



Community of Christ

facebook 101: Best Practices



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The average Facebook user spends fifty minutes per day on the site. Facebook offers many invitational possibilities for congregations, and if used well it can radically reshape how congregations communicate and present themselves to the world.¹

The purpose of this document is to introduce pastors and congregation leaders to the uses of Facebook. It will cover:

- The difference between Facebook pages and Facebook groups.
- Best practices for using Facebook.
- Instructions for creating Facebook pages and groups.
- An introduction to Facebook advertising.

At the heart of your congregation's Facebook presence should always be the question, "How can we practice authentic relationships in a virtual world?" Use this as a guide to reach people hoping to build sustaining, meaningful relationships.

If you have questions about Facebook, email the Communications Team at Communications@CofChrist.org.

¹James B. Stewart, "Facebook Has 50 Minutes of Your Time Each Day. It Wants More.," The New York Times, May 5, 2016, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/06/business/facebook-bends-the-rules-of-audience-engagement-to-itsadvantage.html>.

Facebook pages vs. Facebook groups

Pages and groups serve different purposes, and your congregation should have both.

Think of your Facebook page as a public billboard for your congregation. Anyone can search for your page and “like” it to see your posts.

Facebook groups should be for internal communication. Only members and friends of the congregation should be included in your Facebook group.

A Facebook user could find your congregation through your public page and choose to visit your congregation. At that point it would be appropriate to ask if that person would like to join your congregation’s Facebook group. This way he or she could begin to form relationships with other members of the congregation.

Facebook best practices

FACEBOOK PAGES

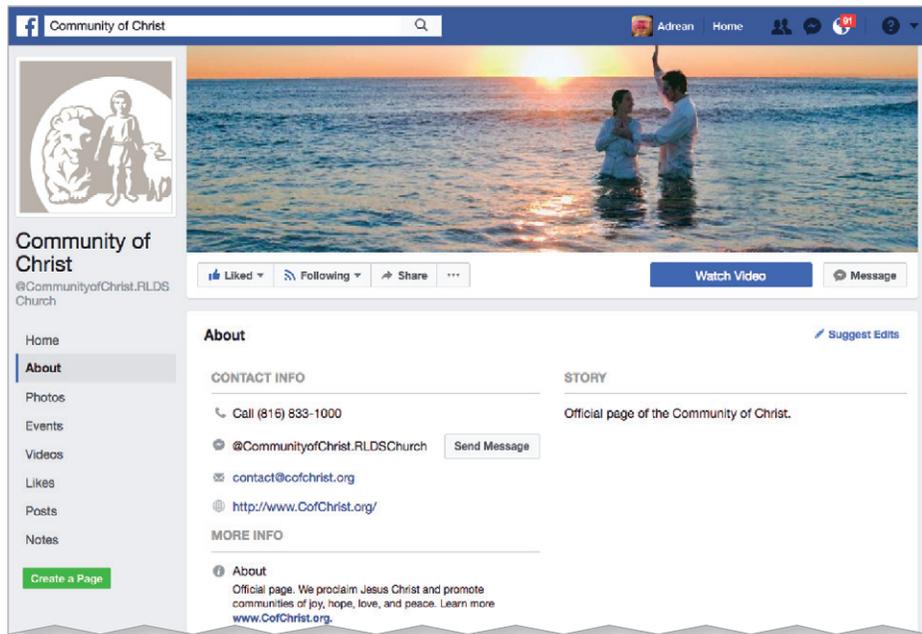
- This is the public profile of your congregation—do not post information that is more appropriate for a private conversation (“Who is planning worship this week?” Or, “Who can give rides to church?”)
- Engage with those who have liked your page by posting at least once a week, so they remain informed and interested.
- Post content that aligns with Community of Christ Enduring Principles and identity, mission, message, and beliefs.
- Post public events and consider boosting (advertising) them to reach a wider audience.

Note: Facebook events can be public (where anyone on the Internet can see them) or private (where only invited guests can see them).

- Photos posted on your page must have approval from those who are pictured.
 - **Photo release for minors:** <http://www.cofchrist.org/common/cms/resources/Documents/Photo-Release-MINOR.pdf>
 - **Photo release for adults:** <http://www.cofchrist.org/common/cms/resources/Documents/Photo-Release.pdf>

Read our social media guidelines at www.CofChrist.org for more information about appropriate use of photos on social media.

- Link to other websites that are relevant to your congregation: www.CofChrist.org, your mission center, and even Latter-dayseekers.org.



- If you have a Twitter, Instagram, or other social media account for your congregation, post content that is consistent across all platforms.



- Consider having a post pinned at the top of your page, regardless of content you add later. This can be a brief introduction to your congregation with a photo or video, such as *Change Your Life, Change Your World*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=97avw00Jo2Q>.

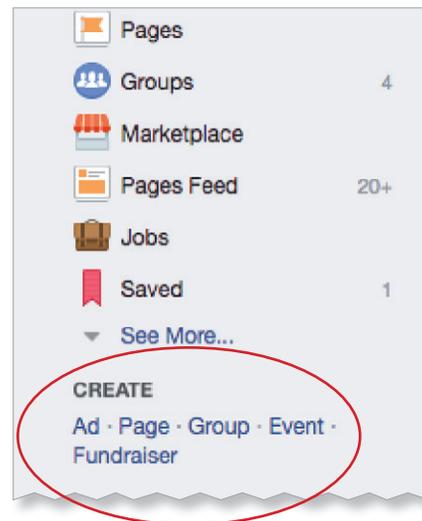
FACEBOOK GROUPS

- Only post pictures on Facebook groups that are set to private. Be sure you have permission to post photos from those who are pictured. Forms and a social media policy were linked previously.
- Post content that aligns with Community of Christ Enduring Principles and identity, mission, message, and beliefs.
- Do not publicly discuss whether new members should be allowed to join the group. Consider this space to be a virtual version of your congregation—all are welcome!
- Create event pages within your Facebook group that others can follow for updates. This is another great way to know who plans to attend your events.

