



www.dioceseofnewark.org/church-website-project

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<http://dioceseofnewark.org/geeks>

Resolution A025:

Challenges congregations to have an effective, dynamic, and current website by 2015.

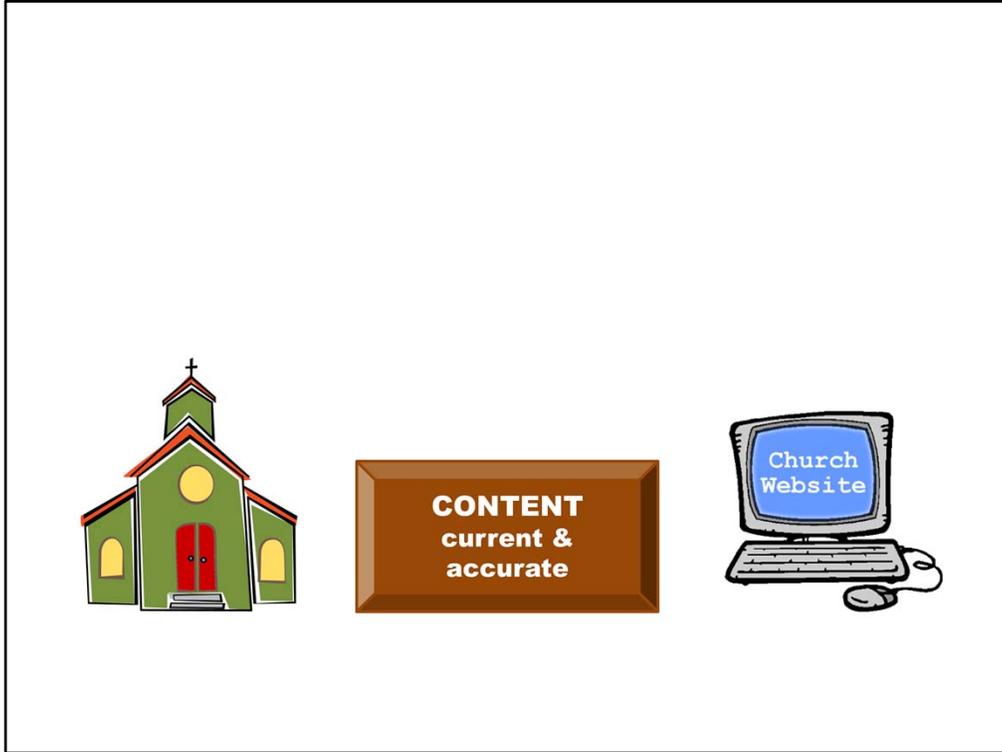
(Adopted at the 77th General Convention, June 2012)

80%

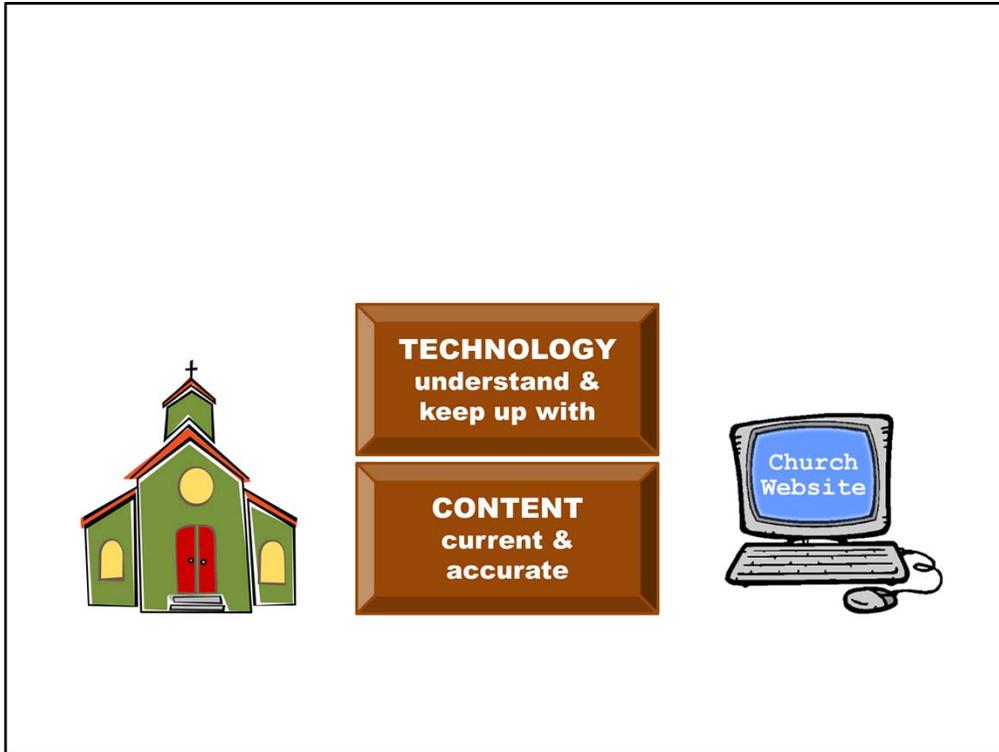
**of church shoppers
look at church websites**

