are engaged with one another, not with the photographer. Good composition and contrast.



DO! Take lots of pictures. Shoot in natural light when possible. The more candid, the better. She is caught in a joyous moment, her hands clapping in celebration.



DO! These subjects knew they were being photographed, but they are not looking into the camera. This is a good example of a successful "posed" photo.



DO! Once again, the photographer chose action over a "lineup" of people. Viewers are drawn to the photo and become more interested in an accompanying article, wanting to know "what are these people doing?"



DO! Another example of avoiding the "lineup."



DO! These ladies are clearly preparing and serving food for a church event. Showing them IN the kitchen, cutting cake, speaks a thousand words. This is a good example of choosing action over the "lineup" of people involved in an event.



DO! A photo like this one brings life to the written story.

PHOTOGRAPHS: DO'S AND DONT'S



DON'T! This photo does not "tell a story." The viewer does not know anything about the event or what these men were doing at the event. Don't rely on cutlines to "tell the story." This could be a photo for a hundred different stories. Better to show the ministry for which the funds were being given.



DON'T! The subjects of the photo are too numerous and too far away. By the time this is sized to fit into the newspaper, there is no way to identify the participants. Better to take a shot of 3 or 4 of them close up as representative of the whole. Also, there is nothing to indicate what they are gathered for.



DON'T! Another classic grip and grin. If the photographer had taken a number of photos of the women, we might see some interaction that indicates their close friendship--the reason they were honored at this luncheon.



DON'T! Another example of the too many people in one shot. Better to have taken one playing the guitar with several others standing closeby singing. The caption would indicate that they were members of Joyful Noyse, the youth choir at St. Swithins, that sang at the recent diocesan Council.

Photo Opportunities

Send an announcement to the media when an opportunity arises that would make a good photo.

St. Mathias Episcopal Church
700 S. Main Street, Tyler, TX 75555
210.555.1212, 210.555.1213 (fax),
e-mail: stmathias@neocom.net

Contact: Annie Liebow
409.343.5512

Photo op, October 3, 4:00 p.m.

St. Mathias holds blessing of the animals on October 3.

St. Mathias Episcopal Church expects an exotic turnout for its annual blessing of the animals. Last year boa constrictors joined ubiquitous bunnies and kittens along with an emu and a pet alligator on the steps of the church. This year's celebration will entail a full procession of acolytes and clergy with an "arkful" of animals beginning at 4:00 p.m., Sunday, October 3 at 1145 Main Street, Sweetwater, Texas. Sweetwater police service animals, dogs and horses, also have been invited to the blessing.

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TEXAS EPISCOPALIAN



THE DIOCESAN NEWSPAPER

One of the most important things to do before submitting anything to any newspaper is to become familiar with the periodical. Read the publication and look at the way the calendar is presented, the way articles are written. Inside the first few pages of any publication, paper or magazine, is a box containing the editor's name, deadlines, policies and the publication's mailing address.

TEXAS EPISCOPALIAN

Calendar items for the Texas Episcopalian should be of interest to a larger group of churches than your own and include the event, location, date, time, cost and contact person with phone number and/or e-mail address.

Conferences and retreats should be described in a short paragraph. Don't include everyone involved and the title of every workshop. This should be an invitation to request a more detailed brochure from you. It is helpful if you do this yourself. Please do not send a brochure and expect a masterpiece gleaned from between the lines.

We are One Church, reconciled by Jesus Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called by God through worship, witness and ministry, building the Kingdom of God together.

When you write a story for the paper, tell how your program or event lives into this vision.

Example: The after-school program in LaPorte began as a direct result of the Gathering of the Diocese (held several years ago). The director was inspired to look at the needs of the surrounding community and answer them. The church in LaPorte is surrounded by schools, and many children leave those schools in the afternoons with no supervision. The church now provides an after-school program that has won accolades from the Governor's office.

Example: The Blue Truck Vacation Bible School of St. Mark's, Beaumont took VBS to the neighborhoods and parks around the church, drawing kids who would never otherwise attend Bible school. This idea is easily exported to many other locations in the form of the "yellow school bus VBS" or the "St. Mark's old purple van VBS," etc.

Both these stories tell about reaching out to the unchurched and are good ideas others may use. Interesting parishioners and feature stories on ministries all make good reading.

What is not good reading are things you yourself would not read, i.e., an "obituary" of a meeting (who ran it, who was the chaplain, what you discussed). Many times there just isn't a story. Sometimes there is a story in the ministry that is proposed, the vision that arises, the spark that is ignited from that meeting. Executive Board meetings of the diocese are reported as briefly as possible in sometimes bulleted form.

TEXAS EPISCOPALIAN

The official diocesan publication for more than 125 years.

MISSION STATEMENT

In the name of Jesus Christ, The Texas Episcopalian seeks to inform the people in the Diocese of Texas of events and philosophies which affect the mission and life of the Church.

