



**Victory
of
the Lamb**

COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

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COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

Introduction

The following guidelines are intended to enhance all communications regarding news, events, and information about Victory of the Lamb. Staff and ministry leaders should familiarize themselves with this document to understand the policies, procedures, and formats to which they should adhere when communicating about the ministries of Victory of the Lamb, both internally and externally. This is a working document and will be updated/changed when needed.

(Last revised 7/12/2018)

Guidelines for Communication

Guiding Principles

At Victory of the Lamb, our mission is *Sharing Christ's victory with today's people, loving them enough to meet them where they are*. All church communications should be viewed through this lens. Therefore, communications should be...

- **Consistent:** Each communication piece is a valuable tool with the opportunity to engage members and non-members alike with our mission. Therefore, we want to ensure that communications share content reliably and utilize standardized formats that make our message recognizable in a positive way.
- **Clear:** Simplify everything our audience sees or touches to make their lives easier and more rewarding in every aspect of their engagement with Victory of the Lamb. Most importantly, ensure that all communications allow the Gospel to shine through.
- **Outreach-Focused:** The commitment to excellence in our print and electronic communication tools should provide opportunities for members and non-members to engage with the Victory of the Lamb community. In order to reach the widest audience, we want all materials from Victory of the Lamb to be vibrant, refreshing, welcoming, and Gospel-centered.

Submissions and Deadlines

Submissions and deadlines vary by publication. However, in general, here are the submission guidelines and deadlines:

- All items for publication need to be requested through a staff member or volunteer in charge of the area of ministry for which the publication is needed. When in doubt, requests should go to Sammi Goodger (sgoodger@victoryofthelamb.com), who will channel the information to the appropriate party.
- All announcements or events **should be submitted on or before the 15th of the month prior to the event**, when at all possible. Requests that include design, video, or graphic aspects should be submitted at least 4 weeks prior to the date needed. All requests should be submitted through the Communications Request form, located on votl.life.
- Requests that need printing quantity of more than 150 and/or will need to be ordered from a printer need to be requested a minimum of 4 weeks prior to the date needed.

Best Practices for Communications

- Include the following items on every public piece:
 - Victory of the Lamb logo
 - Complete mailing and website addresses for Victory of the Lamb
 - Contact information of the person associated with the communication, including phone number and email address. Note: Volunteer email addresses and phone numbers should not be included. Instead, utilize a generic Victory of the Lamb email address (hello@victoryofthelamb.com, office@victoryofthelamb.com) and church phone number (414-433-9790).
- Get a second set of eyes on every piece.
 - Make sure that the piece is proofread and edited by at least two people.
 - Revise for wordiness and redundancy.
 - Use active voice whenever possible.
 - Ensure consistency, clarity, outreach-focused message, and quality of overall design of piece.
 - See *Editing and Formatting* and *Quick Reference Guide* sections for additional information.
- Have a goal in mind for each piece.
 - This includes knowing your audience: demographics, needs, and communication style that will be most appropriate.
 - Choose the communication channel that is most appropriate for your audience and goal. (See *Communication Channels* section for specific details on each communication channel currently utilized by Victory of the Lamb.)
 - Lead with the most important idea that will reach this goal.
 - 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).

Editing and Formatting

- o Expect that your submissions will be edited for content and layout. The editor(s) will do their best not to omit important details. To reduce omissions, please edit your own work and ask someone else to review your work for feedback before submitting it to the Communications Director.
- o If your submission includes photographs, Media Release Forms must accompany the submission (unless we have one on file).
- o All written submissions for any publication must be in Microsoft Word format. Google Docs are also acceptable, as they can be easily converted.
- o Every effort should be made to ensure that submitted publications are without error and maintain consistency in style and formatting. See the Quick Reference Guide (below) for stylistic and formatting guidelines.