Eighty percent of church shoppers look at church websites. What they want is to get an idea of what the congregation is like before they go there, and what's happening.

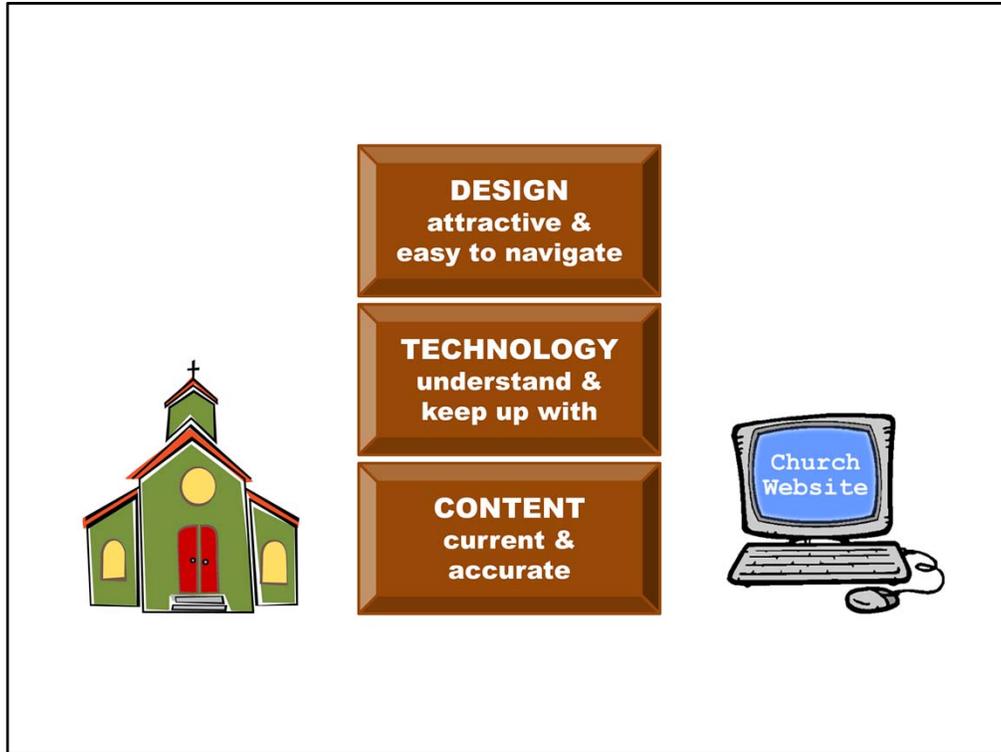
The single biggest turn-off is a website with old information, because it looks like nothing is happening, or else the congregation is out of touch.



The challenge is to keep your website current and accurate. But before you can do that...



...you need to have someone who understands website technology, and who also keeps up with it, because it's changing all the time.



You also need someone who knows how to design a website that's both attractive and easy to navigate.

For many churches, this can seem almost insurmountable.

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The Episcopal Diocese of Newark

Equipping congregations... Empowering people... Engaging the world... with the hope and justice of Jesus.

Bishop Beckwith
Ministries
Events
News & Media
Diocesan Directories
Diocesan Administration

Upcoming Events



Friday, Jan 27 - Saturday, Jan 28:
138th Annual Convention: "Living Into Christ's Mission"



Saturday, Jan 28:
Newark Episcopal Women's Commission Convention Breakfast



Friday, Feb 10 - Sunday, Feb 12:
Happening #25



Sunday, Feb 12:
Celebrate the Feast of Absalom Jones

Monday, Feb 20:
President's Day Observance, Episcopal House closed



"Happening - a Christian Experience" weekend for youth grades 9-12. Register by January 27! [Read more](#)

Montclair High School Makes Toni's Kitchen at St. Luke's its Curriculum and Cause

As many schools hold food drives this time of year, a group of students at Montclair High School are helping the hungry



On the Bishop's Blog

Living Into Christ's Mission



God so loved the world...