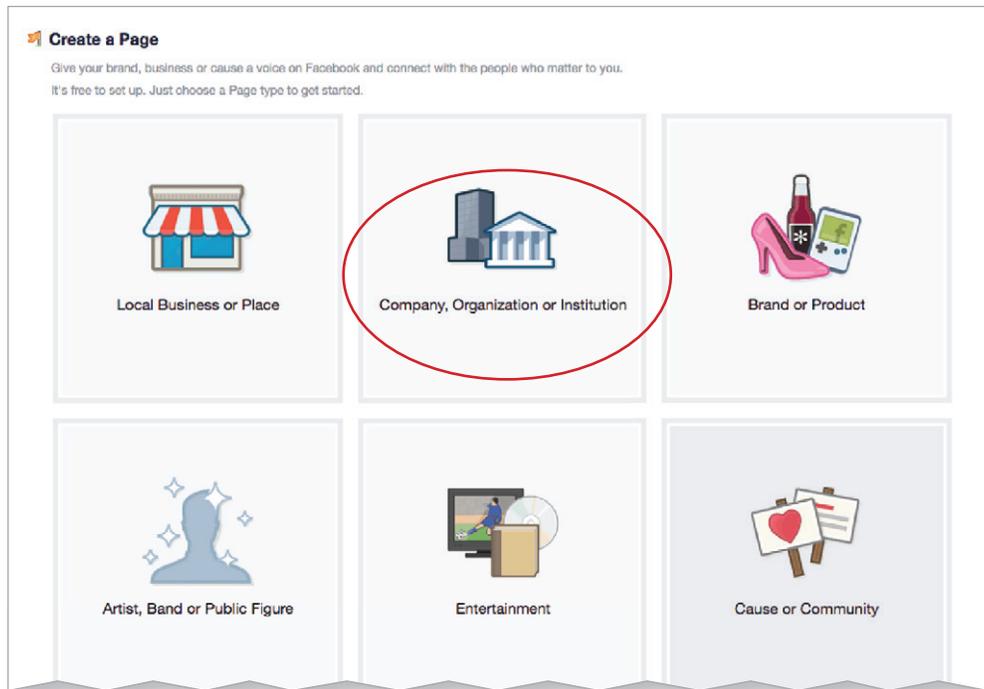
Tip: To prevent confusion, share public content from the public Facebook page.

Creating a Facebook page

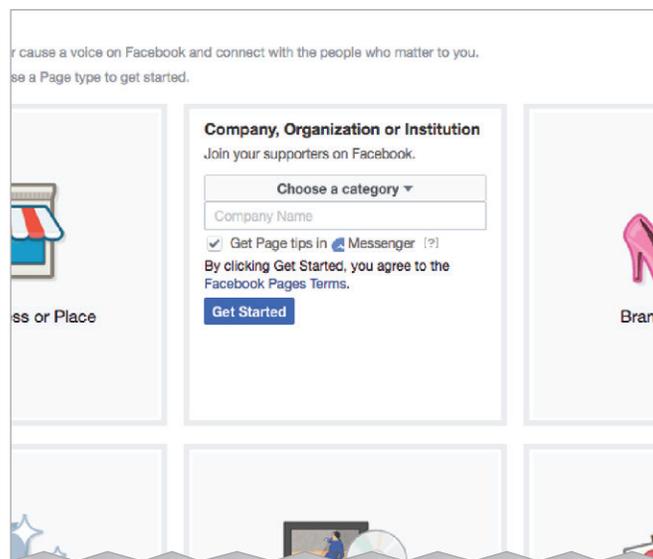
1. Start by clicking the Page link under **CREATE** at the bottom left corner of your Facebook home screen.



- This will take you to a page that looks like this. It is recommended that you choose Company, Organization or Institution as the category for your page.



- When you click Company, Organization or Institution, choose Religious Organization from the dropdown menu. You will be given the option to give your page a name. Your name should start with Community of Christ and end with the name of your mission center or congregation. For example: Community of Christ Oklahoma Mission Center.



