

## Your Pledge Makes It Possible: Communications

Communication is vital to our life together as the Episcopal Church in Southern Virginia. The Communications Office facilitates that work. The diocesan website offers a wide array of resources and information to assist clergy and lay leaders. The weekly Diocesan eNews is available to anyone who wishes to subscribe and is a great way to stay up-to-date on news, events, resources, and educational offerings. The weekly Parish News email provides a venue for congregations to share their news throughout Southern Virginia. Sharing our stories is a great way to get ideas and make connections that grow ministries. The Communications Office also manages our presence on social media like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. These networks are an increasingly useful way to share news and resources and to make connections between individuals and congregations. The Diocesan Connection is distributed electronically to congregations and subscribers. It is a print-ready newsletter that enables congregations to share highlights from our weekly emails with parishioners who are not

online by providing them with printed copies.

In addition to the news and resources offered congregations via our diocesan media outlets, the Communications Office provides resources, workshops and hands-on training to help congregations communicate better. In just the past year, Ann Turner, our communications officer, has visited 28 congregations for



individual hands-on training or a group workshop. Shortly after one of our Social Media for Congregations workshops, a participating church created a Facebook page and enthusiastically shared that,

“It was amazing to see the numbers (of likes) jump within an hour... Our women’s Bible study enrollment has doubled.”

In 2012, for the first time, we were able to budget \$5000 for Communications Grants to congregations. Preference was given to small and rural congregations. Thanks to these funds, seven churches received money to help

them start or re-activate websites: Christ Church Danville, Good Shepherd Richmond, St. Michael’s Bon Air, St. James’ Portsmouth, St. Mark’s Suffolk, St. Augustine’s Newport News, and St. Paul & St. Andrew Kenbridge.

Our first Church Communicators Meeting was held in June. It was an opportunity for communicators – volunteer and staff – to connect with other communicators, share their successes and frustrations, ask questions, and get resources like the new Church Communicators Manual. Here’s what participants said afterward:



“I liked the small groups – I felt comfortable in sharing and questioning”

“I loved hearing from other attendees about the stages of development of their communications.”

“Thank you for having this and all the resources you made available.”

We encourage everyone to subscribe to our weekly email and the Diocesan Connection at our website, [www.diosova.org](http://www.diosova.org). Like us on Facebook ([facebook.com/DioSoVa](https://facebook.com/DioSoVa)), follow us on Twitter (@DioSoVa) and YouTube ([youtube.com/user/TheDioSoVa](https://youtube.com/user/TheDioSoVa)).