They all learn to survive

[More Bishop's blog posts](#)

dioceseofnewark.org

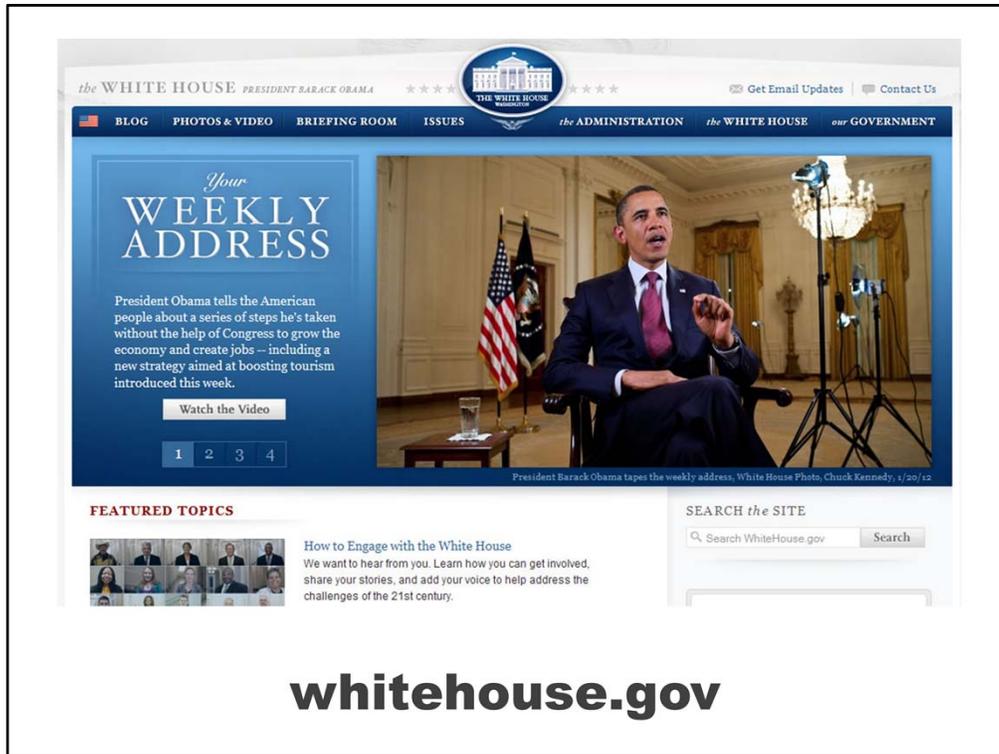
In September 2011, the diocese launched a new website.

When we were researching possible website technologies, one of our top priorities was finding one that would not only meet the diocese's needs, but could also be scaled for and shared with our churches.



The technology we selected is called Drupal, a free and very powerful content management system.

Some of the websites that use Drupal are...



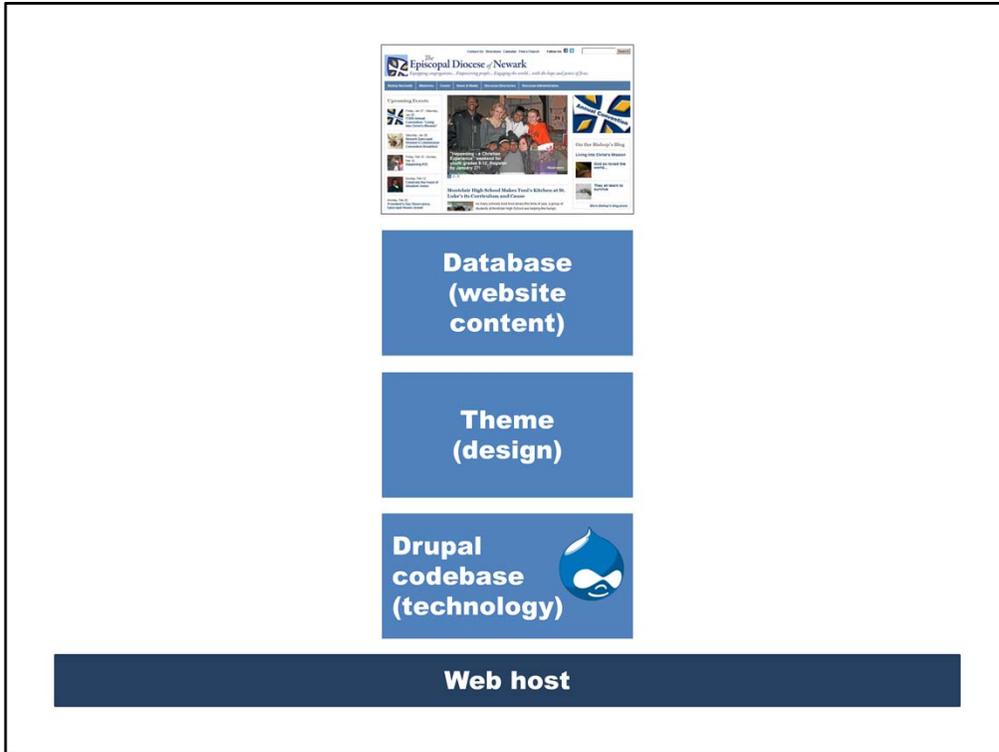
The redesigned White House website launched by the current administration...