Quick Reference Guide

Category	Do	Don't
Church Name	Victory of the Lamb VotL (after referencing full name)	VOTL, votl (except in website) Victory VotL (as first reference)
Times	8:30am, 8:30pm 6:00-8:00pm, 8:00am-5:00pm	8AM, 8:30 p.m. 6-8pm From 6:00 to 8:00pm
Dates	Tuesday, April 28 February 23 May 31-June 1	Tuesday, April 28 th Tues., April 28 th Feb. 28 th
Numbers, Ages, Grades	One, six, nine 10, 270 Six-week series 5-year-olds 5th grade, 5th-graders Ages 5 years-5th grade	1, 6, 9 Ten, two hundred seventy 6-week series Five year olds Fifth grade 5 th grade
Titles	<i>Crazy Love</i> (series/title) "Nailed It" (sermon/section)	"Crazy Love" or <u>Crazy Love</u> <i>Nailed It</i> or <u>Nailed It</u>
Commas	The event will feature prizes, games, and food.	The event will feature prizes, games and food.
Apostrophes	To show ownership or contractions Ex: FAQs, 30s, dog's collar, he's	FAQ's, 30's, 1950's
Capitalization	Titles of documents (per branding guide) Bible, Scripture Pronouns referring to God: He, Him, His	USE ALL CAPS FOR SEVERAL WORDS

End Punctuation	Jesus is alive! Who is this man? He said, "I am with you."	Jesus is alive!!!! Who is this man??!! He said, "I am with you".
Scripture References	<i>Jesus wept.</i> (John 11:35)	"Jesus wept." (John 11:35) <i>Jesus wept. – John 11:35</i>
Web	<i>victoryofthelamb.com</i>	www.victoryofthelamb.com <u>www.victoryofthelamb.com</u> victoryofthelamb.com/- events
Email	<i>blimmer@victoryofthelamb.com</i> **Note: Do not publish volunteer's email addresses. Use a church address (or <i>office@victoryofthelamb.com</i>) and it will be directed to appropriate person.	<u>blimmer@victoryofthelamb.com</u> <i>blimmer@victoryofthelamb-.com</i>

Evaluation of Communication

Evaluate the effectiveness of each piece after it goes out.

- Did the piece meet the intended goal and reach the intended audience?
- How could the communication be improved in future uses?

Plan to adjust communication strategy to best reach the intended audience for future events and communications.

Logo Branding Guide

Please see Victory of the Lamb branding guide for information about how to appropriately utilize the church logo.

Social Media Posting Guide

In process. (to be incorporated in another revision)

Types and Purposes of Communication

In-Church Publications

Worship Folder

- *Purpose:* Worship folders are intended for worship-goers to be able to follow the Order of Service and take notes on sermons. Additionally, the worship folder contains contact information for Victory of the Lamb and other important

resources that worship-goers may want to take with them upon leaving the church building.

- *Limitations:* Worship folders do not contain information that changes frequently, such as group announcements.

Blue Sheet

- *Purpose:* The Blue Sheet is a worship folder insert that contains monthly church announcements for church-wide events, small group events, WELS events, and community events. These are published monthly on or near the start of each month.
- *Limitations:* Due to space, announcements may be left off the Blue Sheet if they are more than a month away. Additionally, announcements may not be printed on the Blue Sheet if they are not received by the 15th of the month prior to publication, do not contain contact information for a group leader, do not contain specific information about an event (such as date, time, or location), or are not deemed appropriate by the pastors or Communication Team. Blue sheets will only be edited mid-month in the case of an error; items will not be added mid-month.

Welcome Area Publications

- *Purpose:* The Welcome Area is a location for people to meet and greet one another and for the Pastor to meet visitors. Publications in the Welcome Area are intended to be for visitors and guests, or monthly subscriptions such as Forward in Christ and Meditations for members to grab if they choose. Materials placed in the Welcome Area should be of interest to visitors who want to learn more about our church and its ministries.
- *Limitations:* Materials located in the Welcome Area are at the discretion of the Pastor and the Communications Team and are subject to space limitations of the space. Materials placed in the Welcome Area without prior approval of the Communications Team will be removed.

