



## Social Media Sunday: September 24, 2017

Social Media Sunday was born in the Episcopal Church in 2013, but it has grown into an ecumenical event for all who use social media platforms to share their faith and the Good News. The Episcopal Church in South Carolina and a growing number of our congregations have been participating since 2014.

**How to participate on September 24, 2017:** Use the hashtag #SMS17 on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or whatever other platform you regularly use. Check in at church, tweet the sermon, post selfies of yourself and the clergy, share a photo of people at your church or a video of your favorite hymn being sung —be creative and have fun being a faithful witness!

### Some Resources and Tips for Organizing & Promoting Social Media Sunday

Join the Social Media Sunday group on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/groups/SMS15](http://www.facebook.com/groups/SMS15) ...these and many other resources are posted there.

Clement, Carolyn,

“Social Media Sunday,” *singingcarolyn* blog, October 12, 2014: <http://bit.ly/KrJUeO>

“Social Media Sunday: Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut Spring Training,” PowerPoint Presentation, May 3, 2014: <http://bit.ly/1Gwd4Uf>

“Case Study: ‘Social Media Sunday’ at Trinity Episcopal, Tariffville, CT,” #chsocm blog, July 18, 2013: <http://bit.ly/1fsBIYA>

Cleaveland, Adam Walker

“Social Media Sunday @WPC, Part 1: Introduction,” *Pomomusings* blog, March 3, 2014: <http://bit.ly/1LrBldA>

“Social Media Sunday @WPC, Part 2: Planning,” *Pomomusings* blog, March 4, 2014: <http://bit.ly/1LrBI7V>

“Social Media Sunday @WPC, Part 3: Advertising and Preparing,” *Pomomusings* blog, March 5, 2014: <http://bit.ly/1GwdHNz>

“Social Media Sunday @WPC, Part 4: Social Media in Worship,” *Pomomusings* blog, March 6, 2014: <http://bit.ly/1GwdLNI>

“Social Media Sunday @WPC, Part 5: Will we do it again?” *Pomomusings* blog, March 7, 2014: <http://bit.ly/1GwdKJe>

#ChSocM Chat Transcript: Joy Shared and Lessons Learned on #SMSunday, #chsocm blog, July 1, 2014: <http://bit.ly/1pV4I2R>

Morrissey, Stephen, “Starting a Social Media Sunday,” *Church Web Strategies*, August 22, 2014: <http://bit.ly/1GwdXMs>

Nicholson, Nina, “Witness to your faith on Social Media Sunday, June 29,” “Geeks for God” Blog: Evangelism in the Electronic Era, June 19, 2014: <http://bit.ly/1Gwdk5D>

## Responding to the “buts”

You may encounter some resistance or outright opposition to the idea of mixing social media and church. However, the anxiety level often goes down when people find out what SMS is -- and what it is NOT. Based on our experiences at Grace Church Cathedral (Charleston SC) on SMS14, 15 and 16, here are some reactions you may hear, and some possible responses:

### **“But I’m not on social media (and I don’t want to be!)”**

SMS isn’t about pushing people into using social media. It’s about encouraging those who ARE using it to consider how they can share their experiences of faith and community, and spread the good news of Jesus Christ, through their interactions in the digital world. AND... it’s also a day when people who are curious about social media are encouraged to learn more about it. Even if you don’t plan to be involved in social media directly, you can appreciate and support what others are doing in this area of evangelism.

### **“But none of our members are on social media.”**

And yet: Lots of potential church members ARE on social media! And SMS is a day to explore how to make our churches visible to them. Even the most basic Facebook page, Twitter or Instagram account with an occasional post is a “roadsign” in the digital world that helps people find you.

### **“But I don’t use a smartphone.”**

Many people don’t, but still enjoy using social media on their computers. Post something about church from home on Social Media Sunday, and help keep the energy going all day.

### **“But I don’t want to use my phone in church.”**

You don’t have to. Check-in before you walk in, or wait until after the service and post something about the experience. If taking photos during services is not the norm where you worship, or it doesn’t feel right to you, then take pictures during coffee hour, or out on the front lawn.

### **“But I don’t want other people using *their* phones in church.”**

It can be disconcerting to see someone messing with electronic devices during worship. But before you decide it’s a distraction, consider: Would you feel distracted if you saw someone writing down notes during the sermon? Some people take notes on their phones and tweet quotes from the sermon so others can hear them too. Also, did you know the Book of Common Prayer can be downloaded as a phone app? At General Convention in 2015, everyone used iPads and smartphones to follow the liturgy -- there were no printed bulletins. Social Media Sunday is a good time to learn about ways devices are aiding people in worship.

### **“But won’t this mean everyone’s phone will be going off during the service?”**

That’s a problem on *any* Sunday! Social Media Sunday can be an excellent time to start a conversation about how to kindly remind people to silence their devices before the service starts.

**Remember:** “Joy is the infallible sign of the presence of God.”\* **HAVE FUN!**

*\*Pierre Teilhard de Chardin*