



The Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
of Greater Kansas City

Inspire • Empower • Connect

Digital Press Release Kit Instructions

Why Share?

We have an obligation to share Good News because we are commanded to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 20:19-20) and because we are to be ready to give an explanation for the hope that we have. (1 Peter 3:15)

What Is Good News (for the press!)?

Media outlets serve advertisers, paying customers, and the general public (sometimes in that order). What may be exciting news to us may not be to them, however, we need not try to overthink this.

Think of the “news” that inspired you to go to an event sponsored by an organization that you did not know about or donate to a cause new to you, or moved you to re-tell the story that you heard. That is the kind of news that media outlets want.

Here are some examples:

- Upcoming events of interest to the public that are also open to the public
- A member of your congregation has won a prestigious award or was given a special honor
- Ordinations and/or installations of pastors and other congregational leaders
- Special guest preacher or workshop leader with a regional, national or international following
- Mission project
- New ministry (service) offered by your church
- Closing or postponing meetings/services due to weather, etc.
- New Bible Study or class
- Training offered (CPR/Stephens Ministry/Financial Peace University, etc.)
- Advocacy for an underserved population

- Fund raiser for a mission (if this includes helping a victim or someone with a severe medical condition, be sure to get their permission first)
- Prayer vigil or rally
- Baptisms (of adults for whom you have permission to share with the public)

What Information Do Media Outlets Want?

They usually want the information that you will normally fill out on the Digital Press Release Form – basic information and links to photos and/or videos if available. That’s it! Journalists will (at their editor’s option) conduct any interview needed, contact the leader listed for more information, and/or write the story. The important thing is that we get the basic elements of our “news” out to them as quickly, accurately, and clearly as possible.

What Shouldn’t We Send?

- Anything that bores you
- News of events more than a week old
- Anything with information that may be considered libelous (gossip, rumors, invasions of privacy, personal health information – without permission)

How About Pictures?

Candid action photos are best. They should (without benefit of words) tell a story to the reader.

- If you are photographing on the church campus make sure that you have permission to share the photo of anyone in the picture. Document that on a simple form that can be easily understood and reproduced.
 - An Example is available: (Put Link to ***GKC Blank Example Media Release form*** here)
- Take high quality photos. 2 mega pixels or higher are better than smaller sizes and can be cropped or compressed if needed by the news organization.
- Head shots should be at least the size of a dime in your photo if they are to be recognizable.

Whenever possible, ask an amateur or professional photographer within the congregation to take pictures. Some youth enjoy doing this. Let photography or video – making be for them a regular part of your evangelism ministry.

Relationships

Building trusting relationships with journalists, editors, news directors, etc. is important. The best way to do that is to make sure that any information that you share is accurate, clear, and of likely importance to their audience.

- Say “Thank you!” when an article or announcement is made. Review the “news” in the media outlets that you frequent to get a sense of what may be important to their audience.
- When media outlets sponsor a community event, attend (or be sure that someone else from the congregation does). You may get to meet the person receiving and sharing your good news stories.

If we are to be served by media that share our good news with a wider audience, let us remember that their services are not free. Good journalism requires a strong media staff, equipment, training, etc. As you are led, support media outlets with your subscriptions, occasional paid advertisements.

Pray!

Odd, isn't it, that prayer is often an afterthought to the ministries we perform. A few moments of prayer prior to composing a news item and a few moments before hitting “send” gives the Spirit opportunity to shape our outreach to better accomplish God's purposes.