

Stop the Chaos: The Messaging Calendar That Will Save Your Church Comms Sanity

A communicator's
guide to strategic
church comms

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If you're reading this, you're probably experiencing one (or all) of these scenarios:

- You're scrambling every week trying to figure out what to post on social media
- Your pastor keeps coming to you with last-minute announcement requests
- You're promoting five different things at once and nothing is getting traction
- People in your congregation say they "didn't know" about something you promoted three times
- You feel like you're just reacting to whoever is loudest on staff rather than being strategic
- You're exhausted from the constant firefighting mode
- Your pastor expects you to read their mind about what matters most

Here's what I want you to hear: If your church doesn't have a messaging calendar, you're flying blind as a communicator and you're at risk of being seen as "non-essential" by your leadership.

What is a Messaging Calendar and Why Do You Need One?

The Strategic Calendar vs. The Messaging Calendar

Before we go further, let's clarify an important distinction:

Strategic Calendar = What matters most, and when

Messaging Calendar = How and where you'll communicate it

If you skip straight to messaging ("Oh, we need an email. We need a social post."), you're actually skipping the most important part. You'll end up promoting whoever is loudest on your staff rather than what's most strategic for your church.

A strategic calendar includes things like:

- Annual church goals and priorities
- Sermon series plans
- Major events and campaigns
- Ministry launches
- Budget/giving campaigns

A messaging calendar takes that strategic calendar and answers:

- What's the one main thing we're saying this month?
- How will we communicate it across different channels?

- How do we tie everything back to our core message?

Here's What a Messaging Calendar Does for You:

1. Prevents Chaos

A messaging calendar is high-level. It tells you WHAT to say, not the tactical details of HOW to say it (that's what a communications calendar is for). Without a messaging calendar, you end up with random messages that don't connect to anything. One week you're promoting an event, the next week you're talking about serving, then you're asking for donations, and none of it ties together. Your people tune out because there's no through-line. A messaging calendar gives you that through-line so when it comes time to get tactical (writing emails, creating posts, planning announcements), you already know what you're saying and why.

2. Creates Consistency Without Redundancy

You don't want to copy-paste the same message everywhere. A messaging calendar helps you say the same core message in different ways across different channels—email, social, stage announcements, website—without being repetitive.

3. Gives You Autonomy and Time Back

When you build a messaging calendar with your pastor and leadership team, leadership comes in at the front and says, "Here's what we're going to say," and you work collaboratively. But then leadership doesn't have to be so involved in the weeds (which takes away from their time), and you get the autonomy to run with the plan within the parameters leadership has decided.

4. Makes You a Strategic Partner, Not Just a Service Department

This is the hill I will die on: communications is a strategic function of a church. Communications is not going to get you what you want from it if it is just a service department. You will have burnout upon burnout if all you're doing is reacting to requests.

The Most Important Principle

The sermon series and what your pastor is teaching from the Word of God should always come first. That will often determine or shape what you will say from a messaging stand point. It should never be the other way around.

Your messaging calendar can flow from your teaching calendar. When you do this well, everything you communicate reinforces what people are hearing on Sunday mornings, which helps them actually remember it and live it out.

How to Build Your DIY Messaging Calendar

Step 1: Make Sure Your Church Has a Strategic Calendar First (If You Don't, Start Here)

You cannot build a messaging calendar without a strategic calendar. If your church doesn't have one yet, this is where you need to advocate for leadership to create one. They need to map out:

- What are our church's top 3-5 priorities this year?
- What sermon series are planned for the next 12 months?
- What major events, campaigns, or ministry launches are happening?
- What are our goals? (Example: Increase volunteers by 10%, launch a new discipleship pathway, reach more families in our community)

Once your church has this, you're ready to build your messaging calendar.

Step 2: Schedule a Messaging Calendar Meeting with Your Pastor/Leadership Team

You need to initiate this meeting. Don't wait for your pastor to come to you. This is part of being a strategic partner.

Who should be in the room?

- Lead Pastor
- You (Communications Director/Manager/Volunteer)
- Executive Pastor (if you have one)
- Anyone else who makes decisions about church priorities (Be careful here, though. This can go sideways quickly if everyone is invited. Less is more.)