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35,000

TEXAS EPISCOPALIAN GUIDELINES

USE QUOTES!

Texas Episcopalian style

- People are referred to with their title (if they have one) on first reference. “We are a Community of Miraculous Expectation,” said the Rev. Jayne Mitchell, rector of St. Mathias, or Dr. George MacAfee will present a lecture on the medical mission....
- On subsequent references the person’s last name is used — Mitchell went on to say... or MacAfee is a pediatrician, practicing at....
- Bishops are the exception. The Rt. Rev. Don A. Wimberly, Bishop of Texas is Bishop Wimberly in subsequent references.
- Titles are lower case — The Rev. Donald Smith, rector of St. Mathias, will arrive early... Amanda Burke, executive director of....
- Bishops are the Rt. Rev.; clergy are the Rev.; canons are the Rev. Canon.
- Rev. on its own is an improper use of the term. It’s like calling a judge Honorable Jenny Jones instead of the Honorable Jenny Jones.

If you have a question about style, bookstores carry a book called the Associated Press’ Stylebook and Libel Manual. As Martha Stewart says, “It’s a good thing.”

PHOTOS

Please don’t send in a photo of someone passing a check to another person. If some ministry is being gifted with \$\$\$, send in a photo of the ministry in action with a caption about the award. The story is not the check but the ministry that is done as a result of such support. The story is not the blessing of a new building but why the new building was necessary. A photo of activity in a shelter (people stocking shelves of a food pantry, unloading groceries from the back of a car) with the information about the check/gift in the caption says far more.

Another “please don’t” is the grip and grin of lined-up folks all looking at the camera. It is far better to have a few people in a candid shot than to try to line up every last one for the group photo. The faces are too small, and there is absolutely no interest from the reader’s standpoint. It doesn’t take many of these standard shots to soon blur, one into another. What was the purpose, the occasion, the idea?

In general, the rule is to have peoples’ heads at least as big as your thumbnail in a photo. Take several photos quickly; don’t wait for people to pose. Take lots of pictures (film is cheap!) Set up a photo and ask people to look at one another and count, if they can’t think of anything to say. Have fun, be creative! Don’t wait until Christmas to finish the roll of film you put into the camera in August. Take all the pictures and get them to the newspaper on a timely basis. Photograph ACTION, ACTION, ACTION!

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TEXAS EPISCOPALIAN GUIDELINES

TIMING

Putting out a newspaper once a month makes it difficult to be very timely, but we try. That's why there won't be any stories in October's issue about summer programs. Several years ago a photo of Santa Claus handing out presents to underprivileged kids was received in February. It was a good photo, a good story but far too late to be printed in the March issue. The photo was saved until the next year and ran in the December issue to advertise the church's annual program before the fact.

You will notice that the Texas Episcopalian leans heavily on items that are yet to happen, feature stories and less on covering conferences, meetings or events that have already passed. The Texas Episcopalian tries to hold up the ministries within the diocese, to be a mirror of One Church.

If you have a story idea or a question contact Carol E. Barnwell at 800.318.4452 or 713.520.6444.

ARTWORK

Artwork adds interest to stories and the paper in general. Feel free to send in something that strikes your fancy. It may show up down the road.

