Back in church but still online

How to Guide 1: Promoting Online Services

St Albans Parish Communications and Online Worship Group

Online Worship

During the lockdown our Church communities have discovered new ways of worshiping God, listening to his word and praying together online. A number of churches have discovered that more people have been accessing their online services than were coming in person when our buildings were open. According to anecdotal evidence by CPAS, online congregations are 53% bigger. Much of the growth has come from younger adults.

For some people with health concerns it may take some time before they feel confident to return to worshipping in our buildings. It’s important that we continue to offer and promote online services so that nobody is left behind.

Passive Promotion:

The single most important way to promote your online services is to link them to your profile in the Church of England’s “A Church Near you” website. Tag you church with ‘Live Stream’seach.

Embed the service on the homepage of your website so that it’s easy to find.

Promote you online services in community magazines etc.

Active Promotion:

If you don’t have an email list of members of your congregation, create one and send the recipients a link in advance. You make a user-friendly link to your service by shortening a long gobbledygook URL into a short one by using a free service called TinyURL.com.

Share a link to the service on social media at least 48 hours ahead and again on the day.
Whatever platform you service is streamed on, promote your service on other platforms.

Ask church members to share a link to the service on their social feeds on such platforms such as Facebook or Instagram.

Encourage members of your congregation to invite friends they meet walking the dog or speak to on the phone to your online service. It is much, much easier to invite someone to an online service than asking them to walk into a church service on Sunday morning.

You can advertise your service to Facebook users living near your church at minimal cost using a featured called “Boosted Posts”. The ads are create from posts on your Facebook Page. Boosting a post may help you get more people to react, share and comment on it. You may also reach new people who have never seen you online service. For advice on advertising on Facebook contact Rachel Wakefied on rachwakefield@outlook.com.

CofE Instructions on how to share a link to services on A Church Near You:

Youtube going live on youtube

Share the video link:
Go to the camera upload icon in the upper right-hand corner
Click Go Live
At the top, select Manage
Click on ... beside your scheduled live video
Click Share
Using the share link, embed the video on your website or A Church Near You profile.

To embed your YouTube video on A Church Near You:
Create a page on your church's A Church Near You profile. Give it a helpful title, such as: Watch a live service
Describe the video in the Page content section. Perhaps include liturgy so they can join in with the service
In the box titled Video paste the share link to your Live video
Add the tag **LiveStream** to your service or event so that visitors to A Church Near You can find churches that are showing Live video. When you are live your community will be able to watch it on this page.

Facebook
Link to your Facebook page from A Church Near You
As an A Church Near You editor, click on the + by events and services to create an event
Add the **time and date** of your live video
**Add a description** inviting people to visit your Facebook page to watch the video by clicking the button which says **More about this event**
In the **web link** box add the URL for your Facebook page
Add the tag 'LiveStream' to your event
Click **save**.