

Getting the Word Out

Policy for Effective Communication about Your Ministry

There are so many wonderful things happening here at Ebenezer! How do we keep up with it all? The answer can be found in three words: Communicate, Communicate, Communicate! But how do we communicate clearly and effectively? The guidelines below should help sift through that question.

Purpose: The purpose of announcements and publicity is to communicate to members, friends, and visitors Ebenezer's vision through its ministries, meetings, and activities. Communication is imperative to a smooth running church. Good communication can contribute to effective ministry.

Forms of Communication:

- 1) Verbal announcement during Sunday morning worship made by the host ministry
- 2) Verbal announcement during Sunday morning worship made by the Pastor
- 3) Printed bulletin announcement
- 4) Printed bulletin insert
- 5) PowerPoint announcement (shown prior to each service)
- 6) Video / Multimedia announcement
- 7) Email Newsletter announcement
- 8) Display Table in Lobby
- 9) Posters displayed throughout the church facility
- 10) Website announcement (News Section)
- 11) Sign-up sheet

General Guidelines for All Forms of Communication:

- A written request for any form of communication must be submitted to the Office Administrator. Please use the Communication Request Form. Follow the instructions on the form and read the policies below before submitting a request.
- All requests must be approved by the Ministry Leader before being submitted to the Office Administrator.
- Requests are subject to editing due to space limitations and grammar.
- Announcements, flyers, posters, bulletin inserts, sign-up sheets, and any other material must be created by the host ministry.
- Be aware that it is impossible to guarantee requests as we receive more requests every week than we can fit into the space / time available. Priority will be given to the events occurring soonest.
- See the policies below regarding each form of communication.

Verbal Announcement Made by the Host Ministry (Sunday Morning):

- Please submit your approved requests to the church office preferably with a minimum of one week's notice but no later than 9:30 am Thursday.
- To insure fairness, we wish to limit each announcement to one Sunday, unless otherwise approved by the Office Admin.
- For the sake of time, we must limit the announcements made by host ministries to no more than two per Sunday, unless otherwise approved by the Office Administrator. Announcements will be scheduled on a first-come basis.
- A representative from the ministry should make the announcement at all 3 services.
- The Announcer needs to attend the pre-worship meeting and prayer time no later than 5 minutes before each service in the Conference Room. The Announcer should sit in the front row of the sanctuary until the announcement has been made.
- The announcement must be written out and submitted with the request. For the sake of time, please do not make any unnecessary remarks or ad lib while making the announcement. Please choose your words carefully in keeping with a worshipful atmosphere.
- When standing at the podium, please do not lean in toward the microphone or adjust the microphone's height. It is strong enough to pick up your voice from quite a distance, and unneeded compensation makes things difficult for the sound room.
- Verbal announcements should not exceed 1 minute (60 seconds) unless otherwise approved by the Office Administrator. This is equal to 120-150 words. We ask that Announcers practice their announcement and time it to be sure that the length does not exceed 1 minute.
- Verbal announcements are reserved for events pertaining to the majority of the congregation.

Verbal Announcement Made by the Pastor (Sunday Morning):

- Please submit your approved requests to the church office preferably with a minimum of one week's notice but no later than 9:30 am Thursday.
- The pastors reserve the right to add or subtract announcements they make as they deem appropriate. But, generally, a maximum of 3 per service will be given.

Printed Bulletin Announcement:

- Please submit approved requests preferably with a minimum of one week's notice but no later than 9:30 am Thursday.
- The Office Administrator will determine the number of announcements based on space available in the bulletin. Announcements not printed when requested will be printed at the earliest date possible within the policies.
- Announcements should not appear more than 4 weeks before the event is scheduled or 4 weeks before a deadline (for registration, giving, etc), unless otherwise approved by the Office Administrator.
- Please limit announcements to 3 sentences, 50 words, or less.

Printed Bulletin Insert:

The policies are the same as printed bulletin announcements with the following exceptions:

- Inserts are limited to 1/3 sheet (legal) or 1/2 sheet (letter), unless otherwise approved by the Office Administrator. Inserts may be 1 or 2 sides. Office staff will print bulletin inserts. Electronic copy to be provided by ministry.
- Bulletin inserts must be designed by the host ministry and submitted with the request.
- Bulletin inserts may only be used once per event, unless it is a major church event (then 2 times is permissible).
- Please provide a hard copy as well as an electronic copy. (acceptable formats for electronic copies: Microsoft Word, Publisher, Power Point, Adobe pdf)

PowerPoint Announcement:

- Please submit approved requests preferably with a minimum of one week's notice but no later than 9:30 am Thursday.
- PowerPoint announcements do not need to be created by the ministry; the Office Staff will take care of it.
- PowerPoint announcements will automatically be created for all bulletin announcements unless otherwise requested.

Video / Multimedia Announcement:

- Please submit approved requests preferably with a minimum of two week's notice but no later than 9:00 am Wednesday.
- For the sake of time, multi-media announcements are best kept to 1 minute, with a maximum of 2 minutes. Also for the sake of time, please consider whether showing your multimedia announcement on a TV next to a table display in the foyer will be effective enough (they can be longer than 2 minutes if shown in the foyer).
- Multimedia Announcements may only be shown one time during Sunday morning worship.
- Please include special instructions for the sound room personnel with the submission of a digital file of the announcement.