OVER THE TRANSOM

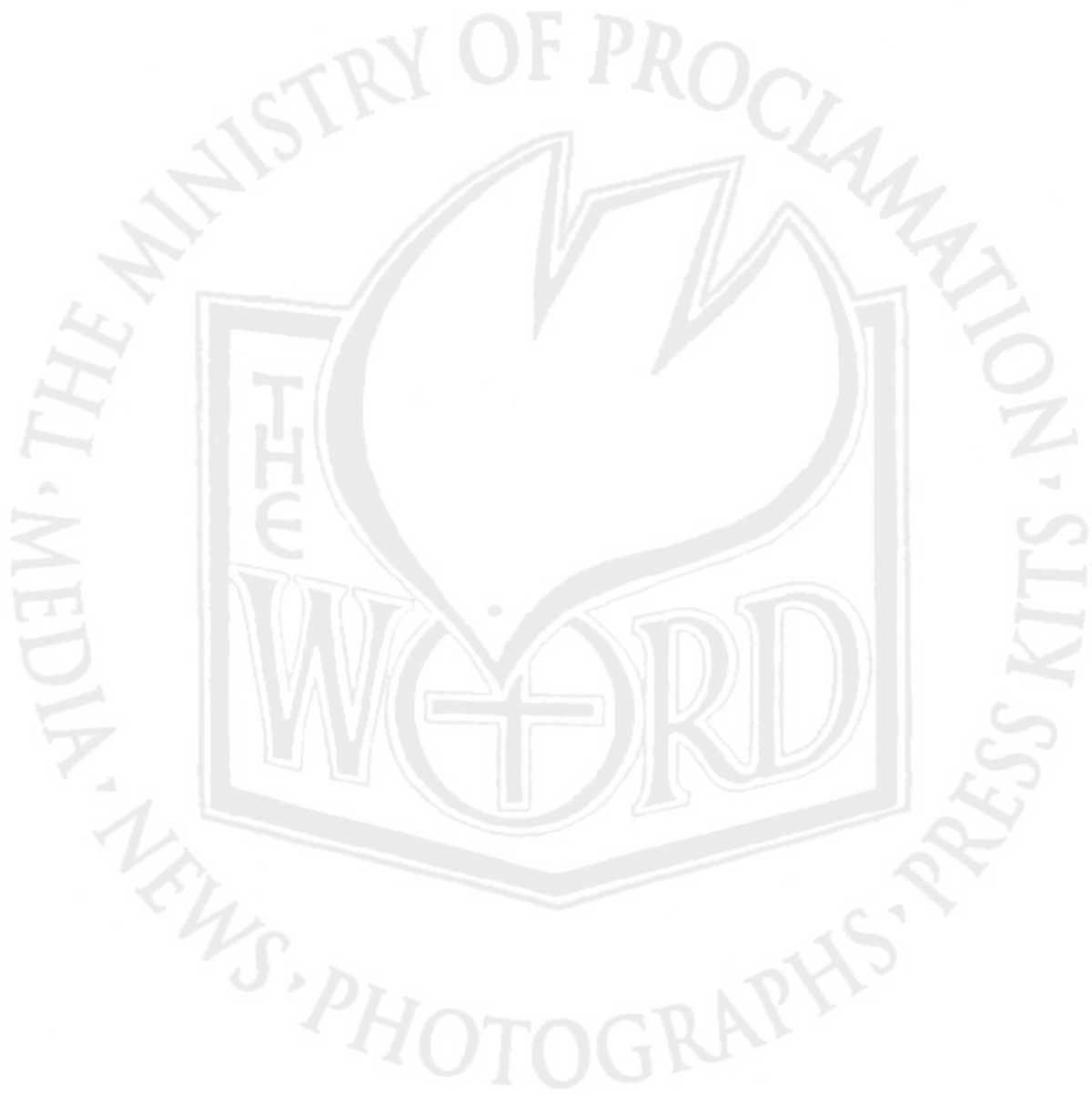
This is a term for unsolicited submissions. You are welcome to submit anything you like. These pieces are published at the editor's discretion and are subject to editing. They may never appear or be saved for a future issue.

In short: Harass me, call me, ask me questions.
I am here to help you. Happy writing!

Carol E. Barnwell
800.318.4452, 713.520.6444 or cbarnwell@epicenter.org



ADVERTISING



“OH, GOD!” - PRAYERFUL MOMENTS CAMPAIGN

USING ADVERTISING TO REACH THE UNCHURCHED

REVIEW OF THE CAMPAIGN

GOAL

Wanting to increase inquiries and boost attendance during the Lenten season, the Diocesan Communications Task Force produced a multimedia campaign aimed at the unchurched.

PROBLEM

In a compelling way, reach adults ages 25-54 (mostly non-traditional Generation Xers) who have never been to church or have been, but no longer attend.

Research suggests targeting this demographic age bracket to reach adults looking for spiritual identity for themselves and their children.

OBJECTIVE

Bring our audience to the reality that God is always present in our lives, and by His grace we can receive comfort from worldly woes and gain the promise of life eternal.

REWARD/BENEFIT

The unchurched do not have to feel abandoned and alone. A journey to relationship with God and community can begin with a visit to the Episcopal Church.

SOLUTION

Tap into the reality that most people do believe in God and will call on God in times of stress and anxiety.

Dramatize this concept in non-life threatening, slice-of-life situations where we consciously or unconsciously say, in so many words, “Please God, please get me through this!” For example:

- A traffic officer pulls you over for speeding
- Your child knocks over a supermarket display
- A painful tooth has you in the dentist’s chair
- You are out of money when the check arrives
- Arms full of groceries, you realize the keys are locked in the car and you don’t have OnStar
- Your child needs help with homework and you are lost

WE CALL THIS CONCEPT “PRAYERFUL MOMENTS.”

(continued on next page)

PRAYERFUL MOMENTS CAMPAIGN

CAMPAIGN STRATEGY

Extend the Prayerful Moments campaign. Continue the “Oh, God!” theme line. Capitalize on its recognition equity and its documented ability to reach out to the unchurched by cutting through the advertising clutter in an over-communicated society.

MEDIA EXECUTION

Continue to use newspaper that reached 2.5 million homes in 57 counties in 1998. Use a portion of a modest budget increase for radio penetration.