...and the new Episcopal Church website launched in December 2011.



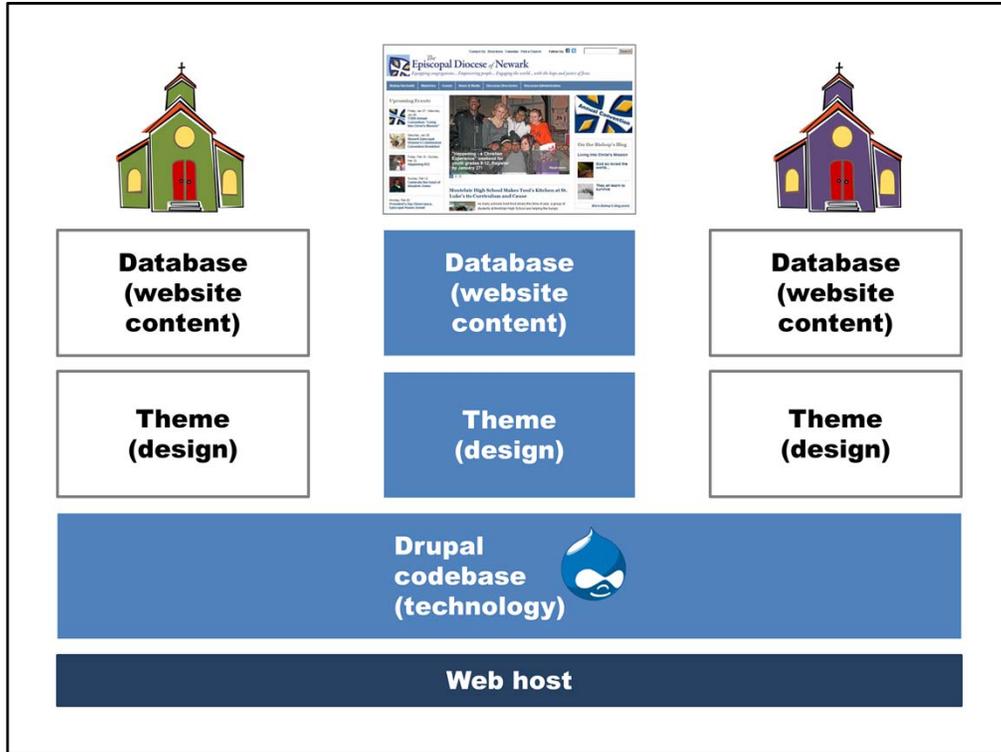
These are the components of the diocesan website.



