Help and Advice Group

The United Reformed Church

Northern Synod Office, 4 College Lane, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8JJ (0191-232 1168)

Bulletin 22:   CHURCH WEBSITES AND BLOGS

The Help & Advice Group was set up by Synod in 2009, to support local churches in being informed and effective in their life and mission. The Group is made up of four members of local churches, together with administrative support from the Trust Officer. We are willing to try to provide specific advice or organise training days on particular topics. Please get in touch if you have questions or wish to suggest a training or discussion event.

This article is part of a series giving an overview of particular subjects on interest for local churches. We also circulate general updates from time to time. Bulletins will also be posted on the members' area of the website with direct links to other websites.

Where readers are directed to web-based resources, the Synod Office is willing to respond to reasonable requests for printed out information for readers without web access, although they may find it more satisfactory to follow up their interest through their local library's web access.

Making Websites and Blogs Official

Nowadays many churches have websites to let seekers know they are there, and give information about their activities and forthcoming events for members and the general public. These can often be a valuable source of contact from people visiting or moving into the area and looking for a church, or to join in community activities, or even hire the church hall for a function.

To ensure that churches benefit from exemptions under the Crime and Courts Bill currently before Parliament, the Churches' Legislation Advisory Service recommends that churches should pass a formal resolution to have an official website (and a blog, if you run one). This ensures that there would be no question of individuals publishing opinions online being caught by regulations arising from the Leveson Inquiry into press standards.

Sources of Information and Design Tips on Websites

http://ichurch.urc.org.uk/faqs

www.churchedit.co.uk/website-tips

www.church123.com/church_website_design_advice.htm

www.goodchurchwebsites.org.uk

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