NEWSPAPER

Repeat same ten markets in 1999. As before, target lifestyles by running in entertainment sections or weekly TV/movie guide.

Develop four more non-life-threatening, slice-of-life situations that dramatize the Prayerful Moments concept. Example:

- Your youngster worshipfully looks to you for help in New Math.
- Presented with a check for you client lunch, you open your wallet and discover that it is empty.
- Loaded down with a grocery sack full of ice cream and perishables, you discover the keys to your locked care are not in your pocket, but in the ignition and you don't have OnStar.

Place ads during the last three weeks of August to coincide with Rally Day schedules throughout the Diocese. This is an especially festive time when each parish is prepared for visitors in a joyous atmosphere of anticipation.

RADIO

In addition to the three largest markets that define the northern, southern and western borders of the Diocese, Tyler-Longview, Houston and Austin, expand radio buy to include Waco, Bryan-College Station and Lufkin-Nacogdoches.

The goal will be to achieve maximum exposure and reach as many people as possible.

MEDIA EXECUTION

Because they can deliver the best production values on a limited budget, newspaper and radio were the mediums chosen to deliver the message.

PRAYERFUL MOMENTS CAMPAIGN

NEWSPAPER

Restructured the 1997 newspaper campaign from small space ads run once a week on a seven-week schedule to a triple-size ad run three times a week on a three-week schedule.

Used compelling photography, thoughtful text and a simple, but provocative, headline: "Oh, God!" Displayed an 800 number and a web address to encourage maximum response.

Considered geographic coverage, market size and budget and scheduled space buys in these markets: Houston, Austin, Waco, Bryan-College Station, Tyler, Longview, Beaumont, Galveston, Temple and Lufkin. Translated ads into Spanish for Houston.

RADIO

Concentrated radio in a two-week schedule in the three major markets that triangulate the perimeter of the Diocese: Houston, Austin and Tyler-Longview.

Developed one master spot that combined two slice-of-life situations with sound effects, music and a soothing lead voice that projects trust. Tagged the spot with the 800 number.

CAMPAIGN RESULTS

This campaign produced more responses in three weeks than the previous campaign did in seven weeks and came in under budget.

- Calls to the 800 number jumped over 253%, from an average 6.7 a day in 1997 to 17 a day in 1998.
- Web site hits increased 300%, from 171 a week in 1997 to 513 a week in 1998.

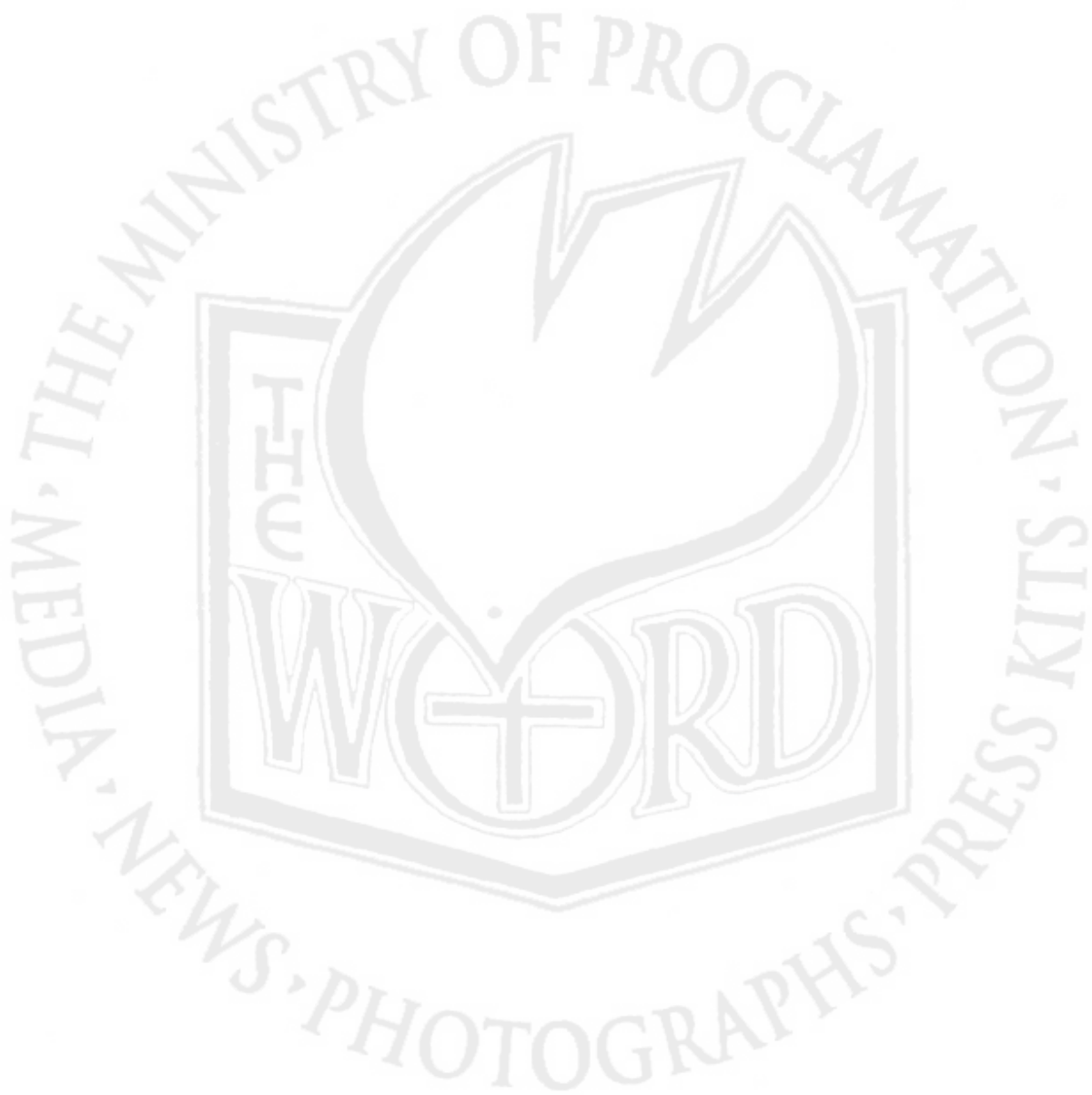
At the same time, the tone of the inquiries shifted from a general, "Let's talk about a church," to a more specific, "I'm new. I need a church."