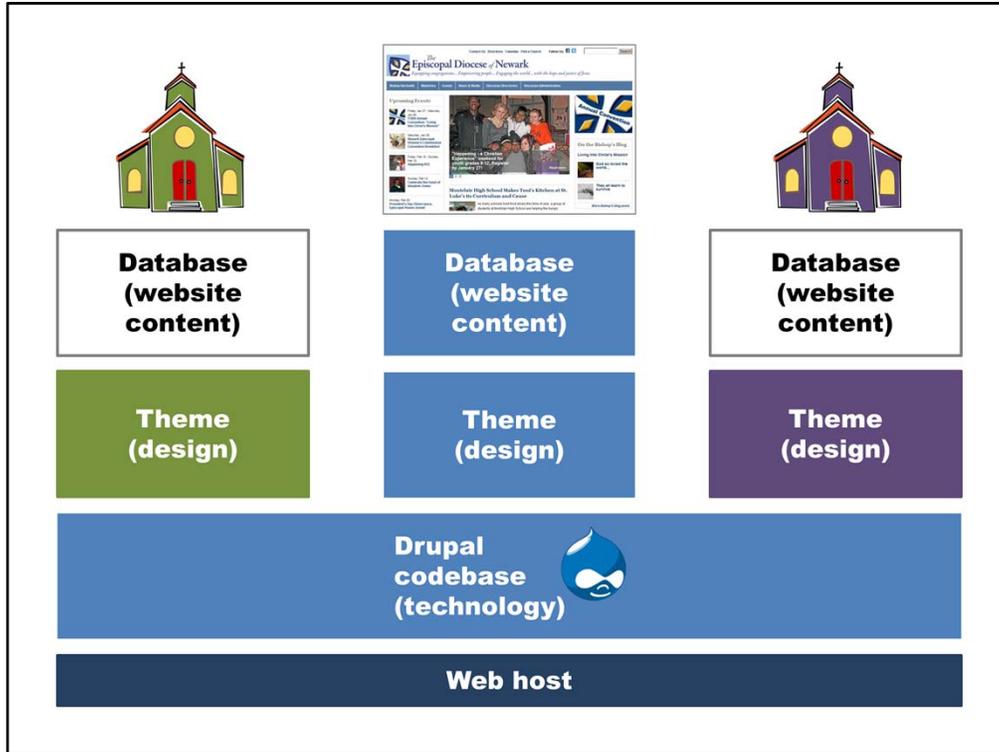
For many years the diocese has made web hosting available to our churches for free.



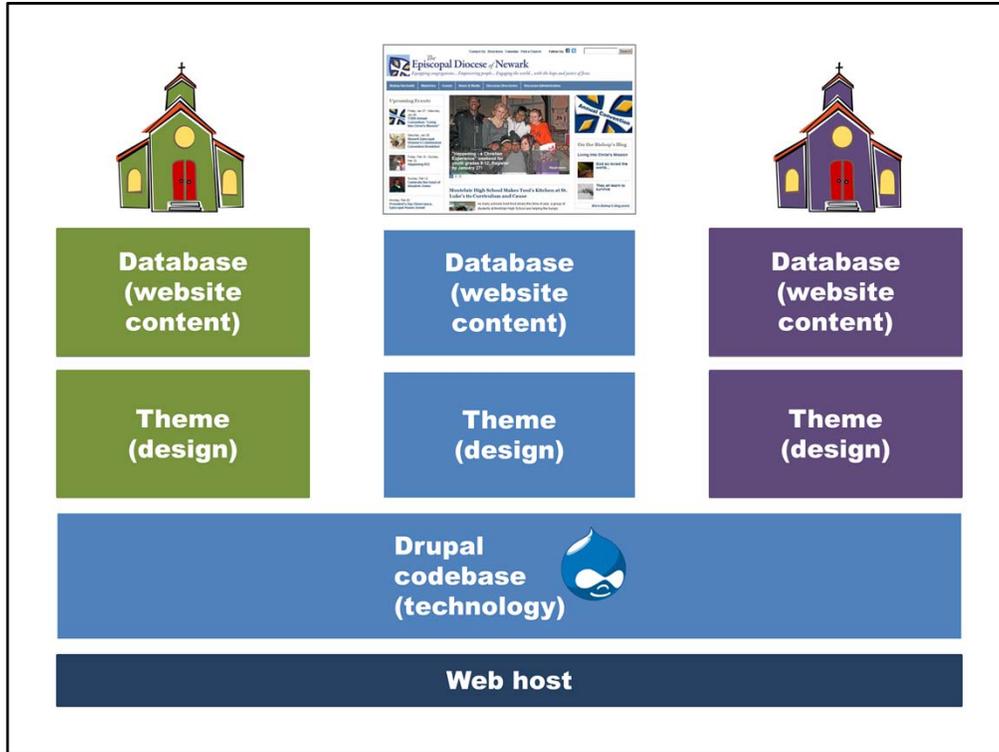
What Drupal will allow us to do for the first time is to share our website technology with any church who is using the diocesan web hosting.



