



THORNAPPLE VALLEY
CHURCH

COMMUNICATION GUIDE

2016 | 2017

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WHY A HANDBOOK?

This document is an integral part of TVC's effort to connect people with God.

It provides guidelines designed to help effectively communicate the mission, vision and values of TVC with one voice via print, electronic and online media. How we communicate with each other and our audience brings the message to life. Our consistent approach will have a positive impact on the overall effectiveness of our church.

- **Consistency**
Each communication piece is a valuable tool with the opportunity to unify or dilute all communications church-wide, depending on the quality of the information and how it is organized.
- **Clarity**
Simplify everything our audience sees or touches to make their life easier and more rewarding in every aspect of their engagement with TVC. Help them connect with God and others effortlessly.
- **Growth**
The commitment to excellence in our print and electronic communication tools provides even more areas for talented people to connect and serve.

COMMUNICATION VALUES

- Reinforce that we are a unified church working toward a common vision.
- Be driven from the outside-in. That is, there will be a heavier emphasis communicating to those in the outside circles (community and crowd), and a progressively lighter emphasis toward those in the inner circles (congregation, committed and core).
- Focus on the needs of our guests, not the needs of our ministries.
- Deliver excellence in timeliness, accuracy, design, layout and ease of use.
- Be simple and clear, eliminating unnecessary fluff or complicated content.
- Always present in a language, style and method that is visible and understandable to the first-time guest.
- Not be fair, but instead be appropriate based on ministry priorities.
- Be designed to reduce the noise in people's lives and eliminates competition between ministries. Too much information can be just as dangerous as not enough.
- Capitalize on our strength. Most people will connect to TVC for the first time through a weekend service. Therefore, most of our communication resources will be expended on inviting people to the weekend service, and then helping them take their next step beyond the weekend service.

STYLE GUIDE

The Basics

- Always include the TVC logo or contact information (when applicable) on every public piece.
- Every piece should cover the most important question our audience asks: “What’s in it for me?” Then follow up with the necessary basics of: Who, What, Where, When, Why and How (call to action). There should ALWAYS be a short one line description included as well.

THINGS TO WATCH

There are several areas of writing that are neither right nor wrong, but should still be consistent. This section summarizes TVC’s grammar, style and spelling conventions.

- **Titles** – All titles are to be in italics for easier readability (rather than underlined or with “quotes”). Example: Meredith Gould’s *The Social Media Gospel*
- **Dates** – Drop reference to year when appropriate. Don’t abbreviate. Example: Tuesday, March 9 (not Tues., Mar 9 2006)
- **Email** – In text, email should always be lowercase. Don’t underline. Example: maggie@tvcweb.com
- **Times** – Should be written consistently and concisely. Use am/pm. Example: 6pm or 9:30-11am
- **Web** – Use lowercase for all web addresses. Internet addresses should not be underlined. Example: www.tvcweb.com
- **Wordiness** – Avoid it and eliminate unnecessary phrases or adjectives. If the sentence makes sense without it, you should take it out. A clear, concise writing style is preferred over a wordy, flowery style.

PUNCTUATION, SPELLING & GRAMMAR

- **Apostrophe** – Avoid using apostrophes in plurals. Example: CDs, URLs, FAQs, 1990s, etc.
- **Bullets** – Maintain consistency in the type of bullets used.
- **Capitalization** – Avoid all caps, except for emphasis. It gives the impression of YELLING. Capitalize pronouns when referencing the Deity (God, Father, Holy Spirit, He, Him, etc.).
- **Exclamations** – Do not overuse!!!!!!
- **Hyphens** – Make every effort to not hyphenate words. Add hard return if necessary to avoid. Never hyphenate Web site addresses or E-mail.
- **Periods** – Use one space after periods and at the end of sentences. Omit periods in bulleted lists for incomplete sentences.

PROOFREADING & EDITING

Copy without proper proofreading and editing can potentially turn off readers. It's important that each piece is reviewed by at least one other person who adheres to the following practices. Those team members (preferably who are unfamiliar with the material) should check and double-check even the most minor of details.