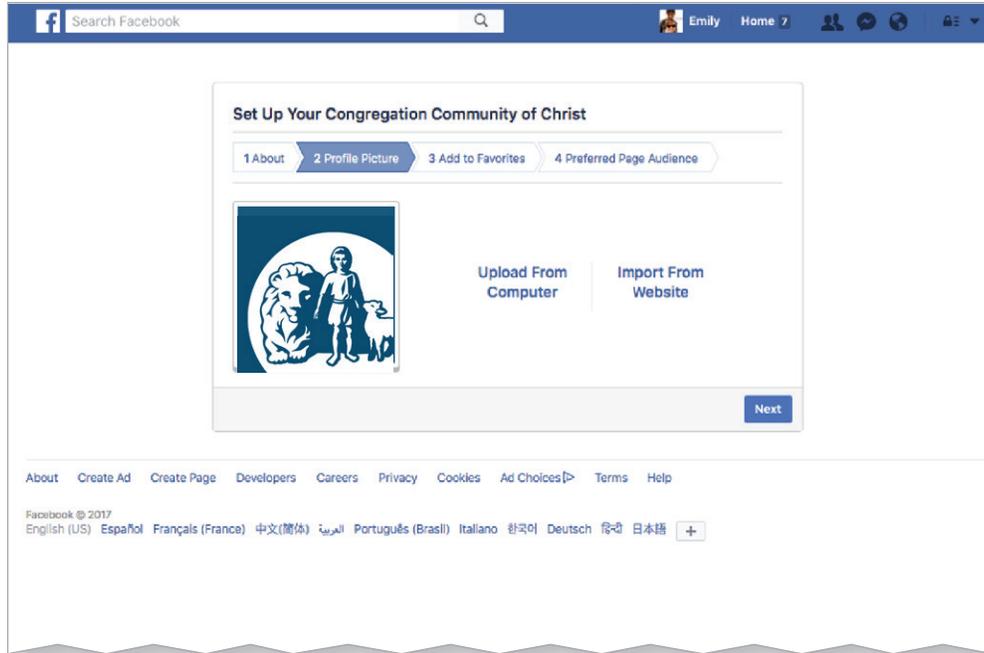
- Next add details. Add a description, a link to your website, the International Headquarters site at www.CofChrist.org, or your mission center's site. You also can make a username that helps others find your page. Your username should start with CofChrist and end with the name or nickname of your mission center or congregation. For example, the username of the Oklahoma USA Mission Center site is CofChristokmc.

Remember to keep your username short.

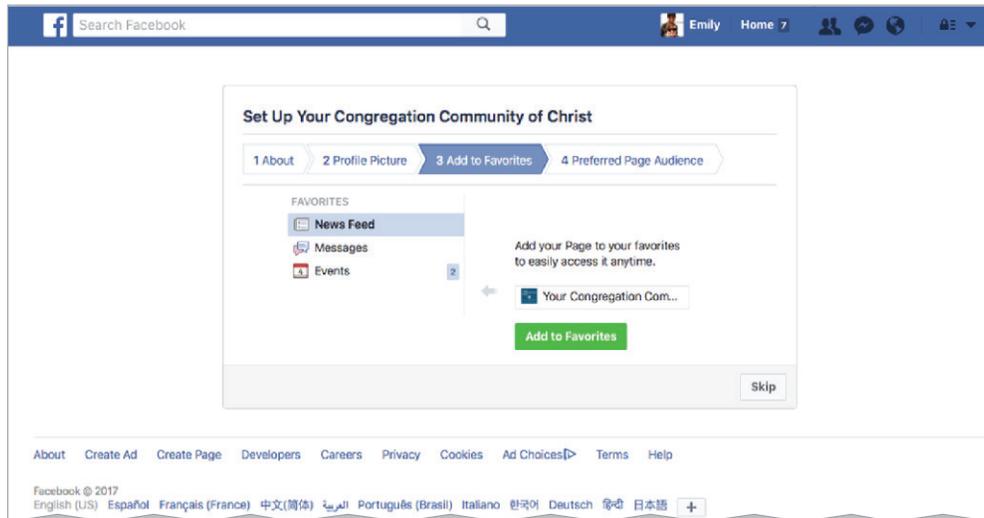
Consider making your username the same as your website URL and other social media handles. For example, the URL of the Calgary Community of Christ congregation's website is www.CofChristyyc.ca. Their Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram handles are [cofchristyyc](#). This makes it easy for seekers and members to find you regardless of where they are looking.

The screenshot shows the Facebook page setup interface for a 'Community of Christ' page. The top navigation bar includes the Facebook logo, a search bar, and the user's name 'Emily' with 'Home 7' and various icons. The main content area is titled 'Set Up Your Congregation Community of Christ' and features a progress indicator with four steps: '1 About', '2 Profile Picture', '3 Add to Favorites', and '4 Preferred Page Audience'. A tip states: 'Tip: Add a description and website to improve the ranking of your Page in search. Fields marked by asterisks (*) are required.' Below this, a prompt asks the user to 'Add a few sentences to tell people what your Page is about. This will help it show up in the right search results. You will be able to add more details later from your Page settings.' There is a text input field with a character count of 155 and a placeholder text '*Tell people what your Page is about...'. Below the text field is a 'Website (ex: your website, Instagram, Twitter or other social media links)' input field. A note states: 'It's easier for people to find your Page in search when it has a unique username. Pages with usernames can also create custom URLs that let people quickly visit and message them.' Below this is a URL input field with the placeholder 'http://www.facebook.com/ Enter an address for your Page ...'. At the bottom of the form are 'Need Help?' and 'Skip' buttons, and a 'Save Info' button. The footer contains navigation links: 'About', 'Create Ad', 'Create Page', 'Developers', 'Careers', 'Privacy', 'Cookies', 'Ad Choices', 'Terms', and 'Help'. It also includes copyright information 'Facebook © 2017' and a list of languages: 'English (US)', 'Español', 'Français (France)', '中文(简体)', 'العربية', 'Português (Brasil)', 'Italiano', '한국어', 'Deutsch', 'हिन्दी', '日本語', and a plus sign for more languages.

