THE NEW PASTOR’S TOOLBOX
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INTRODUCTION

Pastors wear a lot of hats.

In any given day, you might find yourself...

- Writing a sermon
- Reviewing budget reports
- Leading a staff meeting
- Counseling a newly married couple
- Setting up chairs
- Leading a small group
- Meeting with outreach partners

And that list could go on and on and on.

But your day-to-day is more than just busy work.

It’s a calling.

You do what you do because it matters. For today, for tomorrow, and for eternity.
That’s why our team counts it an honor to come alongside pastors to assist, support, and encourage. Our mission is to help you accomplish your mission.

And to point you to resources that can help you do what you do.

The New Pastor’s Toolbox is a list of some of our favorite tools and websites to help you be more effective in ministry.

Many are free. All could help you.

Our goal here isn’t to list every tool available to you. We’re trying to get beyond the ordinary and recommend some tools that might be new to your workflow. After all, you probably know about Google Docs.

Instead, you’ll find some fresh ideas and some new resources.

Finally, WE would love to be a resource to you. I invite you to check out ChurchFuel.com and see if any of our membership programs, courses, or resources could help move your church forward. And if there’s ever anything you need, reach out anytime.

Michael Lukaszewski
michael@churchfuel.com

INSANELY PRACTICAL RESOURCES, COACHING, AND TRAINING TO MOVE YOUR CHURCH FORWARD
Tyler Rominger* recommends SEO Review Tools.

A Pew Research Center study found that about half of all adults have searched online for a new church at some point in their lives. Maybe they were new in town or hoping to find a new church to attend. In fact, most people will visit your website before visiting your church.

SEO is an acronym for “Search Engine Optimization.” It refers to the process of setting up your web pages and doing certain other tasks to make sure your site is:

- Indexed by the search engines like Google.
- Deemed important enough to come up early in the search results.

When someone searches for “Best Church in Louisville,” does your church appear toward the top of that list? SEO Review will help you perform an SEO audit of your church website so you can know where you stand.

Want to read more about this? This article from Caitlin Gustafson is a good guide to optimizing your church website.

Want to listen more about this? This podcast from Pro Church Tools covers five SEO changes you can make to your website.

*Tyler Rominger leads Ministry Designs, which specializes in church website design and communications and is passionate about helping ministries have a profound impact on the web.
#2 SERMONARY.CO

**Sermonary** is a sermon editor, where you can work block-by-block to develop your message, your way. This is a huge step up from Microsoft Word or Google Docs.

Once your message is done, switch to Podium mode and preach from your favorite tablet and device. There’s a built-in clock overlay, too.

Sermonary comes with a library of free and paid commentaries, sermon illustrations, sermon series, and more.

It’s a tool that will help you write your sermons with more impact in less time.

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#3 HTMLSIG.COM

Your email signature might seem small and insignificant, but it’s another opportunity to represent your church and yourself well.

**HTMLsig** is an email signature generator that allows you to create customized signatures with a photo and social media icons. You can promote your church with every email you send.
#4 SLYDIAL

Need to get a message out to multiple people in your church but don’t have time to call them all individually? Record a voice message and send it directly to multiple voicemails at once using Slydial.

The phone of the person you’re calling won’t ring...your call will go straight to voicemail. This is a great tool for following up with guests, reminding volunteers about an important meeting, or sharing a pre-recorded message with your church members.

#5 DOODLE

Doodle is a great tool to help you manage your time and coordinate meetings, appointments, events, and more. It’s easy to compare availability times with everyone you’d like to meet with, even if they don’t use the app. Use it to:

- Take a poll about activities for a church event
- Track participants for a Bible study group
- Send a survey about dietary needs for food at a meeting

“...clandestine operations.”
—Slydial.com
Church Metrics is a free app from Life.Church. The tool allows you to track data such as attendance, salvations, and giving and see the big picture with customized reports. By seeing the trends, you can make better decisions for the future of your church.

If you’re wondering what numbers to track on a weekly, monthly or quarterly basis, read this post.
Kenny Jahng* recommends MindMeister, a free multi-platform mind mapping app.

A mind map is a graphical way to represent ideas and concepts. It is a visual thinking tool that helps structure information, helping you to better analyze, comprehend, synthesize, recall, and generate new ideas. Many experts say mind mapping better mimics how the brain functions, relying on associations rather than linear information.

MindMeister is one of the best mindmapping tools out there. It’s great for:

- Brainstorming
- Note taking
- Planning
- Meeting management
- Sermon writing

Once you try mindmapping, you just might be hooked.