A team will develop a basic theme and database scaled for churches.



A church using one of these websites will be able to work with us to customize the colors of their theme...



...and we will teach them how to populate their individual database with their unique website content, so they can tell the story of who they are on the World Wide Web.

Contact Us Directions Calendar Find a Church Follow Us:  



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[Bishop Beckwith](#) [Ministries](#) [Events](#) [News & Media](#) [Diocesan Directories](#) [Diocesan Administration](#)

Contributor Login

Username: *

Password: *

Once a church website has been set up and configured, posting content will be as simple as logging in...

The screenshot shows the 'Create Story' form on the website of The Episcopal Diocese of Newark. The header includes the diocese logo and name, with the tagline 'Equipping congregations... Empowering people... Engaging the world... with the hope and justice of Jesus.' Navigation links for 'Bishop Beckwith', 'Ministries', 'Events', 'News & Media', 'Diocesan Directories', and 'Diocesan Administration' are present. The form itself has the following sections:

- Title:** A text input field with an asterisk indicating it is required.
- By:** A text input field with a note: 'Do not put the word "By" in this field -- it is included automatically.'
- Main Image:** A section with a 'Browse...' button and an 'Upload' button. Below it, it states: 'Maximum file size: 8 MB' and 'Allowed extensions: png gif jpg jpeg'. A note below reads: 'This image will be used for the main story illustration, as well as the teaser and the dynamic display block on the front page. (Dynamic display block images must be at least 460 x 303 pixels.)'
- Body:** A rich text editor with a toolbar containing various icons for text formatting, alignment, and insertion. A checkbox 'Show summary in full view' is checked.

On the right side of the form, a user profile for **Michael Francaviglia** is displayed, with links for 'My account', 'Create content', 'My content status', 'Contributed content status', and 'Log out'.

... and filling out a form.

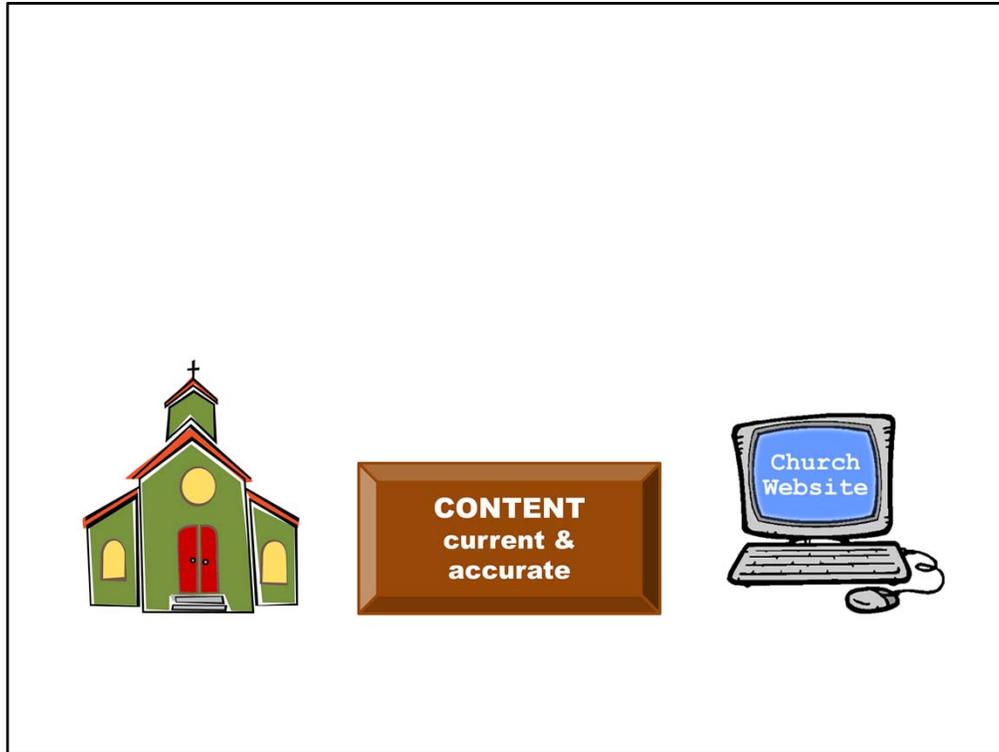
If you can use Microsoft Word, you can update one of these websites.

No special software is needed, and you can log in from any computer over the internet.