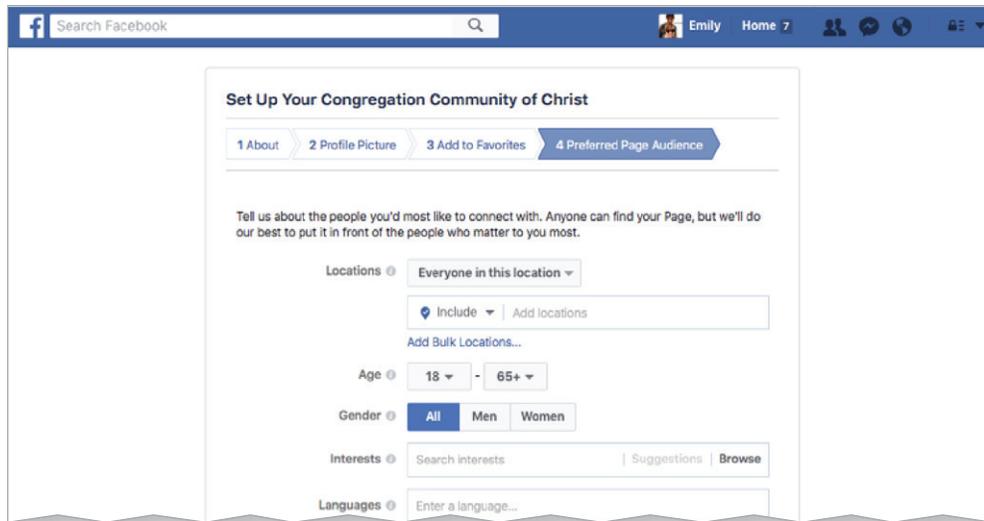
5. Upload a profile picture provided by the Communications Team. These images can be downloaded from Dropbox: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/0t1ijz7u4u3ggka/AADpuygVg9I-IJlwi6RXWJKqa?dl=0>.



6. You can then add this page to your list of Favorites, making it easily accessible on your Facebook home screen.

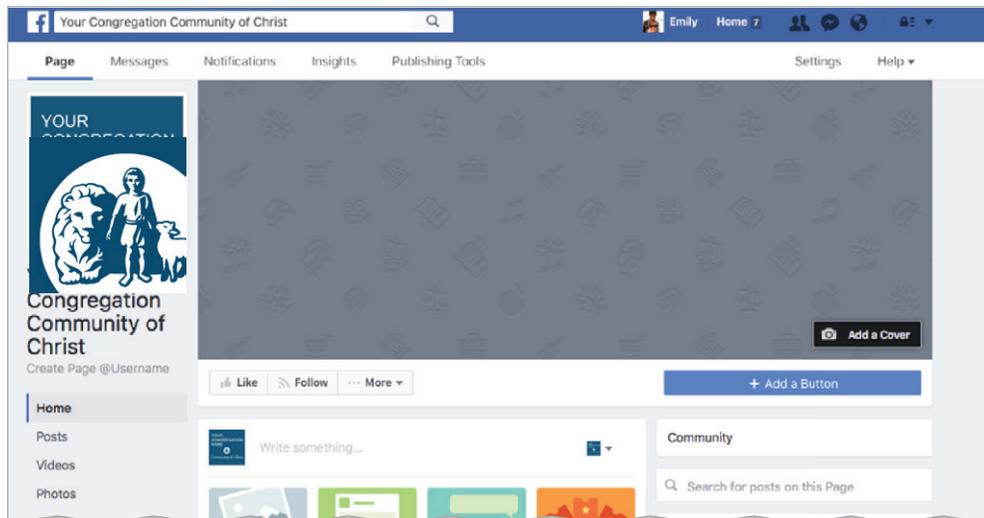


7. The next step is vital for reaching your community. You can add specifications for your preferred audience, including geographic location, age, gender, interests, and preferred language.

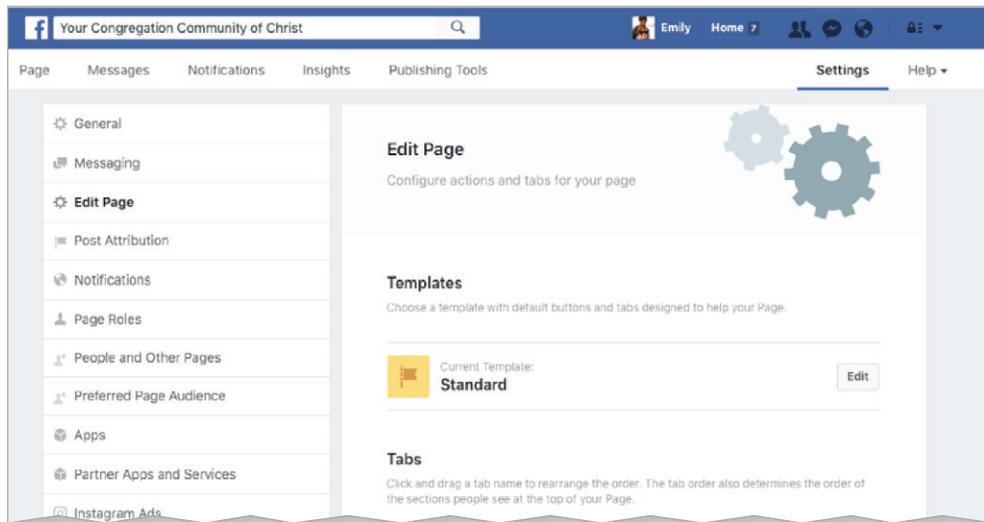


8. Upload a cover image, and use iconic imagery. It must adhere to Community of Christ's Visual Identity Standards, <https://www.dropbox.com/s/b8gh98haub4kgju/Visual%20Identity%20Standards.pdf?dl=0>.