How long should the meeting be?

Plan for 1.5–2 hours. You need enough time to actually think through 3–12 months of messaging.

Email template to request this meeting:

Hi [Pastor's name],

I'd like to set up a time for us to meet and discuss the priorities of our church so that we can build a messaging calendar together for the next [3–12 months]. Like you, I want to ensure our message resonates with our congregation and our community. In order to do that well, we need to be aligned on what it is we're even trying to say.

Would you be up for a 1.5–2 hour strategic planning session where we identify our priorities and what we will communicate each month? I can plan social media posts, emails, and content all day long, but if our message isn't tied to our sermon series and strategic goals, it won't actually help us accomplish what God is calling us to do.

I want to partner with you to determine our messaging strategy so that we're aligned on what we are going to say. This will also help me work more efficiently because I'll know what we're building toward each month instead of just reacting to requests.

Here are some times I'm available over the next few weeks. Let me know what works for you and I'll send an invite with an agenda. [Insert available times.]

[Your name]

Step 3: Prepare for the Meeting

Create an agenda and send it with the calendar invite. Here's what to include on that calendar invite:

Meeting Agenda: See below (provide a high-level overview for the calendar invite)

Purpose: Align on church priorities and create a messaging calendar for the next [3–12 months].

What to bring:

- Strategic calendar (sermon series, major events, ministry goals)
- Any upcoming campaigns or initiatives
- Your church's mission/vision statements

Agenda:

1. Review the strategic calendar (15 minutes)

Confirm sermon series, events, goals, and priorities are still on track.

2. Discuss what communications should accomplish (10 minutes)

What role does communication play at our church?

- Inform our congregation of what's happening
- Showcase the heart of our church through storytelling
- Equip people to live out their faith in everyday life
- Encourage people in their walk with Christ
- Connect people to community and ministry opportunities

3. Review audience segments (10 minutes)

Who are we communicating to?

- Current members
- Regular attenders
- First-time guests
- Families/parents
- Students/youth
- Volunteers
- Community members (not yet attending)
- Identify desired outcomes (15 minutes)

4. What do we hope communication accomplishes? (10 minutes) Examples:

- Our people understand what we're teaching from God's Word and how to apply it
- Our people feel connected to the life and heart of our church
- Our people are growing in their faith and serving in their God-given calling
- New people feel welcomed and know how to take next steps

5. Build the messaging calendar (60–90 minutes)

For each month, decide (or review):

- What will the sermon focus be this month?
- What's the ONE main message we want to communicate?
- What events/campaigns support that message?
- What creative ideas could we use to communicate it?

Step 4: Facilitate the Meeting

Your job during this meeting is to help leadership think through the question: "What are we trying to SAY?"

The key is helping your pastor understand that you should be saying ONE thing ALL month, to ALL audiences, but in a way that makes sense for each ministry and audience.

Here's why: If you send several different messages in a month, your congregation will get confused.

You want them to easily understand who you are as a church and what God is calling you to. But if you consistently communicate one core message while highlighting different ministries, events, and needs, you're making things simple for them. A confused congregation is a disengaged congregation.

Important: The sermon series should drive the messaging. Start with "What are we teaching from God's Word this month?" and let that determine your emphasis.

Step 5: After the Meeting—Set Regular Check-ins

Don't let this be a "one and done" meeting. Set up regular touchpoints (weekly or monthly) where you and leadership check in together. You're both operating from the same plan: "Remember when

we decided in April we're going to be saying this? Here's how we're doing this." Everybody's operating from that same playing field.

This also creates space for you to say, "Hey, if we move forward with this decision, here's what we'll be communicating to our people. Is that what we want?" Often leaders say, "Oh no, that's not at all what I intended," and they can rework it before it goes out.

You need to speak into decisions early, not after they've already been made. That's what makes you a strategic partner rather than just reactive.

Example: How This Works in Practice

Let's say your messaging emphasis for July is "You are sent" and your pastor is launching a sermon series called "You Are Sent" based on the book of Acts.