*Kenny Jahng is the founder of Church Butler, a ready-to-use social media content library for churches. You can find more of Kenny’s tips at butler.church/blog.
#8 **Tithe.ly**

Meaningful, simple, and fast—these three words represent what online giving should be. Tithe.ly provides giving tools that are specifically for churches and ministries. Five giving tools, to be exact: mobile app giving, text giving, online giving (via donation form), kiosk giving, and administration gift entry. There are reports, receipts, and a dashboard all in one secure platform.

#9 **Canva**

You don’t have to be a professional graphic designer to design professional-looking graphics for your church. Canva is an easy to use, drag-and-drop tool with hundreds of layouts to choose from. Use this tool to create flyers, social media posts, newsletters, business cards, brochures, and a lot more.

Canva has a free and paid version. The premium Canva for Work version allows you to use your church’s brand (fonts, colors, etc.) consistently and is free for nonprofits.
Tyler Smith* recommends Church Media Squad.

“Church leaders are busy. That’s why I recommend Church Media Squad. When you work with Michael Tuszynski and the rest of the team, all of your graphic design needs are handled by professionals. So, you can spend more time doing ministry and spend less time on graphics. You have a message that’s worth sharing. So share it beautifully.”

You can try it for 14 days, and after that it’s $497-$997 a month for unlimited, custom graphics. It’s more than a library of graphics. You get customization and unlimited revisions. It’s like having a graphic designer on staff.

*Tyler Smith is Co-Founder of Text in Church, a tool that helps churches send text or email messages quickly and easily. Learn more from Tyler and his team at blog.textinchurch.com.
Need a voice over, copywriter, video editor, or virtually any other service? Fiverr is the place to go. It’s an online marketplace for freelance services where you can quickly hire someone to take care of needs that pop up at your church—from web programming to arts and crafts.

Here are just a few ways you can use Fiverr:

- Transcribe audio or video
- Proofread a bulletin or handout
- Edit or change a graphic
- Make a funny announcement video
- Record a podcast introduction
- Review your website for clarity

Pastors have a lot of meetings, and the back and forth emailing to schedule them can get confusing. With Calendly, you simply set up a few rules and preferences and send people a link so they can choose a time when you are free.

It integrates with your Google, Outlook, Office 365, or iCloud calendars to see when you’re available, and does the rest for you. It can also be set up to make sure there are buffer times in your schedule and that you’re never double booked.
Temi

Wes Gay* recommends Temi. “Get an idea in the car? Record it with the Temi app, then get it transcribed for just $0.10/minute. Or use it to transcribe your sermons each week.”

What could you do with a transcribed sermon?

- Post it to your blog (which may come up in Google searches)
- Summarize for your church newsletter (and link to the full transcript online)
- Pull shareable quotes to share on social media

*Wes Gay is a StoryBrand certified guide and TEDx speaker who helps companies create clarity in their communications and develop better strategies to grow their business. See more of his ideas at wesgay.com/blog.

Unsplash

Thousands of free, high-resolution stock photos are available through Unsplash. Download all the photos you need without having to worry about copyright or license issues. It’s easy to search for the photos you need and save photos into collections that you can organize by category to download when you need them later.

“Unsplash has been used in everything from Apple keynotes to the default theme shipped with Wordpress. You’ve probably already seen a photo from Unsplash, you just didn’t know it.”

– Unsplash.com
It takes a lot of collaboration to run a church. Trello is a web-based project management application that uses boards, lists, and cards to help you collaborate with team members. In Trello, you organize and prioritize the tasks it takes to get the project done. You can integrate Trello with other helpful apps and sync it with your smartphone.

Michael Tuszynski* recommends Text in Church.

“Communicating with your people and guests shouldn’t be difficult. Take the work out of communication and make sure your people are informed, automatically. Use Text in Church to reach people effortlessly and take the headache out of your communications.”

With Text in Church, you can quickly send text messages to a person or group or you can create in-depth workflows to automatically engage your members and guests. Start with a 14-day free trial here.

*Michael Tuszynski is the founder of Church Media Squad, a company that helps churches everywhere communicate better and save time.
#17 LOGOS BIBLE SOFTWARE

Logos is an in-depth Bible study tool that helps you dig deep into the Word of God for personal study, preparing sermons, creating curriculum, counseling on specific issues, and everything else pastors consult the Bible for. There are free and paid versions that allow you to keep your notes in one digital Bible, consult commentaries, easily compare translations, do original language exegesis, and more.