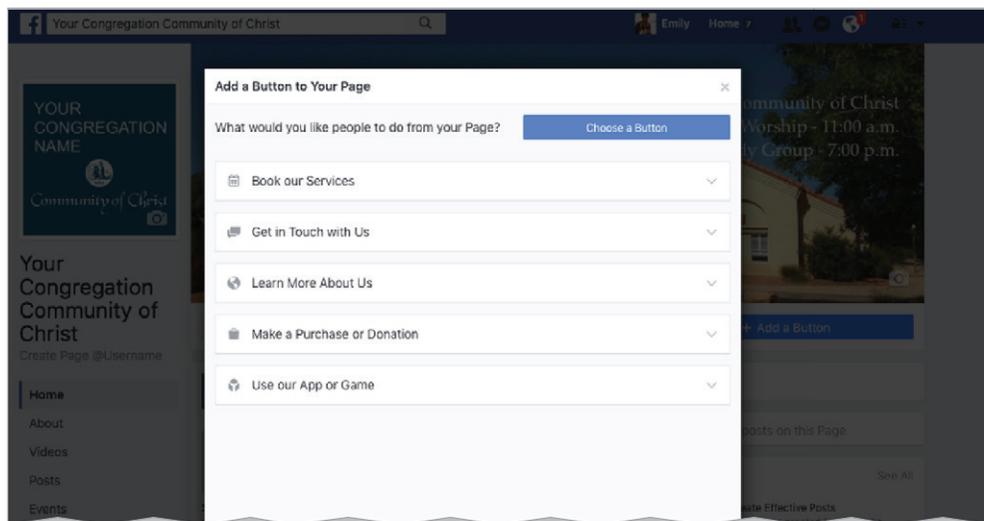
You can use an image provided by Integrated Communications that can be downloaded from Dropbox: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/3ehyfh5ypjvz8k/AABpp8XJpPDMC293nlyG2cAea?dl=0>.



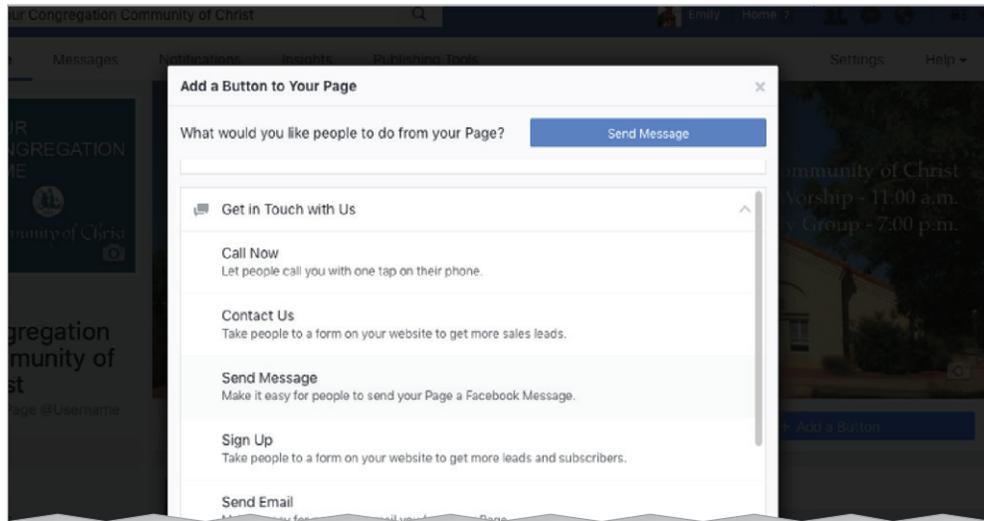
9. Click **Settings** in the top right corner to edit and manage your page. You can choose different templates for your page, and edit buttons and tabs.



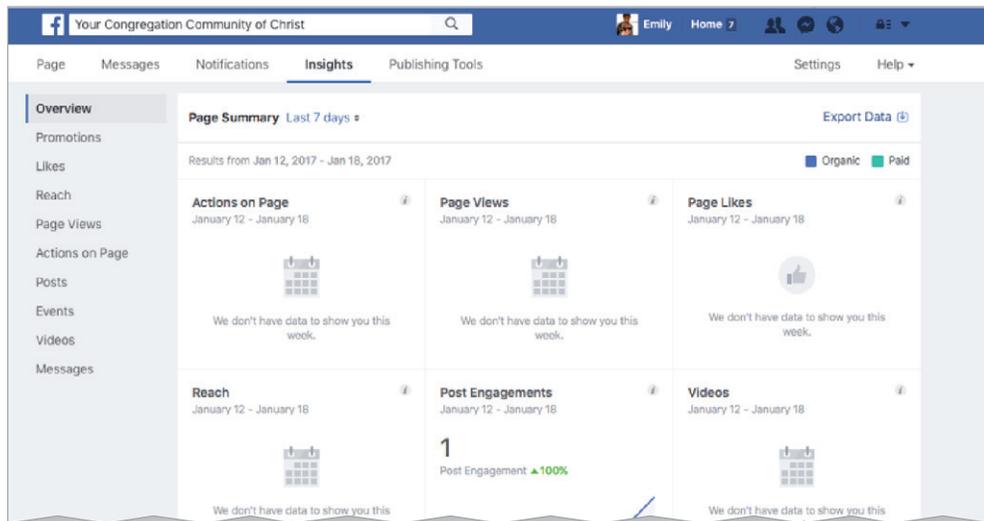
10. Click **Add a Button** at the top right side of the page as a way for users to communicate with you. You will be given several options for buttons.



