

Bethel Mennonite Church

Communications Plan

Overview of the Plan – Current Version

Updated June 16, 2021

1. General communication strategies
 - a. Bethel's overall vision "Loving God, Each Other, And Our Neighbours" will influence the messages generated and communicated.
 - b. Our communications will include our active Bethel Family members (covenanting and affiliate), our neighbours and our community ministries partners and will encourage a sense of common purpose and connectedness
 - c. We will clarify the desired messages, the particular audience, the medium to be used to communicate these messages and the desired interaction with the specific audience.
 - d. We will spend more energy on social media than we have in the past because people in our community are using these mediums more and more to share their life with others.

2. Messages to be communicated on a regular basis
 - a. Work of the Pastoral Team
 - spiritual input, pastoral care, what activities the pastors are involved in, issues facing our community/neighbourhood and issues facing the church, both in Bethel and in the broader church.
 - b. Work of the Church at Bethel
 - work of the Deacon ministries, Education, Witness, Worship and other supporting committee work.
 - work of our Community ministry and the work of our various ministry partners
 - the issues Church Council is dealing with and important decisions made at congregational meetings
 - c. Work of the Broader Church
 - work of Mennonite World Conference, MC Canada, MC Manitoba, MCC, MDS, CMU, Westgate, Bethel Place and Brethren Mennonite Council
 - d. Bethel Family Notes
 - notices of births, deaths, illnesses, celebrations, tributes to Bethel members who passed away, personal messages/faith stories/devotionals and other stories of or from Bethel members.

3. Content development
 - a. The Pastoral Team will influence directly or indirectly the content included in all of the messages regularly communicated.
 - b. Specific content will be prepared, as specified in the detailed communications plan, by the Pastoral Team, the various committees, the administrative assistant, and Church Council and will be submitted to a Content Editor prior to its use.

- c. The editing process will include a process that will provide for a consistent brand, and messaging which is consistent with Mennonite Church Canada graphics guidelines.
4. Communication mediums to be used
 - a. Bethel website
 - will generally be used to capture and organize the various content generated
 - Bethel Family Notes will generally be placed in the Members section of the website. This content will only be placed on the public side of the website in certain specific and appropriate cases.
 - the available website technology will be used to provide for a lively presentation of the content placed on the website. The Lead Pastor, in conjunction with the rest of the pastoral team and the Content Editor, will determine what is reported upon here and will communicate this to the Web Administrator to put into place.
 - b. Bethel E-Newsletter (formerly known as Bethel Communications email)
 - will be used on a regular weekly basis to “push the news” that is important to highlight in any particular week.
 - The content editor will put the desired content into the template of the newsletter and forward the final version to the Lead Pastor and the Chair of the Communications Committee for their final input and approval.
 - The format and order of the various components of the Bethel E-Newsletter will be identical each time it is issued to make it easier for people to absorb the content
 - c. Social media
 - will be generally used for those who follow Bethel on Instagram or Facebook, with a particular focus on youth, young adults and young families.
 - will be used to specifically connect and interact with area churches and other connected organizations.
 - a specific social media strategy has been developed with certain guidelines that will be followed.
 - d. Other mediums
 - emails and phone calls will continue to be used to communicate the various messages desired.
 - Printed communication: flyers, posters, brochures, invitations
5. Desired audience interaction
 - a. Generally, the desired audience interaction is “one to many” for the messaging identified.
 - b. In certain instances, however, where social media is used, the desired audience interaction will be “one to one”. This would also be the desired interaction for any phone calling that is done.

6. Roles and responsibilities

a. Church Council

- approve the overall communications plan for each year and the related budget
- provide general oversight as to whether the communication process is achieving its intended goals

b. Pastoral Team

- determine, together with the Church Council Executive, what messages are communicated.
- The Pastoral Team will be directly involved in the planning for the face-to-face visits and phoning of Bethel members, drawing on the resources of the Deacon Caregiving Committee and other volunteers to ensure that the appropriate level of contact is being made and that the work load is shared.
- the use of Social Media will be the responsibility of the Associate Pastor, who has the primary focus for Children, Youth, Young Adults and Young Family Ministry. Other members of the Pastoral Team will contribute content to be posted as required.

c. Communications Committee

- develop and maintain a plan for how, when and to whom, specific information should be given and then to outline what means of communication will be used to disseminate this information.
- support Church Council Executive and the Pastoral Team in their efforts to communicate desired messages.
- ensure that all printed and electronic Bethel communications, such as posters, brochures, media releases, the website and social media, have a common brand and look
- the committee will consist of: a Pastoral team member, Content Editor, Web Administrator, Branding Manager, and two members at large.
- the Chair of the committee, will sit on Church Council and report on the activities of the committee.

d. Administrative Assistant

- coordinate the assembly and issuance of the weekly Bethel E-newsletter
- prepare, together with input from the Pastoral Team, content for the Bethel Family notes and the work of the broader church
- maintain the member data base on a regular basis
- ensure all required mailings of relevant communication pieces are done.

7. Other notes

- a. The current version of the bulletin and announcements will be phased out as these are effectively replaced by the communication process listed above. A simple one- page, double sided, folded hard copy version will be produced for all attendees of our in-person worship services.
- b. Ongoing phone calls (in-person, texts, or Robocalls – as appropriate) will continue as required.

- c. Regular mail will be used to provide required information for those people who do not have access to computers