#18 GROUPME

It’s likely that the teens and young adults in your church are already using GroupMe to chat with groups of friends. GroupMe is a free smartphone app that allows people with various types of smartphones to communicate in one place. You can even add events in the group and set reminders. It’s a great way to communicate with a team of staff, volunteers, youth leaders, or a small group. For example, you can set up a group for the Elders as a convenient, casual place to chat.
The “new tab” in your web browser can be a distracting place. But what if it was inspiring instead?

Momentum is a Chrome or Firefox browser extension that replaces the new tab with a personalized, minimal dashboard. It can help you eliminate distraction and focus on being productive.

There’s a free and paid version of Momentum. The paid, “Plus” version allows you to personalize it with your favorite quotes and photos, add to-do lists, access custom themes, and sync with other productivity tools like Basecamp, Asana, Trello, and more.
From keeping up with receipts to sharing meeting notes, churches go through plenty of documents. Scanbot is an easy and fast way to scan documents, barcodes, labels, whiteboards, business cards, sketchbooks, QR Codes, and more. It’s easy and fast because you can use your smartphone or tablet and have the document auto-upload or auto-share.

Use it to:

- Markup a PDF with notes and highlights
- Scan receipts into the church’s system
- Send a fax from anywhere
- Auto-upload your team’s important documents to a cloud service

Jonathan Hardy* recommends Belay Solutions.

Belay is your home for virtual assistants, bookkeepers, webmasters and even content writers. You’d be matched with a dedicated support person who can help you free up more of your time to do what only you can do.
A Virtual Assistant could help you:

- Manage project tasks and assign tasks to team members
- Complete weekly data entry and pull reports
- Process appointment requests and make travel arrangements

A Virtual Bookkeeper could help you:

- Steward your ministry department’s budget wisely
- Organize bills, receipts, and other financial documents
- Send and pay invoices

Belay bookkeepers and virtual assistants do great work at a fair wage. Belay will match you with just the right person and then manage the entire relationship— from onboarding to payroll.

*Jonathan Hardy is the co-founder of Leaders Church, a digital resourcing firm that specializes in pastoral leadership development, membership site with church leaders investing in others.

#22 FACEBOOK GROUPS

You can create your own Facebook group to serve as a central place to engage with staff, volunteers, etc. and even let a staff member or volunteer leader help manage and moderate it. But there are also Facebook groups out there to help you connect with other pastors and church staff members and learn from them. Pastors on Facebook, Church Communications, and Small Church Pastor are a few examples.
IFTTT

Busy people love and need automation, and the life of a pastor can get very busy. IFTTT (full name: If This Then That) is a “web-based service to create chains of simple conditional statements, called applets.” More simply, it’s a tool with plenty of ways to automatically save, send, track, sync, and get notified.

For example, the “If new tweet by specific user, then tweet the text automatically to your Twitter account” option could be used for your church and personal account. “Press a button to track work hours in Google Drive” could make it easier to log how much time you spend at the office by adding a button widget to your phone’s home screen. And the “Tweet your Instagrams as native photos on Twitter” option can save you some time on the social media front.

EVERNOTE

Evernote is your personal filing system, your online notebook, your digital brain. It’s a desktop and mobile app that helps you take notes, organize files, keep up with task lists, and archive documents. Use it for productivity and decluttering.

As as pastor, you can use all the help you can get keeping track of important files. Your sermons, conference notes, saved article links to read later (thanks to the Evernote web clipper browser extension for Chrome), meeting notes, and more are all stored in one place.
Adam McLaughlin* recommends RecurPost, a great way to keep evergreen content on a recurring schedule on multiple social media platforms.

There are three primary ways you can post to your social media channels.

- **Option #1: Live.** You can share things as they happen or thoughts as they occur. Most churches start here.

- **Option #2: Scheduled.** There are many tools to help you schedule posts, so instead of posting throughout the day, you can create content in batches and schedule your posts.

- **Option #3: Recurring.** Recurring posts are still scheduled, but rather than being “one and done,” they are repeated as often as you determine. After all, if something really connects with your audience, it’s makes sense to share it again so more people can engage.

RecurPost is a tool that will help you turn the most relevant posts into recurring posts. It’s not a replacement for instant engagement, but it is a tool to be sure that on busy weeks, your content is still happening.

What kind of recurring things could your church share on social media?

- Bible Verses
- Quotes
- Testimonies and stories
- Invitations to attend a service

*Adam McLaughlin is a church communicator, blogger, and speaker who blogs his ideas on branding, marketing, and advertising your church within your community and to the world at AdamMclaughlin.net.

"You can share things as they happen or thoughts as they occur.”

— Adam McLaughlin
Find many more resources for pastors and leaders at

CHURCHFUELM.com