

The liturgical year of the church provides us with a framework for an editorial calendar for our websites and other online channels (Facebook Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and other social media platforms). As you approach each season, look at your website with the lens of the season - what story are you telling? What do you want them to know? How do you want them to feel? What do you want them to do?

## **Advent**

Advent marks the beginning of the church year, starting 4 Sundays before Christmas Day (December 25). The word 'advent' is literally 'to come'. Advent calendars, Advent wreaths and Advent devotionals are common practices and traditions of this season. What do people outside the church know about Advent? If anything, they may have encountered some version of an Advent calendar. We experience it as something different - does your website and posts lead others through that experience?

## **Christmas**

Christmas, like Easter, is both a day and a season of the church year. As families come together, many come to church that don't attend regularly. Others come because they miss gathering with family and the hope that Christmas brings. Be a light shining in the darkness of winter, both online and offline. Christmas is no longer just a celebration in the Church. Your website, social media posts, and services have a lot to compete with. If we're paying attention, we're just starting Christmas when everyone else is getting over it.

## **Epiphany**

Epiphany follows Christmas and celebrates the revelation of Christ as God. The arrival of the Magi (the 3 Kings) is one of those revelations.

## **Lent**

Lent is the 40-day period (excluding Sundays) prior to Easter Sunday. During this season of the church, Christians follow a variety of disciplines - fasting, prayer, reflection and penance.

## Easter

Easter Sunday is one of the most-attended worship weekends of the year, Christmas being the other. This has given rise to the "[CEO Christian](#)" label - Christmas and Easter, only. Easter is not just a Sunday, but also a season of the Church. In fact, every Sunday is an observance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.Â

## **Pentecost**

The longest season of the church year - often referred to as 'Ordinary Time', covers the time between the end of the Easter season and the beginning of the next church year on the 1st Sunday of Advent.

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## Advent [Advent]

We seek for ways to be present each day as we anticipate the celebration of Christ coming into the world and coming again. As church communicators, our goal is not to add to the hustle and bustle, but to add things to help people pause and reflect, to be **in** Advent, not just getting **through** Advent. The Advent we observe and celebrate is not just historical remembrance of Christ's first coming to live among us, but us also anticipating his next coming.

We move from darkness to light (Isaiah 9:2), were are at the dawn. While we wait, we are not idle (Matthew 25).

Some ideas for practicing Advent

- Create a digital Advent calendar
- Publish a list of hashtags, with one for each day, for tagging images on Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter and Instagram. Here's one list from the [Anglican Communion](#)
  - Post weekly or daily devotionals on your website, Facebook page, or send as emails (or all these)
  - Look through this [Twitter chat](#) from #ChSocM (**Church Social Media**) on Advent, with lots of ideas and feedback.

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There are themes for each week of Advent, though there are variations between traditions. Use the themes from your tradition for each week to guide you. Hope. Peace, Joy, Love. Faith. Prepare. Prophets. Angels. Shepherds. Magi. Bethlehem. Use them as separate tags, or in combination with Advent - for example, #AdventHope, #AdventPeace, #AdventJoy, #AdventLove.

## Facebook

You can use your page to highlight Advent - create and update photo albums, post a morning Bible verse, or an evening prayer. Or, do them all. Whatever you have the resources to do - do.

- [OccupyAdvent's](#) Facebook page
- [Advent Conspiracy's](#) Facebook page
- [AdventWord](#) Facebook page

## X/Twitter

A few years back, [tweewisemen](#) and [natwivity](#) had interactive Twitter story-telling of the nativity during Advent and Christmas. [OccupyAdvent](#) continues to be active each year.

- Use Twitter search - this will give you all the [ChSocM tweets about Advent that contain links](#)
- Common hashtags for Twitter and Advent - [#advent](#), [#adventus](#), [#occupyadvent](#), [#adventword](#)

## Pinterest

Looking for ideas? You'll find them on [Pinterest](#)! Start by collecting ideas to use, reuse, and share. The search functionality allows you to search for pins, boards, pinners, and search through your pins.

## Instagram

Images are very powerful and Instagram has become a major player in photo-sharing. While you can view your photos from a desktop computer, sharing, tagging, and searching, are easier done from a mobile device.

- [AdventWord](#)
- Hashtag [advent](#)

## YouTube

Videos are powerful tools for communicating. Curate and create playlists of videos for each week - an audio/visual Advent calendar of sorts. Use your hymnal, liturgy, and lists of works composed for the season. Did you know - Johann Sebastian Bach composed pieces for every Sunday of the year - cantatas, chorales, passions, magnificats, motets, masses, oratorios, and more?

## Your Website

Be sure you are updating your website - especially as your online traffic is increasing (more people are coming to church as [Christmas](#) approaches).

- Are your service times correct?
- Are there any additional services or events to list?
- Are your Easter service times and summer service times removed or hidden?
- What special Christmas services will you have? When will you display them?

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## Christmas [Christmas]

Beginning on December 25th and lasting 12 days, Christmas is a season during the darkest time of the year in the northern hemisphere that celebrates the coming of Christ into the world - a light shining in the darkness. Culturally, Christmas has been adopted and adapted to commercial excess. The temptation is to try to speak over the cultural Christmas, only to become part of the noise.

Leading up to Christmas, be sure to have any special services, programs, meals, and activities somewhere they can be easily found and discovered.

### Checklist

- Images of past Christmas services for use on your online channels
- List of services and times
- Update Google, Bing, Yelp!, and Facebook listings for any changes in hours

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## Lent [Lent]

Lent is the 40-day period (excluding Sundays) prior to [Easter](#) Sunday beginning on Ash Wednesday. During this season of the church, Christians follow a variety of disciplines - fasting, prayer, reflection and penance. The exact date Lent starts can vary each year because it is based on the date of Easter, which is a 'movable' feast. The color purple used by many churches to signify the season. The last week of Lent - Holy Week - starts with Palm Sunday, and includes Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Vigil (Saturday).Â

The name for this season is derived from the Old English word '*lencte*' or '*lencten*' - the word for 'spring' or 'long' (as in the days are getting longer).

[#ChSocM wiki page for Lent](#) (only in the Internet Archive, now)

## Ways to Update Your Website for Lent

- Post special service times: Ash Wednesday, additional Lenten services, Holy Week, Easter
- Devotional resources from your congregation, denomination, or other organizations
- Provide ways to invite others to church on Easter - downloadable flyers and postcards, sharable content for social media

## Related Posts

[Lenten Practices for Church Webmasters](#)

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Easter is one of the 'movable' observations of the Church - it is the "first Sunday after the full moon following the spring equinox". As one of the most-attended Sundays of the church year, Easter presents an opportunity for your church and your online channels to reach a lot of people. Easter is also the 'E' of 'CEO Christians'.

You will probably have no problem filling your church on Easter Sunday, and you're probably adding more services. People will have no problem finding a church service near them. That is, if they want to.

Is this really true? What are the attendance trends for your church on Easter? While they may be the most attended services each year, what is the Easter attendance trend over the past few years?

To make the most of your church website for Easter, here are some things to consider:

- Are your service times on your website correct for Easter? Not just for Sunday, but for the entire week leading up to Easter?
- Are your hours on your local listings (Google My Business, Bing, Yelp! Facebook) correct?
- Do you have a separate page on your website for Easter, not just a transient mention of Easter services?

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