You can even assign different people permission to update different parts of website, with oversight and approval.



Drupal websites can also be fully integrated with social media such as Facebook and Twitter.



Because the church websites will be sharing the same codebase used by the diocesan website all technology updates will be handled automatically by the diocese.

Design will be handled by the customizable theme.

Many of the barriers to having an effective church website will disappear.

The only thing churches will need to worry about is updating their content. This will still take a commitment, but now is a lot less daunting.

Cost to churches:

\$0

Best of all, the diocese is able to offer this to our churches for free.

Sites launched through the Church Website Project *as of October 2014*

1. St. George's, Maplewood (beta test site) <http://stgeorges-maplewood.org>
2. St. Paul's, Chatham <http://stpaulschatham.org>
3. St. Matthew's, Paramus <http://stmatthewsparamus.org>
4. St. Agnes', Little Falls <http://stagneslf.org>
5. St. Dunstan's, Succasunna <http://stdunstansuccasunna.org>
6. St. Mary's, Sparta <http://stmaryssparta.org>
7. Trinity, Allendale <http://trinitybc.org>
8. St. John's, Montclair <http://stjmontclair.org>
9. Good Shepherd, Lincoln Park & Montville <http://goodshepherdepiscopal-mlp.org>
10. St. James', Upper Montclair <http://stjamesepiscopal.org>
11. St. Peter's, Mount Arlington <http://stpetersmtarlington.org>

Website Elements

Basic Elements

Page – Has static intro text; lists related dynamic elements based on tags. Front page has the option of a headline slideshow.

Content – Use content for longer text (with an optional illustration) such as articles, sermons or announcements.

Event – Use events for items to appear in the calendar (with an optional illustration).

Media – Use for your photo albums, videos and audio files.

People – Use people for clergy, staff, lay leaders and other people who work for the church. Includes contact information and a photo.

Resource – Use resource for downloadable files, such as PDF, Word, Excel, etc.

Advanced Elements

Blog entry – Use for individual blog posts (with an optional illustration).

Only recommended for users committed to posting at least twice a month.

Webform – Use for online forms users can fill out and submit. Submissions are recorded and accessible to authorized users.

Requires basic programming ability to set up.

Slideshow Image Content – Use for images to display in a slideshow in the body of the page.

Only if the headline slideshow is not being used.

Slideshow Image Header – Use for images to display in a slideshow in the header at the top of the page.

Only if the headline slideshow is not being used.

Example Tags

These are the tags used by St. George's, Maplewood, given as an example. Pages have a single tag; other elements may have as many tags as are applicable.

Baptism

Capital Campaign

Children & Youth

Choirs

Communications

Confirmation

Contact

Family Eucharist

Fellowship

Healing

Membership

Men's Group

Newcomers

Outreach

Parish Hall Rental

Sermon

Social Justice

Stewardship

Sunday School

Tenant

Weddings & Civil Unions

Worship

Youth

The Church Website Project: Due diligence before you start your new website

The Church Website Project will allow churches who are using the diocesan web hosting to have a Drupal website under their own domain name. The diocese will provide a basic website template, and a consultant from the Technology Committee who will help you configure your new website to your congregation's needs.

Before your congregation can be assigned a consultant to work with you on designing your new website, there are some things your congregation needs to do. When you have these items checked off, you will be ready to send the contact information for the lead person from your congregation (who will work with the consultant) to Nina Nicholson, Director of Communications & Technology, at nnicholson@dioceseofnewark.org.

Diocesan Requirements

These are the same as the requirements of the diocesan loans and grants committees.

We are in compliance with all the obligations and financial reporting requirements of the diocese:

_____ Current Parochial Report on file.

_____ Current Church Audit on file.

_____ Current Pledge Commitment Card on file.

_____ Current on clergy and lay pension and health care payments.

_____ The following people need to have taken the Safeguarding God's Children online training within the last five (5) years:

1. All clergy whether stipendiary, non-stipendiary, or otherwise who are engaged in ministry or service in the congregation.
2. All paid personnel whether employed in areas of ministry or other kinds of services in the congregation. For example, sexton, secretaries, youth minister, choir director, Christian Education Directors, school personnel, etc.
3. Volunteers who are working with or supervising children and/or youth in the congregational setting.

Communications & Technology Requirements

An explanation of each communications and technology requirement follows.

