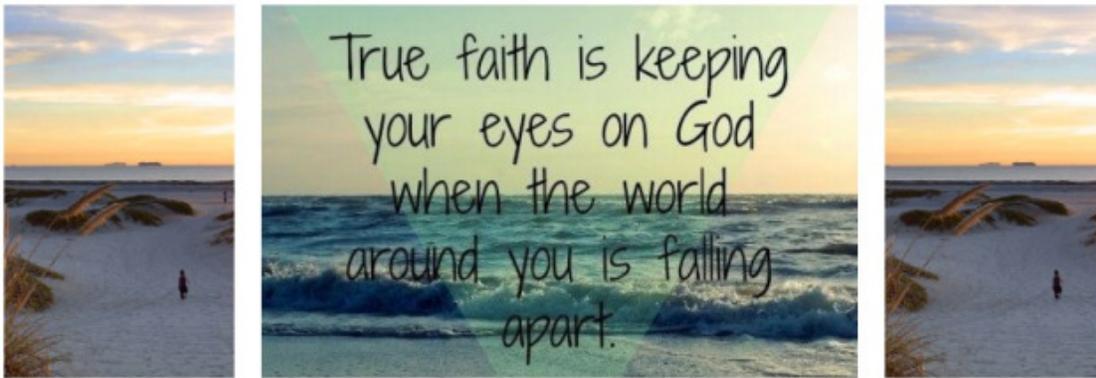


From: Rev. Cheryl <cgaver@cogeco.ca>
Sent: August 28, 2020 4:40 PM
To: cgaver@cogeco.ca
Subject: Animator's September Newsletter for Seaway-Glengarry

Volume IV | September 2020



Seaway-Glengarry Newsletter for September

Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving.
(Albert Einstein)

Hi everyone

As we head back into the new school year, many of us are wondering how to re-open safely, and re-build safely. We are used to focusing on Sunday services and offering mid-week activities that may be led by ourselves or others but our primary focus has always been Sunday worship (and important life events).



The pandemic has forced us to re-examine what we are doing, how we are doing it, and what else can we be doing? If people are not comfortable returning to in-person Sunday worship, how then can we engage them? If new people (including shut-ins) have joined our online services, how can we build on that? How do we create relationships in a virtual setting that are more than virtual relationships?

- **What happens with our Sunday School and Youth Groups?**
- **How can we grow our people without in-person events and activities?**
- **What new *Leading with Care* guidelines do we need to implement?**

Communication is so important. We can't rely on bulletins to get the message out right now. While some churches have weekly newsletters, most don't. How do we communicate with our folk? How do we reach those who aren't computer-savvy or who may not even have computers?

The pandemic is pushing us into a new form of ministry. We're still learning what this means. This is

where outside organizations and resources can help. For example, **Facebook** has created a "[Faith on Facebook Resource Hub](#)" with suggestions and resources. Check it out!

Granted, many organizations have services or products they want you to subscribe to or buy but, many are making good information available free of charge. Take advantage of it. Last month, I talked about *Text-In-Church*, the *Bible Project*, and other resources. This month, I focus on *Sharefaith*. Some points they highlighted:

- **Keep families engaged and in the know.** People feel isolated from their normal groups. Reach out in different ways to let them know the church has not forgotten them.
- **Develop flexible systems.** Don't try to have one set of curriculum that you deliver in-person but another set that you use online. Find material that can be customized across platforms (in-person, paper copies, digital versions, etc.)
- **Grow your volunteer base.** See this "new normal" as an **opportunity** for new directions and new growth. You can't do everything yourself. The minister's job is to focus on God's message, not on camera angles, sound quality and film editing. What an opportunity to grow your volunteer base!

Welcome to the 21st century!

Cheryl
Presbytery Ministry Animator
(<https://www.cherylgaver.ca/PMA/>)

(And here is the link to this newsletter's [PDF](#)).



"Back to Church in the Fall" - ShareFaith Webinar

Sharefaith.com recently held a webinar on "Back to Church in the Fall". Of course, they are trying to sell subscriptions for their services but they also stressed a number of points that are valid regardless of whether or not you buy their products. Thought I'd share some of these with you along with my thoughts.



Church in September 2020 is radically different from church in September 2019 (or even January 2020). Most of us considered Sunday morning worship in the sanctuary as our primary form of contact with our members.

Some of us had websites (more or less current). Some of us had Facebook pages. A few of us even livestreamed services but those were generally of secondary importance. Sunday morning in-person contact was where our focus was directed; with other in-person contact (hospitals, etc.) being our secondary focus. Outreach programs were geared to bringing visitors into church buildings.

With the pandemic and church building closures, all that has changed. Church buildings may have re-opened and we may be holding Sunday services once more, but chances are that they are no longer the only or even the primary focus of our attention.

(The chart below is based on what I think - not from Sharefaith)

Pre-Pandemic

- Sunday morning in-person worship
- Web presence (current or not)
- Facebook presence (current or not)
- Getting visitors into the church building (& body) is a challenge

Pandemic & Post-Pandemic

- "Sunday" morning online worship
- Sunday morning in-person worship
- Facebook presence (current & inviting)
- Web presence (current but inviting?)
- Reaching members is a challenge
- Reaching newcomers also a challenge



5 milliseconds?

Websites

Clarify your story.

Who are You? Can visitors find out who you are and whether they might be a fit in

Anticipate your visitor. Place yourself as a visitor. Can you easily find what you are looking for ... say within a couple of clicks?

Lead users on a journey. Think this referred to making it easy for visitors to find out the latest news. *You might also include a "COVID-19" alert button* that outlines your safety protocols. You might also have a welcome card on your website.

Make livestream (or pre-recorded services) easy to find. You should either put it on the home page or have an easy-to-see link to it on the home page.

Use pictures of your people. Pictures of an church building - or empty sanctuary - may look great but what would visitors think if they don't see any people around?

Most Importantly

Pray. Keep your own relationship with God on track. Trust in God's guidance and God's Spirit..

Livestreaming / Pre-Recorded

Self-Conscious? No one likes seeing themselves on a screen. You probably look better than you think.

Clerical Collar, Gowns, Suit?

- If you are live-streaming the service, wear what you usually wear - that's what people expect to see.
- If you aren't using a mask, take time to say why not (if live-streaming from church with others present).
- If you are recording from your home, wear what you generally wear at home - (clean, neat and proper is fine though).
- If you are in an informal setting, keep it informal. Wear your clerical collar if you must but don't wear a jacket as well.

Start Small. Looking at what some congregations do can be intimidating. They have likely been at it for a while and have learned & grown along the way. Don't try to copy them. Start small with what you know.

Walk Visitors Through. Don't say "Check our website or Facebook page" without giving them the actual address. Don't say, "Give through our website" without telling them where to find the "donate" button.

Presbytery of Seaway-Glengarry/Ottawa | c/o Rev. Dr. Cheryl Gaver, 276-751, Prescott, Ontario K0E 1T0 Canada

[Unsubscribe {recipient's email}](#)

[Update Profile](#) | [About our service provider](#)

Sent by cgaver@cogeco.ca powered by



Try email marketing for free today!

THIS IS A TEST EMAIL ONLY.

This email was sent by the author for the sole purpose of testing a draft message. If you believe you have received the message in error, please contact the author by replying to this message. Constant Contact takes reports of abuse very seriously. If you wish to report abuse, please forward this message to abuse@constantcontact.com.