FOUR STEPS TO EFFECTIVE ADVERTISING

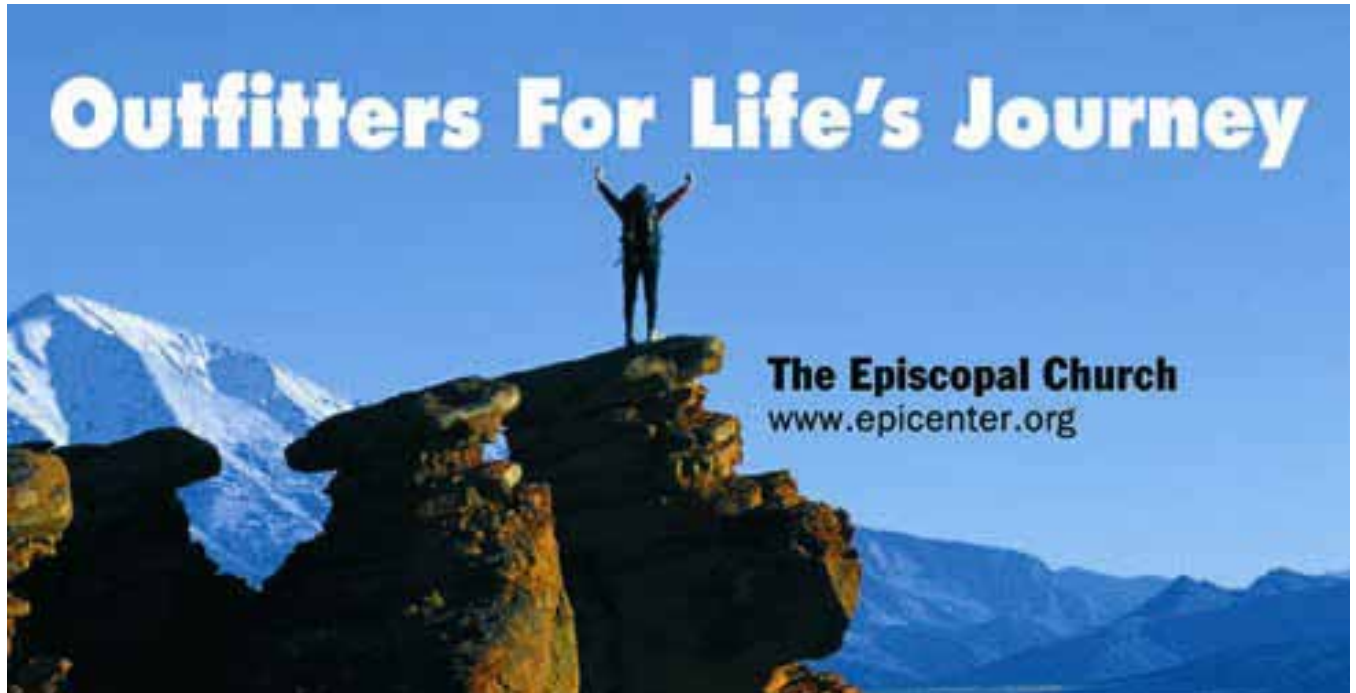
1. Plan to make a difference
Set goals for mission outreach. Make sure this ministry is part of your congregation's annual budget. Go to your vestry with a plan. Become a proactive presence in the community.
2. Tap into your resources
You've got a treasure of talent just a phone call or e-mail away. Use it.
 - Tie in to the diocesan campaign when possible. Take advantage of the increased exposure and important message repetition you gain by using this professionally produced ad series. Just localize with your own name and service information.
 - Use the Ad Project as a Resource. Critically acclaimed, this Minneapolis creative group has generated a catalog of rich material from which to choose. www.churchad.org
 - Co-op with Other Congregations. Join with convocation members and nearby congregations to share the costs of newspaper advertising, especially at Christmas and Easter.
3. Create your own ads
Once you've tapped into a budget and your local talent pool, develop your own campaign. However, before you dive into layout and design, review the following three-step checklist:
 - Define your Audience. This dictates the style, tone and content of your message. Are you talking to children, their parents or their grandparents? They each have different vocabularies, needs and expectations.
 - Articulate Your Goals. Is the intent of your ad to inform, persuade or motivate? What results do you want? What can you realistically expect? How will you measure results?
 - Anticipate Expectations. Don't promise something you can't deliver. If you want to tell the unchurched that you're an "inviting and friendly" church, be sure that you are. Take an inventory. Deal with problem areas in advance. Maybe the solution is as simple as fresh paint on doors and trained greeters.
4. Share what you learn
Use the Diocesan Communications Office to share advertising/marketing experiences and success stories with others.