_____ Our congregation has committed itself to continuing high standards of communication.

_____ We have a team in place to work with the consultant.

_____ We have reviewed our ministries and gathered our website content.

_____ We are establishing a web policy.

_____ We have made a plan to keep the website current.

_____ We either do not own a domain name, or have our domain name along with the administrative login needed to redirect it to the new website.

Having a website and maintaining it properly is a necessary part of communication in the 21st century. **Your congregation needs to commit itself to continuing high standards of communication.** This will mean a commitment on the part of the clergy, the wardens and the vestry to support the work of this project now and into the future. This is not a one-time promise. It is suggested that a vestry responsibility for communication in general and the website in particular be discussed and formally established. Further, it is necessary that one person on the vestry be given the oversight and authority to make decisions, allocate resources, and see that the work that needs to be done is, in fact, carried through. This is the step that will ensure that when an individual is transferred, the clergy leaves, or the wardens and vestry change, the website will still continue to be the visible sign of the church in cyberspace. The passwords will not disappear and the ownership of the website will not be in question. Everything will be owned by the clergy, wardens and vestry, not a single person.

Find the people resources you need to make this project work. This website project will have two stages. In the first stage the new site will be set up and configured. In the second stage it will be maintained and continue to grow. At the beginning you will have a consultant who has all the technical skills to set up your site. You will not need to have a technology professional to do this; that is the role of the consultant. **You will need someone with the knowledge and the authority to make decisions to work with the consultant to set everything in place.** This might be your vestry liaison. You may choose to have a small committee including your clergy, your vestry liaison, and (if available) members with artistic or technical skill. **You will also need someone who can be trained to work with the new system and teach it to the others in the congregation or staff who will be doing the on-going maintenance.** Again, a technology professional is not required, just someone who is familiar with computers and word-processing software who is willing to learn something new. Your people resources should include several different people and they may have over-lapping roles; it may include clergy, but should not rely solely upon them.

Review your ministries. Your website will tell the world who you are and what you are doing. The things that should stand out include when and where you worship and what you are doing as the hands and feet of Jesus in the world. Strangers who visit your site are looking for that information, along with an answer to the question “Will I find people like me if I go there?”

The content you can post on your website which conveys this includes:

- Worship schedule and directions.
- Clergy, staff and lay leader headshots, contact information and areas of oversight.
- Calendar events.
- Ministry descriptions that are engaging and brief.
- Longer text content such as sermons, articles or announcements.
- Digital photographs for both page illustrations and online albums.
- (Optional) A blog by a clergy person, lay leader, or a group – BUT only if the blogger is willing and able to post at least twice a month. A blog by minors, such as a youth group blog, must have designated adult oversight.

Other member-specific content you may want to add includes:

- Downloadable resources, such as ministry schedules and forms in PDF format.
- Online forms, such as for event registration.

Sort that all out and collect text content together in electronic format (word or text documents). Photos should be the unedited, original JPG files as they came off the camera.

While you are gathering photos and information, you should also **think about your web policy** around names, photos and contact information for people. If you decide on a website permission form, get it going and get the releases you will need to make your site. As an example, all Diocese of Newark registration forms for youth events include this clause:

I give my permission for photographs and/or video footage of my child to be used by the Diocese of Newark for promotional purposes (brochures, on diocesan websites, promotional videos, presentations, etc).

When you put together the list of the things/pages/features you want, remember that it will be your job to maintain this and keep it current. It's perfectly OK – in fact, it's strongly recommended – to start with a small website that you can grow over time. For example, if you want a Youth Group but don't have any children over the age of 8, you probably don't need a Youth Group page just yet, but you may want to make a page for "Children and Youth Ministry" rather than just "Sunday School." Set up a plan for who will update which parts of content on what schedule. If no one is responsible or anyone could do it, no one will actually do it after the first month.

One minor technical detail to take care of is **the status of your domain name**. If you don't have one, that is fine. Domain names can be acquired inexpensively, and your consultant will work with you to do this. If you do have one, however, it will need to be changed to direct to the new website when it is completed. Someone "owns" that domain name and has the administrative login to it. You need to find that person, obtain the administrative login and have it available for your consultant.

Suggested reading: This article by our friends at the United Methodist Church is recommended reading for all churches contemplating a website: ***Online 'shopping': Church websites keep visitors in mind*** (<http://www.umportal.org/article.asp?id=7222>)

Questions? Please contact Nina Nicholson, Director of Communications & Technology, at nnicholson@dioceseofnewark.org or 973-430-9907.