- **Accuracy** – Cross-reference dates and days of the week with a calendar.
- **Audience** – Does the copy answer the most important question our audience asks: “What’s in it for me?”
- **Basics** – Does the copy include the necessary basics of: Who, What, Where, When, Why and How (call to action)? Does the call to action include appropriate contact information (e.g., complete address, phone with extension, email, Web site addresses, etc.)?
- **Consistency** – Look for consistency with punctuation, style and formatting throughout the piece. Compare with our Style Guide.
- **Names** – Double-check accuracy on names, phone numbers and extensions directly with name owner or cross-reference with more than one proofer.
- **Spelling** – It’s critical. A single misspelling can convey that the information and/or audience are not important or valued. Do not rely on your computer’s spelling and grammar checkers.
- **Terminology** – Step into the shoes of a new guest and consider what their reactions may be to certain phrases and the appearance of the piece. Do certain words sound “cliché” or “too implied”? If so, it is likely the message may not be understood by our audience.
- **Tone** – Are we accurately representing the intended meaning? Question anything that may raise a red flag to you. It’s better to address the potential problem than to allow it to go unchecked. Don’t assume someone else will do it.

TVC SPECIFIC

- **Church Name** – You may refer to the church as either Thornapple Valley Church or TVC, but please remain consistent throughout the entire piece (don’t switch back and forth between the two). A suggestion would be to use *Thornapple Valley Church (TVC)* once and then refer to the church as TVC in the rest of the document.
- **TVC Kids** – Please refer to it only as TVC Kids (not Sunday school or Children’s Church). It can be referred to as Children’s Ministry if necessary to explain what TVC Kids is.
- **Fusion412** – Please refer to it as Fusion412 whenever possible; use Youth Ministry if needed to explain what Fusion412 is (for example in a one sentence description).
- **Application Names** – Please refer to this applications as they are titled (for instance, Application to Volunteer with Kids & Teens)
- **Message** – Any talk given should be referred to as a message. (not sermon...or homily)
- **Information Center** – The information desk at each campus
- **Team Room A, B, C** – (Formerly 6, 4, 2) at the Hastings Campus

DESIGN STANDARDS

The following section explains policies and guidelines for the use of the logo and provides information for the preparation of various types of printed materials used by the church. To assure effective usage of the TVC logo, these guidelines must be followed.

Use of Authorized Logotype and Mark Only

The official logo consists of two components shown below; the words 'Thornapple Valley Church' and the accompanying circle with check mark (referred to as the Mark). They must be reproduced from authorized original reproduction-ready art and cannot be redrawn, re-proportioned or modified in any way. Only the TVC Communications Department (Director of Communications (DOC) or Creative Arts Leader) has official art suitable for publication. Both the logotype and Mark must be reproduced. Only the Communications Department can determine in which cases it is permissible and/or appropriate to use the logotype without the accompanying graphic Mark or the Mark without the accompanying logotype.

Reproductions

Contact the Communications Department for electronic files of the logo. The logo must never be stretched, skewed, or scale disproportionately. In most software applications, holding down the "shift" key while dragging a corner handle will cause a program to constrain the proportions.

Colors for Reproductions

In most instances, the official identity should be reproduced in two main colors (the greens and blacks), with the logotype in Black (or white ink when printed on colors too dark for black), and the Mark in the shaded variations of green.

When printing to a CMYK printer (or when using and outsource printing company), use these colors:

Gray – C=68% M=61% Y=59% K=46%

Light Green – C=48% M=0% Y=96% K=0%

Dark Green – C=88% M=28% Y=100% K=15%

Font – Bebas

Our main color church logo that we have been using will remain the same. This is the logo that has the word "church" in dark gray and the circle in black with a green gradient check mark. Please use this logo whenever possible. Please use only this logo when printing on colored paper. The reason for this is that the printer here does not have white ink; therefore anything that was in white will be the color of the paper when printed. We would like to remain true to our brand as much as possible, and having a different paper color show through does not stay true to our branding.



