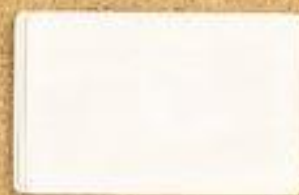


LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY IN THE 21ST CHURCH SCHOOL

Rev. David L. Ferguson

What does the 21st Century
Church School look like?



Why Technology in the 21st Century Church School?

The church school of the 21st-century if it is to survive it is going to require that the church be in constant contact and communication with this members.

Technology has made this very easy as 95% of members have at least a mobile phone, tablet or computer.

Technology expands the reach of the church and pastor beyond the traditional Sunday morning church school service. Facilitating the constant infusion of God and his word on a daily basis

The church infrastructure must have a technological component to be relevant in today's world

| It's Here To Stay?

Whether you like it or not, technology is here to stay. If your church doesn't use or have a plan to use technology, it will become a religious dinosaur

There are some wonderful benefits of technology that enable the mission of the church.

Use technology in your church to enable Communication, Community, Discipleship and Giving.

Technology Enables Communication

Ongoing communication through technology helps the mission of the church school. Whatever your mission is, technology can help.

Through social media technology, we can easily communicate directly with the people in our congregations, throughout the day and week. We can pastor our church all throughout the week through social media and digital technology.

Technology enables the congregation easily to have direct communication with the pastor, and enables the pastor to have communication with the members on a broader and a clearer scale.

Technology Enables Community

He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. Mark 16:15

Technology allows a greater sense of community that doesn't demand proximity. Unlike the church of yesterday, Proximity isn't required for community. For example, you can sit next to each other week after week and never talk. But through technology, people in our church are praying for each other thanks to our church Facebook page. Sometimes they already know each other, but at other times they meet one another through social media applications such as Facebook.

Social media is where younger generations are interacting. It's the new marketplace. It may be unnatural for past generations, but it is how community for younger people is now started and developed. We can pastor our church all throughout the week through social media and digital technology. Of course, true community requires feet and faces and not just electrons and avatars. But those electrons and avatars can be tools to bring people into closer community with feet and faces.

This is a big shift in how we interact, but we have to use it if we want to enable community for the sake of the mission of the church.

Technology Enables Online Giving

- As online giving grows, many churches are looking at programs that would give their members a way to donate virtually. For small- and mid-sized churches, though, finding the right online giving program is often challenging. There is a plethora of choices, but many solutions' fees are too large for smaller churches. Setup, monthly and transaction fees would eat up a significant portion of any donations made online. If your church is relatively small and looking for an online giving solution, though, there are a few low-cost options. Here are four that are worth looking into.
- Paypal Donations
- Easytithe
- GivingTools.com
- Continue to Give

Technology Enables Discipleship

Churches are developing apps where people can actually access the church school and sermon outlines, and use their phones or iPads to follow along and take notes. Technology enables members and attendees to enhance their discipleship experience at church school.

Our Monday morning prayer line is recorded on Freeconferencecall.com and a link is texted to the entire membership after the call so that all members can access the recorded conference call.

All of these are tools to enhance discipleship. Technology, though, is not the goal. The goal is to enable the church's mission to make disciples of all people groups.

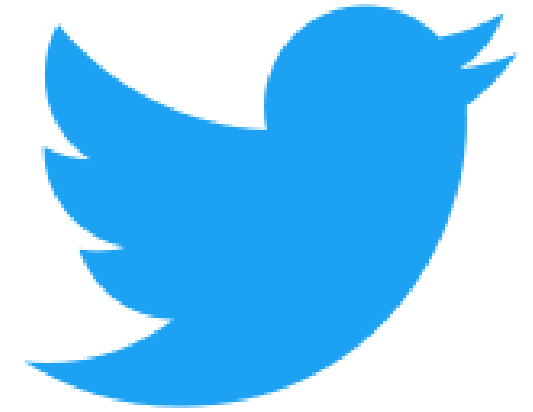
Social Media

Three of the most common social media applications today are Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Your church can use a Facebook page to communicate with members and visitors.

Outreach events can be captured and posted on the page so that each member with a Facebook account can view outreach opportunities.

Recorded sermons can be posted to the Facebook page for subsequent viewing.



Video Conferencing

- Video Conferencing can be used to have an interactive Church School from the comfort of each member's home. You can display Power Point presentations and members can ask questions via a conference line or they may type a question.
- Video Conferencing tools are designed for personal and corporate collaboration. They are used to connect to others, typically through the internet, and allows you to communicate with audio, video, text chat, file sharing, etc.
- Some of the more common online meeting tools are:
 - Freeconferencecall.com
 - Webex
 - Join.me
 - GoToMeeting

21st Century Church Must Have

- Email Account
- Website
- Facebook Page
- Twitter
- Instagram
- Conference Call Line
- Mass texting/email capability

If your church doesn't have at least two of these, it isn't representative of a 21st Century Church.