Here's how you'd communicate that ONE message across different channels without being repetitive while still bringing attention to various ministries and events:

Youth Ministry Email:

"Teens—who in your life has God placed in your path? Who have you been sent to in your local schools? Invite them to this pool party on July 20."

Equipping Class Announcement:

"We're launching a new equipping class to help you live out your calling in everyday life. Wherever God has sent you—your workplace, your neighborhood, your school—you can make a difference."

Social Media Post:

Share a story of a church member living on mission in their everyday life with the caption: "You are sent. Where has God placed you this week?"

Men's Ministry Event:

"Where has God sent you to serve? Join us as we serve with Men of Valor this month and live out what it means to be sent."

See how the core message stays the same, but you're saying it in fresh ways that connect to each specific event or ministry?

The DIY Messaging Calendar Template

How to Use This Template

Step 1: Make a copy of this and save it somewhere you'll actually use it (Google Docs, Word, a notebook—whatever works for you).

Step 2: Start with your sermon series. Fill in the "Sermon Focus" for each month first.

Step 3: Decide on your "Messaging Emphasis"—the ONE main thing you want to communicate that month. This should tie directly to your sermon series or a strategic goal.

Step 4: Fill in your events, campaigns, and ministry focus for each month.

Step 5: Brainstorm creative ideas for how to communicate your messaging emphasis across different channels. (Ideas marked with an asterisk * are suggestions—these are things you could do, not things you have to do.)

Step 6: Share this with your team and revisit it monthly to stay on track. Update it as needed when plans shift—the calendar should be a living document, not something set in stone.

Template: Messaging Calendar for [Your Church Name]

January

Sermon Focus:

[What series or topic are you teaching?]

Messaging Emphasis:

[The ONE main thing you're saying this month. Should tie to your sermon series or a key church goal/value.]

Events:

- [Event name] (Date)
- [Event name] (Date)

Communication Ideas:

- Email: [How will you communicate your messaging emphasis in your weekly email?]
- Social: [What could you post on social media that ties to your messaging emphasis?]
- Stage: [How will you connect announcements back to your messaging emphasis?]

February

Sermon Focus:

[What series or topic are you teaching?]

Messaging Emphasis:

[The ONE main thing you're saying this month. Should tie to your sermon series or a key church goal/value.]

Events:

- [Event name] (Date)
- [Event name] (Date)

Communication Ideas:

- Email: [How will you communicate your messaging emphasis in your weekly email?]
- Social: [What could you post on social media that ties to your messaging emphasis?]
- Stage: [How will you connect announcements back to your messaging emphasis?]

March

Sermon Focus:

[What series or topic are you teaching?]

Messaging Emphasis:

[The ONE main thing you're saying this month. Should tie to your sermon series or a key church goal/value.]

Events:

- [Event name] (Date)
- [Event name] (Date)

Communication Ideas:

- Email: [How will you communicate your messaging emphasis in your weekly email?]
- Social: [What could you post on social media that ties to your messaging emphasis?]
- Stage: [How will you connect announcements back to your messaging emphasis?]

April**Sermon Focus:**

[What series or topic are you teaching?]

Messaging Emphasis:

[The ONE main thing you're saying this month. Should tie to your sermon series or a key church goal/value.]

Events:

- [Event name] (Date)
- [Event name] (Date)

Communication Ideas:

- Email: [How will you communicate your messaging emphasis in your weekly email?]
- Social: [What could you post on social media that ties to your messaging emphasis?]
- Stage: [How will you connect announcements back to your messaging emphasis?]

May**Sermon Focus:**

[What series or topic are you teaching?]

Messaging Emphasis:

[The ONE main thing you're saying this month. Should tie to your sermon series or a key church goal/value.]

Events:

- [Event name] (Date)
- [Event name] (Date)

Communication Ideas:

- Email: [How will you communicate your messaging emphasis in your weekly email?]
- Social: [What could you post on social media that ties to your messaging emphasis?]
- Stage: [How will you connect announcements back to your messaging emphasis?]

June

Sermon Focus:

[What series or topic are you teaching?]

Messaging Emphasis:

[The ONE main thing you're saying this month. Should tie to your sermon series or a key church goal/value.]