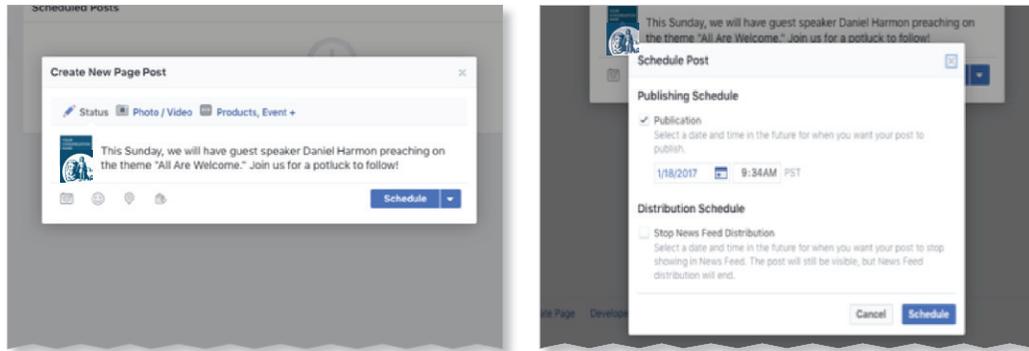
11. Consider choosing a button in the **Get in Touch with Us** category. You have several options. You may choose to link the button with an email address, or choose for the button to link with Facebook Messenger, so users can send your page a private message.



12. You can access statistics on how users are interacting with your page under **Insights** at the top of your page. This allows you to track engagement, views, likes, and clicks.



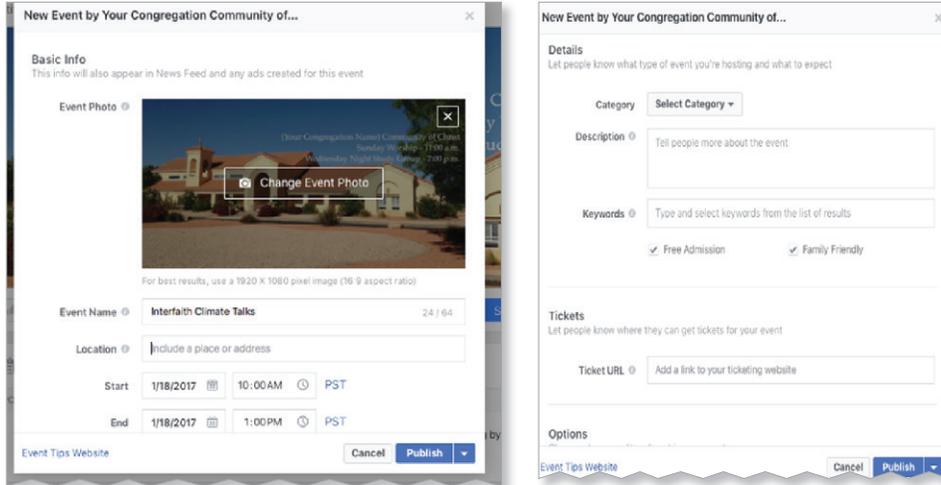
13. Under **Publishing Tools** you will find resources for managing your posts. For instance, you could schedule a post to be published at a certain time for a particular duration. This could announce events, weekly services or guest speakers.



14. Click **Create Event** to present information about happenings. This also allows users to let you know if they plan to attend.

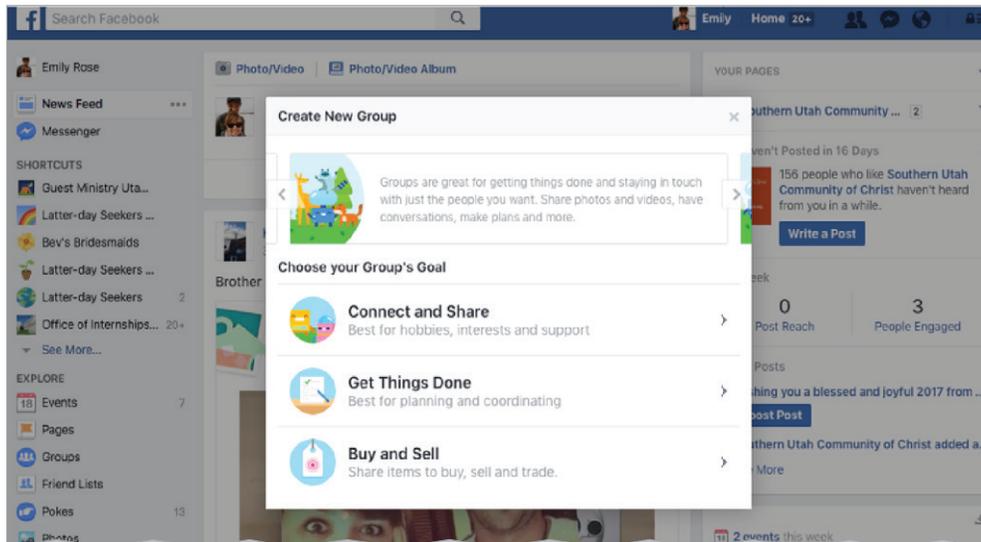


15. When you click **Create Event**, you will be taken to this screen. Choose a title and an event photo. Include the location and time for the event, and write a short description. Include words that make your event more searchable. Users can share your event with friends on their personal Facebook pages.