Display Table in Lobby:

- Please submit approved requests preferably with a minimum of one week's notice but no later than 9:30 am Thursday.
- All supplies (including the actual table), set-up, and clean-up must be taken care of by the host ministry.
- Please be sure your table is cleaned up by Friday afternoon to make way for the next ministry's display. Each Table can be set up from Saturday Morning – Friday afternoon. Please be sure to maintain your display for the entire time it is set up.
- To prevent clogging up of the foyer, no more than 2 tables will be allowed in the lobby at one time, and may not be placed in front of the coat racks.
- In an attempt to ensure that all requests for table displays can be honored, each display may be out for a maximum of 2 weeks, unless otherwise approved by the Office Administrator.
- Collection boxes are in addition to table displays, with a maximum of 2 in the foyer at one time, and a maximum of 4 weeks for each. It is the host ministry's responsibility to maintain collection boxes to be sure they don't get too full and to store/deliver the donations to the appropriate place.

Posters Displayed Throughout Church Facility:

- Poster designs must be done by the host ministry.
- Please submit 2 posters to the Office Administrator to be hung throughout the building at the appropriate places with the appropriate method of adhesion. Please do not hang your own posters.
- Posters should not be displayed for more than four weeks, unless otherwise approved by the Office Administrator.

Sign-up Sheet:

- Sign-up sheets must be created by the host ministry.
- Sign-up sheets should be submitted with the announcement request and will be hung by the Office Staff. Please do not hang your own sign-up sheets.

Newsletter Submissions:

- Please submit newsletter announcements with your request or email them directly to the office by 9:30 am Wednesday.
- Remember that hot links to web pages or email addresses can be included.
- The newsletter is emailed every Wednesday to the congregation.

Website Announcement:

- Please submit approved requests with a preferred minimum of one week's notice.
- Please include specific instructions for the webmaster with the request.
- Appropriate location on the website is determined by the Office Administrator and Web Master. Requests concerning location will be considered.

Three examples of Good Verbal Announcements:

1) The Bible gives us a few examples of benevolence and giving. Dorcas and Cornelius were two New Testament characters who were cited for their generous giving. The Women's Shelter of East Texas is in need of your help. One woman recently sought help from the shelter after losing her home in a fire. She has 2 young children. Another woman left an abusive situation with nothing. For the next 2 weeks, MOPS will be collecting the items found in the bulletin insert. The list can also be found on the church's website. Please take this insert home today, pray about your part in this collection, and bring the items to the box that is located in the lobby for the next two weeks.

2) "For thou art my hope, O Lord GOD: thou art my trust from my youth." -- Psalms 71:5. All children and parents are invited to attend an outreach event in 2 weeks called "The Main Event". This is a great opportunity to reach out to your classmates and neighbors, friends and relatives, in a non-threatening way! Kids Crossing is sponsoring a fabulous event with food, games, drama, and the sharing of the Gospel in a unique way. Every parent and child who attends will clearly hear the Gospel. Invitations are available in the lobby as well as in your bulletin. You can also download them off of the church's website. Make it your commitment to invite at least 2 unsaved friends this week to "The Main Event".

3) The Activities Committee is sponsoring an event you just can't miss! Bring a lawn chair, a blanket, a side dish, and your favorite lawn game next Sunday at 4:00 pm for our Kick Off Picnic. If you've been meaning to meet some new people or finally get together with some of your church family, this is the event for you! If you've never been to our picnics, now is the time to come! Food, games, and a big surprise will await you! Please sign up in the lobby as you leave today. Once again, that is next Sunday at 4:00 pm. Bring a lawn chair, a blanket, a side dish, and a game for a great time of fellowship. Don't forget about the big surprise!

Bad Announcement Statements:

- I KNOW I only have one minute to make this announcement, so I better hurry up!
- Good Morning! Wait, wait, wait!! You can do better than that! Good Mooooorning!
- Boy, 1st service people aren't as lively as you 3rd service people!
- Ooh! I almost tripped up the steps! Oh, by the way, Happy Birthday, honey!
- Um, we have a Men's – um – retreat this weekend. (clear throat) Come out for a good time. Hold on, um – there's more information in – um – your – um – bulletin.

Creative Ideas for Communication:

- Set up a display outside that no one will miss on Sunday.
- Have a few volunteers stationed throughout the building with a flyer that is handed personally to anyone who should know about your event. Have them tell them about the event.
- Have your committee introduce themselves to 5 or more new faces in the congregation each week for a month. Have them personally invite each one to your ministry event / study.
- Looking for help in your ministry? Get out the church directory and make phone calls. Try someone you don't know!
- Be creative with your flyers. Attach something unforgettable to the flyer.
- Set up a display inside that won't be forgotten!
- Have members of your ministry team stand outside with sandwich board signs as people enter the building.
- Create a catch-phrase or unforgettable title for your ministry or event.
- Run a contest.
- Personal invitations have greater impact than any verbal or written announcement.