AD MATERIALS



AD MATERIALS



Billboard used in pre-rally day ad campaign diocesan-wide.

OH, GOD!

You called on God this morning,
call on Him again this Sunday.

You might not consider God to be a big part of your life, but in times of stress and anxiety you do call on Him. And within those prayerful moments is the gentle reminder that you are not alone. For nothing can separate you from God's love, except you. And that can change.

The Episcopal Church offers you an open door to a renewed relationship with God and the fellowship of a loving community of faith. Receive God's comfort, and experience the promise of eternal life, no questions asked.

The Episcopal Church
Discovering God in Community

1-800-404-6484 for information
www.epicenter.org

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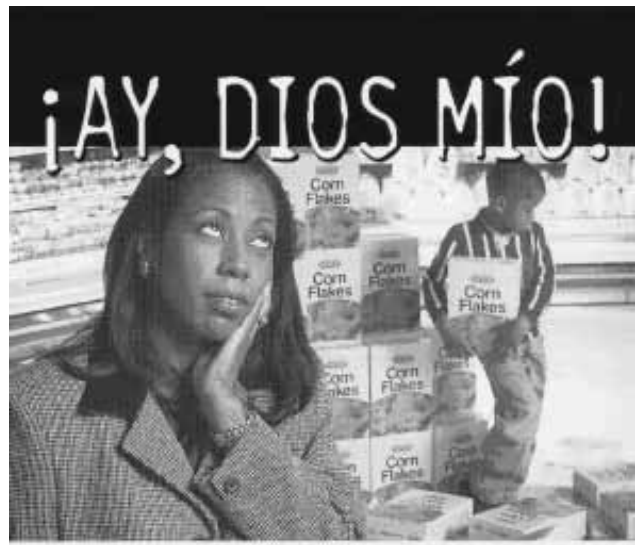
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Has invocado a Dios esta mañana, invócalo de nuevo este domingo.

Podrías pensar que Dios no constituye una parte importante de tu vida, pero en tiempos de tensión y ansiedad sí que acudes a él. Y en esos momentos de devoción reafirmas la grata certeza de que no estás solo. Porque nada puede separarte del amor de Dios, excepto tú mismo. Ese trato ocasional puede cambiar.

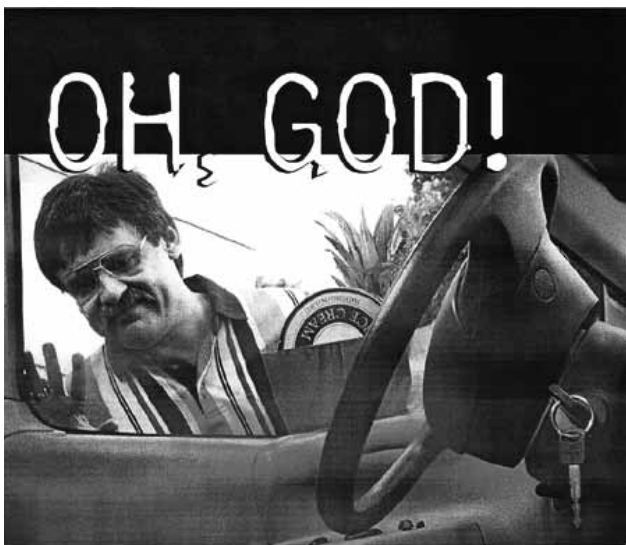
La Iglesia Episcopal te abre una puerta a una renovada relación con Dios y a la fraternidad de una amorosa comunidad de fe.