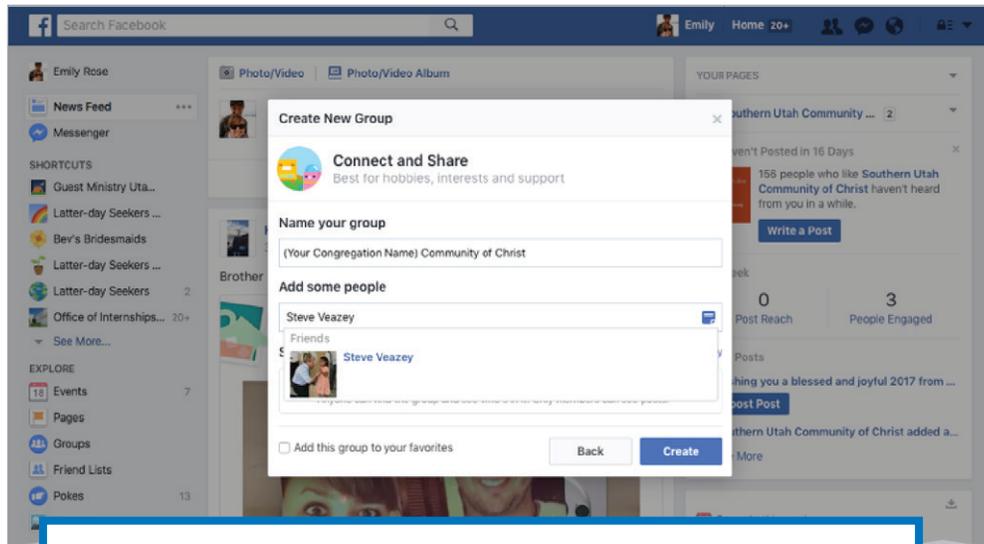


Creating a Facebook group

1. To create a Facebook group, click **Group** under **CREATE** in the bottom left corner of your home screen. You will be taken to a page that looks like this:

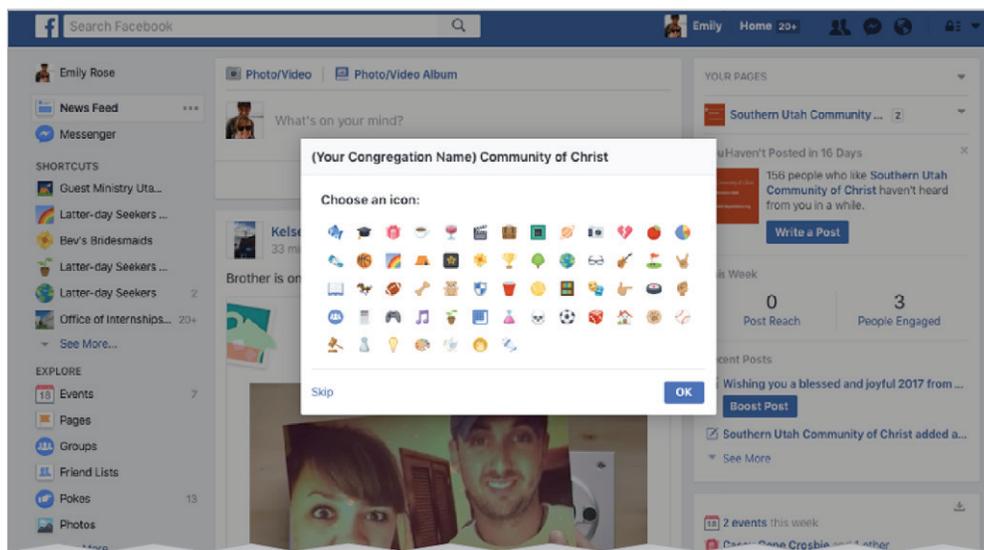


2. Click **Connect and Share**. You will be directed to this page. From here you can name your group, add people from your congregation, and select the kind of privacy you would like for your group.



Closed Group is the recommended setting—this way others can find your group but only members can read what is posted in your group.

3. You have the option of choosing an icon for your group. This is a fun addition that makes your group easier for people to find, but it is not necessary.



4. In the screen below, you can change your cover image, add a description, and post events and content. Unlike a Facebook page, however, your posts will not be public if you have a closed Facebook group.



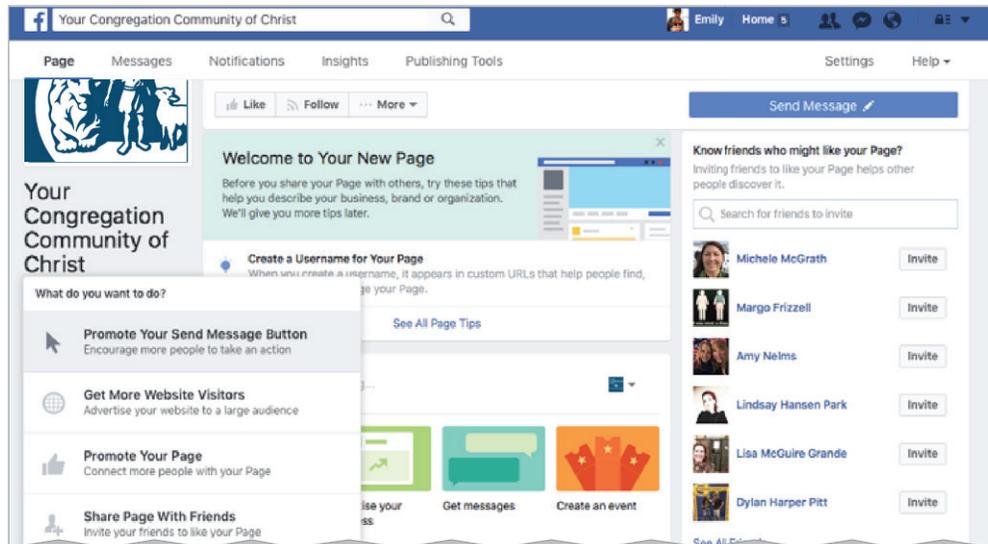
5. At the top of the right column you can add members of your congregation who are on Facebook. If you have visitors to your congregation who want to be included in the closed Facebook group, add them here as well.



