



# Communications for Episcopal Leaders

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## What is the Episcopal Church Foundation (ECF)?

### Overview:

- Independent and lay-led organization
- ECF's mission is to strengthen the **leadership** and **financial** capabilities of Episcopal congregations, dioceses, and other institutions
- ECF carries out this mission through a wide array of programs including...



### Leadership Resources

- ECF Vital Practices ([ecfvp.org](http://ecfvp.org))
- Vestry Resource Guide
- Fellowship Partners Program
- Educational Events

### Financial Resources

- Capital Campaigns
- Planned Giving
- Endowment Management
- Educational Events

## For those just joining...

### A Few Notes:

- All participants are currently muted to cut out background noise and audio interference.
- To start your web cameras, press “Start by Web Cam” button and “Start Sharing”.
- If you have questions, please type them into the chat box on the right-hand side of the screen.
- PDF’s of the slides and resource list are downloadable.
- This webinar is being recorded and will be made public.



Introduce yourself! Please share the name of your church and what you hope to learn in the chat box on the right.

Thanks for coming!




## Our Presenter: Nancy Davidge



- ECF associate program director& editor, ECFVP
- Immediate past president Episcopal Communicators
- Experienced communications professional –for profit & nonprofit
- # 1 take away – always remember your audience






## Key to Effective Communication?

Trust. Building trust helps you:

- Communicate major decisions/changes.
- Build engagement within and beyond our congregations.

*Have a question? Please send via the Chat Box; we have a Q&A time built in.*



## Bible Study: 1 Samuel 3:1-20

Samuel was lying down in the temple...Then the Lord called, "Samuel! Samuel!" and he said "Here I am!" and ran to Eli, and said "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call, my son; lie down again."

Then the Lord said to Samuel, "See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears of it tingle. On that day I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. For I have told him that I am about to punish his house forever....."

Samuel lay there until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the Lord. Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. But Eli called Samuel and said..."What was that he told you? Do not hide it from me..."





## Our Role as Leaders:

“Church leaders have a responsibility to model Christ like behaviors and when we don’t we pay a heavy price.”

- *Mary MacGregor, Diocese of Texas*



## Communicating Effectively is a Skill:

What is it that makes some communications more effective than others?

Often, the focus is on message and media (what and how) > audience.

Ex. Do you think about how your communications might make someone feel?



## Here's an example... Poll

**You helped write a grant for your church and are waiting to hear the result. Today, your neighbor congratulates you on getting the grant (she read about it in the newspaper). How do you feel?**

- Happy the grant was approved
- Hurt or angry that as a committee member you didn't hear the news first
- A bit of both.



## Danger Will Robinson!

What are the things that we can do to ensure that our communications efforts fail?

Jot your ideas down in the chat box.

Miguel and Brendon will add them to the white board

Here's what you are saying...



## To Ensure Success...

Looking at our list – what's the opposite action for each?

Jot your ideas down in the chat box.

Miguel and Brendon will add them to the white board

Looking at this list, what are the top two or three things you'd put at the top of your list?



## Build Trust by...

Five tips for effective communication

- Create a safe environment
- Recognize issues of power/control
- Guard against defensiveness
- Practice transparency
- Tell the truth

What helps: Covenants or norms  
Show of hands – who uses them?





## Communicating Change

**Resistance to change is NORMAL**

3 ways to minimize resistance

- Invite key influencers into process
- Keep people informed
- Help people understand why

Listen – and be open to hearing...



## Remember:

### #1 – Feelings Matter

- Are there things people care about that we might be missing or minimizing?
- What would my reaction be to this message as presented?





## Remember:

### #2 –Consider Intent/Impact

- Audience context
- Tone
- Delivery methods
- Timing



## How Does this Help with Communicating Difficult Messages?

Like Samuel, we are often afraid. He didn't want to tell Eli.

Resistance to delivering what is perceived as being 'bad news' is normal.

What happens? It usually turns out okay





## Check in

Need clarification on anything covered?

Please type your questions into the chat box

The last 10 minutes of this webinar have been set aside for Q&A – send your questions anytime.



## Building Relationships...

**How do we reach members we rarely see and ‘the people we don’t know yet?’**

We live in a time when it is very easy for people looking for a spiritual home to find us – and yet many of us hide our light under a bushel basket.

How do we invite people who are ‘in the database’ but not actively engaged into a different relationship within the congregation?





## Building Relationships...

Where and how are people likely to learn about what your congregation/church values?

- Friends and neighbors
- Free directory listings
- Your website
- Information you share via social or traditional media




## Building Relationships

Which is more likely to engage you? (poll)

- A story?
- An image?
- A report?
- A list of information?





## Sharing Our Stories

### How well are we doing?

If I went to your website, would I find:

- Worship times?
- Church history?
- A leadership directory?
- Stories?
- Jesus?



## Sharing our Stories

FREE Directory listings –

[Find a Church](#)

[Faith Street](#)

[Google Places](#), Yelp, Yellow and White Pages

If you only do 1 thing: Claim your places



## Next Steps: Build Trust

Consider covenants:

- Create a safe environment
- Recognize issues of power/control
- Guard against defensiveness
- Practice transparency
- Tell the truth



## Next Steps: Communicating Change

Incorporate these practices:

- Invite key influencers to be part of change/decision making process
- Keep people informed – schedule regular updates using a variety media (worship, e-news, etc)
- Help people understand why – share as much of the back story as you can while respecting confidentiality



## Next Steps: Relationships

**As we welcome others in – as participants, as members, as leaders – remember this also = change**

Let's prepare ourselves by:

- Being open to doing things differently
- Sharing power/control
- Sharing information more widely



## Questions & Comments

What's your experience with communicating a major decision?

How are you sharing your stories within and outside of your congregation?

Any strategies to share that have worked for you?

*Please use 'raise your hand' or type your comment/question into the chat box.*





## Contact Us

### Episcopal Church Foundation

ECF website: [www.episcopalfoundation.org](http://www.episcopalfoundation.org)

ECF Vital Practices: [www.ecfvp.org](http://www.ecfvp.org)

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## Contact ECF's Leadership Resources Team



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## **“How to” Resources**

[ECF Vital Practices](#)

[Episcopal Communicators](#)

[Episcopal Church Public Affairs Toolkit](#)