Recibe el consuelo que Dios te ofrece de las adversidades de este mundo y experimenta la promesa de vida eterna, sin que te hagan preguntas.

La Iglesia Episcopal

Para encontrar a Dios en comunidad.

Para saber cuál es La Iglesia Episcopal con oficios en español que te pueda más cerca, llama al 1-361-679-6030.



You've called on God before, call on Him again this Sunday.

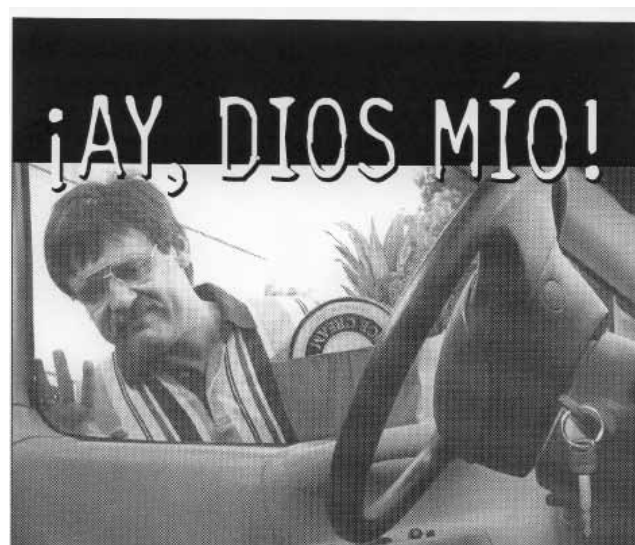
You might not consider God to be a big part of your life, but in times of stress and anxiety you do call on Him. And within those prayerful moments is the gentle reminder that you are not alone. For nothing can separate you from God's love, except you. And that can change.

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The Episcopal Church

A Community of Miraculous Expectation

1-800-318-4452 for information
www.epicenter.org



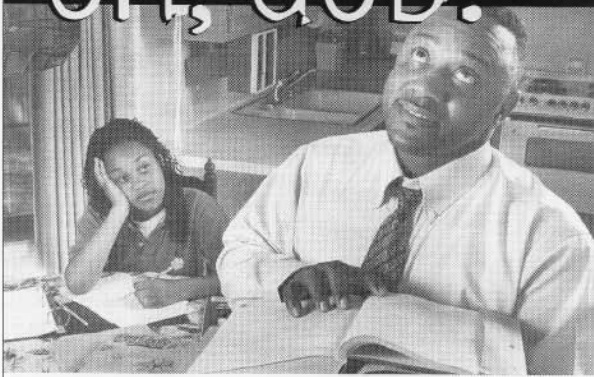
Tu has llamado a Dios antes, llámalo otra vez este Domingo.

Podrías pensar que Dios no constituye una parte importante de tu vida, pero en tiempos de tensión y ansiedad sí que acudes a él. Y en esos momentos de devoción reafirmas la grata certeza de que no estás solo. Porque nada puede separarte del amor de Dios, excepto tú mismo. Ese trato ocasional puede cambiar.

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Recibe el consuelo que Dios te ofrece de las adversidades de este mundo y experimenta la promesa de vida eterna, sin que te hagan preguntas.

OH, GOD!



**You've called on God before,
call on Him again this Sunday.**

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OH, GOD!