Due to the issues with printing on darker colors, we have also created a color logo that has a white circle and the word “church” in white. This logo is acceptable to use on anything that is too dark to print black on (i.e. a black t-shirt, table cloth).

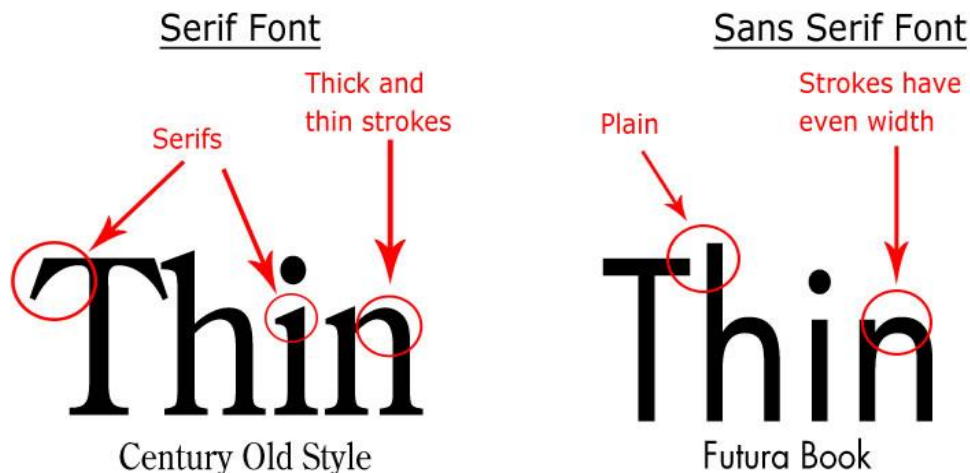


We also have options available in black and white only. One is all black with a white check mark and the other is all white with a black check mark. These are acceptable to use when printing a gradient is not an option. Please ONLY use these when you cannot use the full color options we have.



Design

Whenever possible, please use fonts that are Sans Serif. Approved fonts include: Arial, Helvetica, Futura, Impact & Bebas. The TVC logo is in Bebas font, and is available for download at dafont.com. A zip file with the logo can also be e-mailed to you. If you would like help installing the font, please contact the DOC or Creative Arts Leader. Please remember if you use the Bebas font and are sending the document to someone who does not have it installed on their computer, it must be in a PDF or JPG format.



When designing generic slides and templates, please use grays, greens or blacks. Please also use geometric designs (diagonal lines & shapes) when possible. A template for brochures and slides can be provided by the DOC. All slides need to be 16:9 ratios (i.e. 16” x 9” or 32” x 18”...etc.)

Logo Use

When using the logo on a campus-specific event, it is appropriate to use a logo tagged with a campus reference (see below). When using the logo in a publication that spans multiple campuses, or doesn't refer to a specific campus, use the non-tagged (all church) version. Please use only the all church version on signage (ie outdoor signs, rugs, etc.) at each campus as well.

When promoting something that has a unique logo (i.e. TVC Kids or Fusion412) you should use that logo in place of the logos below. If you still aren't sure what logo to use, or cannot find the correct one, contact the DOC for help.

Hastings:



Middleville:



Delton



All Church



Unacceptable Uses

Unless cleared with the Communications Department, the logo should be used as described above. Please do not change the color, stretch, skew or in any way alter the logos provided. Exceptions may be made by the Communications Department.

APPROVAL GUIDELINES

Any handouts that are delivered to the church family at services must be approved by the DOC, Executive Pastor & Lead Pastor

All Social Media posts (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) should follow the Social Media guidelines below. **Individual ministries can post to Social Media on their individual pages without approval, by following these guidelines.** Any posts for the TVC Hastings, Middleville or Delton pages should be approved by the DOC OR the campus pastor, except in emergency circumstances.