Events:

- [Event name] (Date)
- [Event name] (Date)

Communication Ideas:

- Email: [How will you communicate your messaging emphasis in your weekly email?]
- Social: [What could you post on social media that ties to your messaging emphasis?]
- Stage: [How will you connect announcements back to your messaging emphasis?]

July

Sermon Focus:

[What series or topic are you teaching?]

Messaging Emphasis:

[The ONE main thing you're saying this month. Should tie to your sermon series or a key church goal/value.]

Events:

- [Event name] (Date)
- [Event name] (Date)

Communication Ideas:

- Email: [How will you communicate your messaging emphasis in your weekly email?]
- Social: [What could you post on social media that ties to your messaging emphasis?]
- Stage: [How will you connect announcements back to your messaging emphasis?]

August

Sermon Focus:

[What series or topic are you teaching?]

Messaging Emphasis:

[The ONE main thing you're saying this month. Should tie to your sermon series or a key church goal/value.]

Events:

- [Event name] (Date)
- [Event name] (Date)

Communication Ideas:

- Email: [How will you communicate your messaging emphasis in your weekly email?]
- Social: [What could you post on social media that ties to your messaging emphasis?]
- Stage: [How will you connect announcements back to your messaging emphasis?]

September

Sermon Focus:

[What series or topic are you teaching?]

Messaging Emphasis:

[The ONE main thing you're saying this month. Should tie to your sermon series or a key church goal/value.]

Events:

- [Event name] (Date)
- [Event name] (Date)

Communication Ideas:

- Email: [How will you communicate your messaging emphasis in your weekly email?]
- Social: [What could you post on social media that ties to your messaging emphasis?]
- Stage: [How will you connect announcements back to your messaging emphasis?]

October

Sermon Focus:

[What series or topic are you teaching?]

Messaging Emphasis:

[The ONE main thing you're saying this month. Should tie to your sermon series or a key church goal/value.]

Events:

- [Event name] (Date)
- [Event name] (Date)

Communication Ideas:

- Email: [How will you communicate your messaging emphasis in your weekly email?]
- Social: [What could you post on social media that ties to your messaging emphasis?]
- Stage: [How will you connect announcements back to your messaging emphasis?]

November

Sermon Focus:

[What series or topic are you teaching?]

Messaging Emphasis:

[The ONE main thing you're saying this month. Should tie to your sermon series or a key church goal/value.]

Events:

- [Event name] (Date)
- [Event name] (Date)

Communication Ideas:

- Email: [How will you communicate your messaging emphasis in your weekly email?]
- Social: [What could you post on social media that ties to your messaging emphasis?]
- Stage: [How will you connect announcements back to your messaging emphasis?]

December**Sermon Focus:**

[What series or topic are you teaching?]

Messaging Emphasis:

[The ONE main thing you're saying this month. Should tie to your sermon series or a key church goal/value.]

Events:

- [Event name] (Date)
- [Event name] (Date)

Communication Ideas:

- Email: [How will you communicate your messaging emphasis in your weekly email?]
- Social: [What could you post on social media that ties to your messaging emphasis?]
- Stage: [How will you connect announcements back to your messaging emphasis?]

Final Encouragement

Building a messaging calendar might feel like extra work up front, but it will save you countless hours of scrambling, second-guessing, and reacting to last-minute requests.

More importantly, it will help your church communicate with clarity and consistency—which means your people will actually hear what you're saying and be equipped to live it out.

And it will position you as a strategic partner to your pastor and leadership team, not just someone who posts on social media.

You've got this.

Ready for More Support?

You don't have to figure this out alone. Building a messaging calendar is just one piece of the puzzle. But what about when your pastor changes the plan last minute? Or your colleagues don't understand what "comms" even is? Or when you're stuck writing the same announcement five different ways and none of them feel right?

That's Where the Church Comms Club Comes In

Get a full year of group coaching, proven frameworks, and a community of church communicators who actually understand what you're dealing with. I've led comms at faith-based nonprofits, served as a volunteer comms director at my church, coached church teams, and helped churches hire and train the right comms leaders. I know what works—and what doesn't.

Stop trying to reinvent the wheel every week. Get the support you need to thrive.

[Learn more and join the Church Comms Club.](#)