**You've called on God before,
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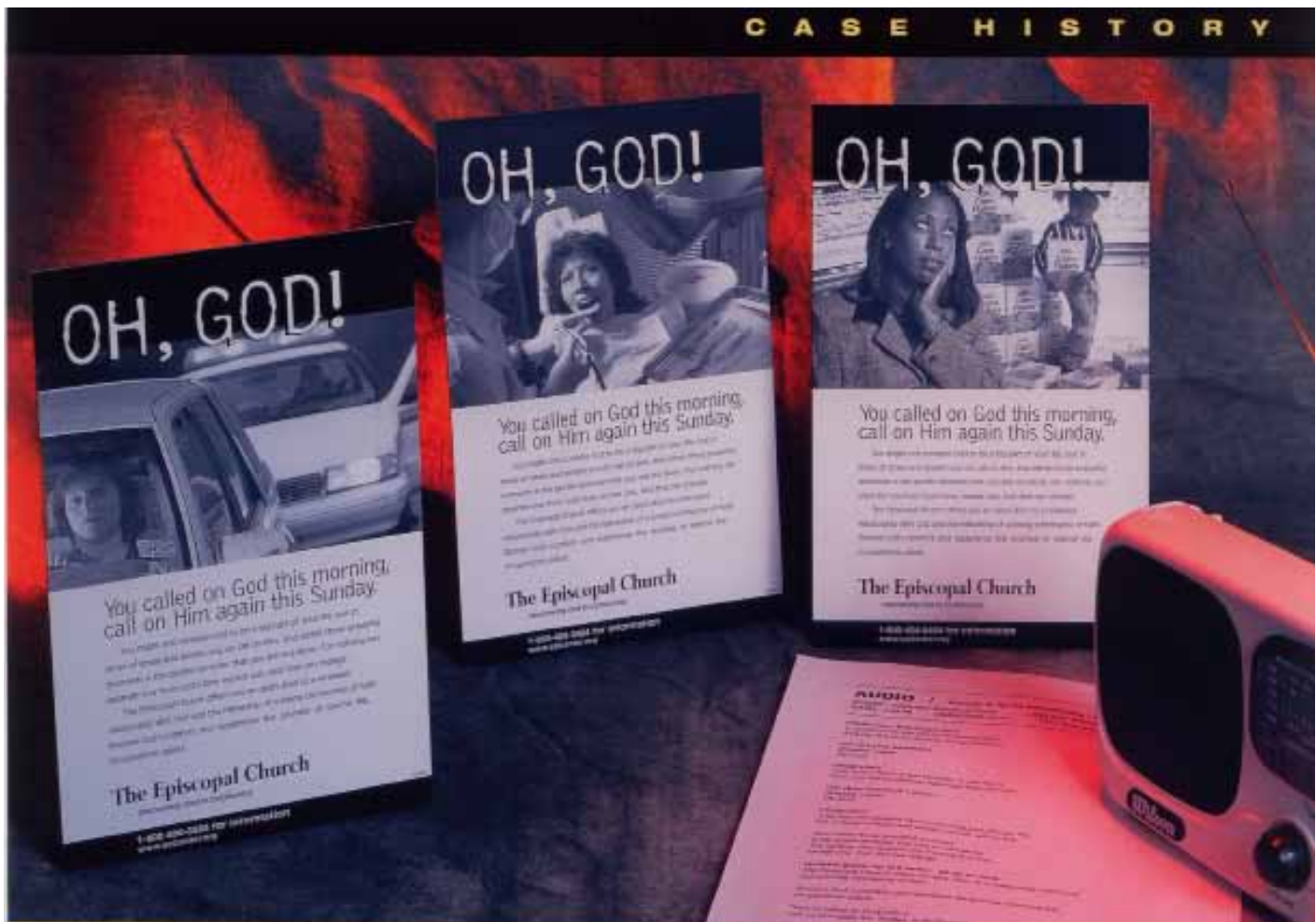
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DIOCESE OF TEXAS

Episcopal Churches

Background:

The Diocese of Texas serves more than 80,000 Episcopalians in over 150 churches and missions throughout 37 counties located in the Southeastern part of the state.

Problem:

In a compelling way, reach adults ages 25-54 who have never been to church or no longer attend. Do this without increasing the budget from the previous year.

Solution:

Tap into the reality that most people believe in God and call on a Supreme Being in times of stress and anxiety. Dramatize this concept in non-life-threatening, slice-of-life situations where we consciously or unconsciously say, in so many words, "Please God, help get me through this!"

Restructure the 1997 newspaper campaign from small space ads run once a week on a seven-week schedule to a triple-size ad run three times a week on a three-week schedule. Use compelling photography, thoughtful text and a simple, but provocative, headline: "Oh, God!" To encourage response, display toll-free number and a web address.

Concentrate radio in a two-week schedule in the three major markets on the perimeter of the Diocese: Houston, Austin and Tyler-Langview. Develop one master spot that combines two slice-of-life situations with sound effects, music and a soothing lead voice that projects trust. Tag the spot with the 800 number.

Media:

Newspaper, radio

Results:

This campaign produced more responses in three weeks than the previous campaign did in seven weeks, and came in under budget.

Calls to the 800 number jumped over 253%, from an average 6.7 a day in 1997 to 17 a day in 1998. Web site hits increased 300%, from 171 a week in 1997 to 513 a week in 1998.

At the same time, the tone of the inquiries shifted from a general, "Let's talk about church," to a more specific, "I'm new. I need a church."

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Brand Development Specialists™

*“Faith
can move
mountains.”*

*— Nat King Cole
Entertainer, Episcopalian*

**We can move your spirit.
The Episcopal Church**

*“Don’t worry.
Be happy.”*

— Bobby McFerrin
Vocalist, Episcopalian

Discover the Way.

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Call for information 1-800-498-4936 Website: <http://www.epicenter.org>

**“And that’s
the way
it is.”**

—Walter Cronkite
Broadcaster, Episcopalian

Discover the details.

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Call for information 1-800-498-4936 Website: <http://www.epicenter.org>

WEB COMMUNICATION NOTES

What is noticeably absent from this manual is a section on the web. This is being worked on and I will be available later this Fall. Feel free to add your own web information.