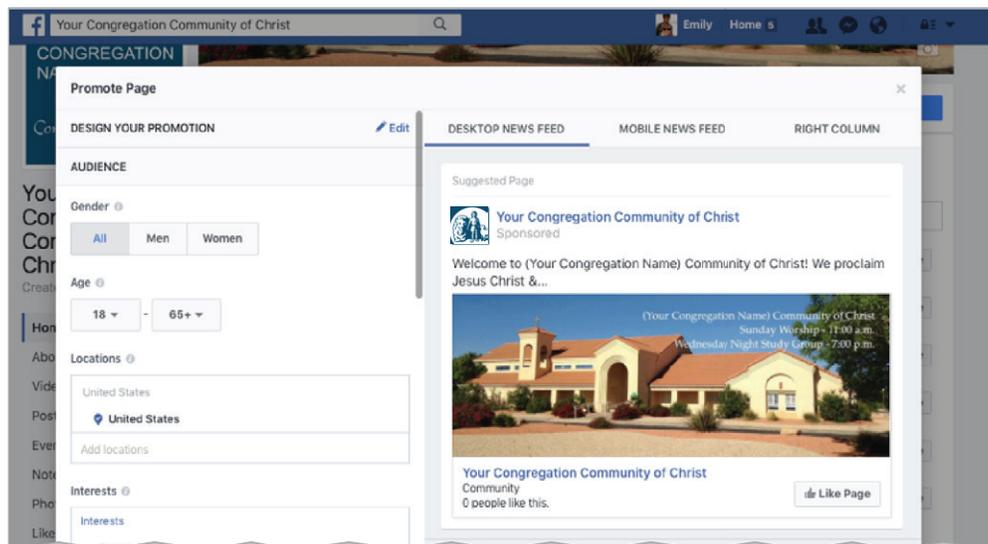
Introduction to Facebook advertising

Facebook advertising is an inexpensive way to reach a wide audience in your area. This is a space for experimentation. Try boosting your Facebook page for a week. You can set limits on what you would like to spend and who your target audience is.

1. Start by going to your congregation's Facebook page and clicking **Promote** at the bottom left corner. Then click **Promote Your Page**.

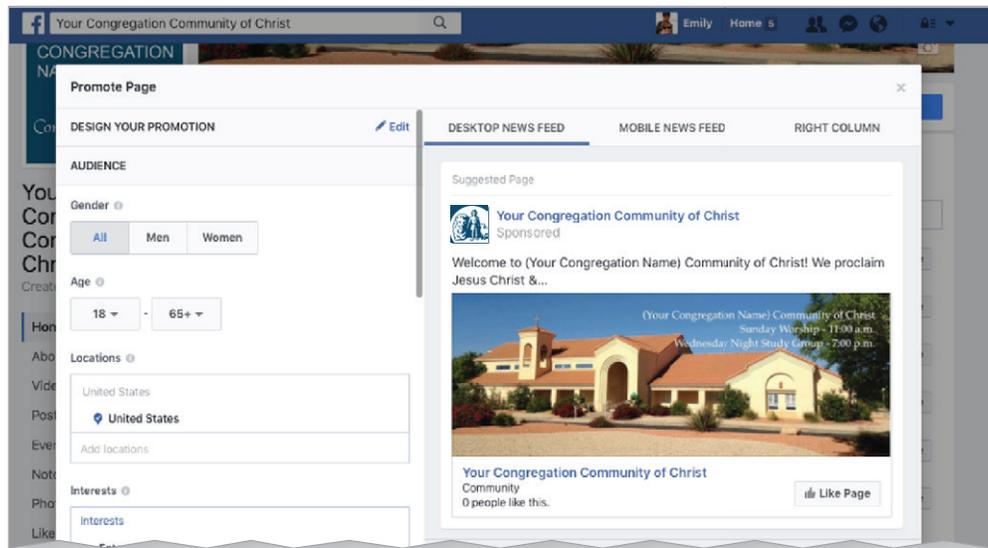


2. You will be taken to a page that looks like the one below. Choose the demographics of your target audience, and scroll down to see other options.



3. Set a budget and the duration of time you would like your ad to run. Facebook does not have a set price for ads. The price depends on a number of factors, such as target audience, industry, etc. You can spend a few cents per click on an ad, or you might spend a dollar per click on an ad.

Enter your payment information and click **Promote**. In coming days you will receive notifications and statistics about how people are engaging with your ad.



This is a description of how to promote your Facebook page. The same process can be used to boost specific posts on your page or specific events that you would like to advertise. This is a low-cost and low-risk way to get the word out about your congregation and start building relationships with people in your community.

More about Facebook ads: <https://www.facebook.com/business/ads-guide?tab0=Mobile%20News%20Feed>.

Case studies

These congregations and mission centers appropriately use Facebook.

Calgary, Alberta, congregation

<https://www.facebook.com/cofchristyyc>

Michigan USA Mission Center

<https://www.facebook.com/CofChristMI>

Oklahoma USA Mission Center

<https://www.facebook.com/cofchristokmc>