

Determine whether your news fits the requirements of any local radio stations, especially those that serve smaller niche markets.

How about being part of a weather outside segment? Is your news big enough to be featured on a segment of A.M. Buffalo or any other locally produced show?

If your event would appeal to the specific community groups or other special interest groups, send releases to those outlets.

Consider inviting local government officials, members of neighboring churches of all denominations, other community groups, etc.

Be sure members of outside groups that use your facilities for meetings, etc. receive news about your special events. It's likely their members already have a good feeling about your church—and you never know when one of them might be looking for a connection to a faith community.

Does your event warrant a news release to a larger paper like the Buffalo News or local television stations? If you're not sure, contact the diocesan communication office at 716-881-0660, x22.

For television, especially, think visually!

## GOING AFTER THE BIG GUYS

If you hope to attract coverage by a large daily newspaper or a television station, ask yourself the following questions first:

1. Does your news tie into a wider community interest, need or issue?
2. Do you have a person willing to be interviewed by the media?
2. Can your event provide the camera with interesting visual images?
3. Are you willing to:
  - Properly prepare a news release?
  - Send it to the media to meet their workflow and deadline requirements?
  - Make follow up phone calls to assignment editors at appropriate times?

Whenever you're faced with a publicity question, help is only a phone call away. Communication officer Laurie Wozniak will gladly discuss publicity possibilities with you and coach your congregation through the process of preparing for and contacting the media. Laurie can be reached at 716-881-0660 x22.

TOOLS FOR  
CONGREGATIONS



## TIPS FOR PUBLICIZING YOUR CHURCH'S SPECIAL EVENTS

DEVELOPED BY THE  
DIOCESAN COMMUNICATION OFFICE

716-881-0660 x22  
COMMUNICATION@EPISCOPALWNY.ORG

WHEN A STRANGER  
CAME TO TOWN,  
2000 YEARS AGO,  
IT WAS  
**BIG NEWS.**

TODAY,  
THERE'S A LOT  
OF COMPETITION.  
YOU HAVE TO  
**WORK HARD**  
TO GET PEOPLE'S  
ATTENTION.

HERE ARE SOME IDEAS  
TO HELP YOUR  
SPECIAL EVENT  
**GET NOTICED.**

## IN-HOUSE

Use your parish newsletter and website before and after the event to share the story.

Create a series of short blurbs for your Sunday bulletin. Have someone make a verbal announcement at Sunday services. Create an attractive billboard.

Issue individual invitations via regular mail, email and/or phone.

Display special banners or signs, inside & out, as well as festive decorations.

Have formally dressed or appropriately costumed greeters. (Involve the youth group!)

Hand out a simple memento. (Involve the Sunday school in making these!)

Assign several people take photos during the event. Post photos afterwards on your website and bulletin board. (If the event is a recurring one, photos taken one year can be used for pre-publicity purposes the following year.)

Mount a special display about your church and/or one of its ministries that compliments the event. Dig into the parish archives and/or take photos of current ministries, programs etc. Enlarge the best ones to at least 5" x 7" (It's easy to do these days!) to create a photo gallery. Use only brief captions. Let the pictures tell the story. Showcasing the common life of the parish and those who help make it happen honors people's contributions and can encourage non-members and less active members, to join in.

## DEANERY & DIOCESE

Never assume others know about your event. Communicate specifically with other clergy and churches, past members and friends of the parish.

Send news of your event to *Church Acts* beforehand. Is there a story behind the facts with which people can easily connect?

Send in an event listing for Postings, the diocese's weekly e-news. (See [www.episcopalwny.org/Postings](http://www.episcopalwny.org/Postings) for proper format.)

## WIDER COMMUNITY

Seek coverage by your local weekly newspaper. Check the submission deadline well ahead of time. You might also discuss the story with the editor. Listen carefully to what aspect of the story catches his or her attention. Play that angle up when you write your news release. Offer to provide a photo opportunity – action photos are best. (Some smaller papers may consider using a photo you provide. Ask!)

If your event involves people who live in other towns, you can legitimately submit your story to papers in those communities as well. Lead with "Anytown resident John Doe is chair of St. Swithen's 100th Anniversary Celebration." Follow this up with brief details of the event, but more importantly, the reasons why St. Swithen's is still a community of which people want to be a part.

Send your news to the community billboard listings offered on various websites, such as television, cable and radio stations, Buffalo.com, Bee News, etc.