Any other communications to church members or the public (flyers, all church e-mails, billboard, advertisements, etc.) must be approved by the DOC (lead pastor & executive pastor when appropriate).

APPROVAL SYSTEM

When you have a request for an event or group promotion, visit <http://tinyurl.com/tvcpromotionrequest> and make sure to fill out the form in its entirety. All required areas must be filled out. Please also include what you hope to gain out of this event (other than you simply want people to know about it). This request is sent to the DOC who will respond to you within 2 work-days of receiving the form with next steps.

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES (FACEBOOK, TWITTER & INSTAGRAM)

- Keep the posts short and simple
- Make sure all pertinent information is included when referencing events (time, place, description, etc.)
- Remember to keep the posts relevant to our church or events happening in our church
- Don't disclose any confidential or personal information on any social media websites
- **See approval system above to learn how to submit a social media promotion for the TVC Campus pages**

COMMUNITY & CHURCH PROMOTIONAL GUIDELINES

- Include a call to action for the audience to become engaged whenever possible (i.e., visit tvcweb.com and sign up, or visit the Information Center for more info, etc.)
- Include the appropriate TVC logo on all communication pieces
- When applicable, include date, time & location that can be easily read
- Ensure that everything is clear and there are no "insider" terms used (see <http://churchtechtoday.com/2015/04/13/insider/> for a great explanation of this)
- **See approval system above to learn how to submit a promotion**

SIGNAGE GUIDELINES

When ordering a sign that will be in the lobby or common area, order a black sign with white writing. The font to be used for these signs is **Futura STD Book**. For logos that will not work on black sign (i.e. a logo with dark writing/icons), please order the sign in light gray (Pantone 5315C) with the logo you are using. Make sure that all signs are rectangular or square.

There are exceptions to any “aesthetic signs” (i.e. metal café letters) that will be displayed in the lobby/common areas. These should be approved by the DOC.

If you are ordering signs/decor for inside your specific area (i.e. TVC Kids, Fusion412, etc.) you do not need to follow the above guidelines.

PROMOTION TIER SYSTEM

Tier 1

The request applies to most people at all campuses (i.e. Big weekends, Spring Blitz, Connection Fair) These events affect almost everyone in our church, and therefore should receive the most amount of promotion

Promotions for Tier 1

- Social Media
- Website page
- Vision Casting (amount of weekends TBD by DOC/lead pastor)
- Table in lobby at all campuses
- Information in Preservice & on the Wall
- Outside advertising (if deemed necessary by ministry leader & DOC)
- Brochure or handout – Must be created by the ministry & approved by DOC

Tier 2

The request applies to a large group of people, but not everyone. (i.e. Fusion412 / TVC Kids events).

These events affect a smaller portion of the church family, and will receive some promotion, and possibly a small mention from the platform

Promotions for Tier 2

- Minimal social media (1 post or mention)
- Update to their own web page (i.e. info about a dance on Fusion412 page, but not a specific page for the dance)
- Table in lobby – They will get the less visible spot unless there is nothing else in the lobby, then they will get the prime spot
- Information in Preservice & on the Wall TV
- Brochure or handout – Must be created by the ministry & approved by DOC

Tier 3

The request applies to a small group (i.e. Celebrate Recovery, specific Life groups)

These events don't affect as many people in the church, and will receive minimal promotions from central support. The exception is when the lead or executive pastor would like to promote them in correlation with a message that is given.

Promotions for Tier 3

- Update to their own web page (i.e. info about a class on Life groups page)
 - An update on the website home page may be possible depending on the amount of requests.
- Table in lobby – They will get the less visible spot unless there is nothing else in the lobby, then they will get the prime spot
- Information in Preservice
- Brochure or handout – Must be created by the ministry & approved by DOC.
 - Note that **ONLY** the consistent groups or classes will get a brochure (i.e. Celebrate Recovery or Grief Share). All others will not get a brochure or handout unless considered necessary by the Lead Pastor or Director of Spiritual Formation.