Pastor's Announcements/Video Announcements

- *Purpose:* Announcements at the end of church are intended to highlight specific ministries, outreach events, or other all-church events. Announcements should be of interest to at least half of the members and attenders of church.
- *Limitations:* Announcements will be limited to three announcements and may be reduced in the case of a special guest speaker. Announcements should be no longer than 60 seconds in length. Any announcements that do not have an audience of at least half of the members and attenders of church will not be read but will be considered for screen announcements.

Rotating Screen Announcements Before/After Services

- *Purpose:* Rotating screen announcements displayed on the screens before and after services are intended to inform members and attenders of opportunities available for them to serve or be served at Victory of the Lamb. Some examples

include church-wide events, small-group meetings, and serving opportunities that are open to everyone in the intended demographic for the group/event.

- *Limitations:* Rotating screen announcements should not be used to inform closed group members of upcoming events. For example, the leadership team will not have an announcement to remind the members of a meeting during the week. Fundraisers and events being held by other churches or affiliated organizations will not be included in the rotating announcements. Rotating screen announcements will be limited to eight rotating announcements per week and will be prioritized based on the size of the intended audience.

Temporary In-Church Signage

- *Purpose:* Purposes for temporary in-church signage may include decorating for a special event/service or designating areas for specific purposes during special events. All signage must be approved and ordered (if needed) through the church office. Signage design should adhere to Victory of the Lamb's communication guidelines.
- *Limitations:* Temporary in-church signage may be prohibited from being used if it appears outdated, is not consistent with other marketing materials being used for the special event/service, or does not adhere to Victory of the Lamb's communication guidelines. Signage will be removed if it was not approved by church staff members prior to being displayed.

Church Main Website

Main Page Icons

- *Purpose:* The purpose of these icons is to highlight important events and information about Victory of the Lamb so visitors can easily find information they might need. Typically, the icons will include the current sermon series, a link to watch online, registration links for events, or links to holiday pages.
- *Limitations:* Icons for small groups or topics that apply to less than half of audience will not be included.

Events Section

- *Purpose:* All events sponsored by Victory of the Lamb can be represented in the Events section of the website. Proposals for events should be submitted by leaders via the Communication Request Form, located at votl.life.
- *Limitations:* Events not sponsored by or affiliated with Victory of the Lamb will not be included as events on the website. For example, a community-wide race would not be listed on the events page unless Victory of the Lamb will have a team participating in the race. Proposals not submitted with all required information will not be included.

Micro-Sites and Sub-Pages

- *Purpose:* Micro-sites and sub-pages are intended to share information about specific ministries and groups within Victory of the Lamb. Micro-sites might also include information about important events at Victory of the Lamb (examples: Holy Week, Christmas, Soccer Camp.) These sites will be created by staff and volunteers as time allows and prioritized by date of need.
- *Limitations:* Micro-sites and sub-pages must be created within the main site's heading; links to external sites or sites created outside of the main website will be not be included in the website.

Church Secondary Website

votl.life (Nucleus)

- *Purpose:* The purpose of the secondary website is to provide members and church attenders a mobile-friendly site to get information about church, register for events, and get connected to Victory of the Lamb. This site will be the primary “go-to” site referenced in church announcements. It will include links to get connected with groups and staff, contact forms to indicate interest in serving, information about Path to Victory (membership), and registration links for events.
- *Limitations:* This site will not include information about one-time events sponsored by small groups. It will not contain all information about our church, nor will it be a site to which we direct visitors.

Weekly Blog and Email

- *Purpose:* The weekly blog is intended for pastors to communicate with members and attenders on the website and through email. The blog/email contains a devotional message from a pastor, information about the current sermon series (including a link to the prior week's sermon and a preview of the upcoming sermon), Victory News (updates and announcements), Victory Opportunities (registrations and upcoming service opportunities), and Victory Stories (celebrations of events or individuals brought closer to Jesus). Request for blog announcements should be submitted via the Communication Request Form on *votl.life*.
- *Limitations:* Each section of the blog will be limited to three announcements, so publication of information is subject to space available. Information not submitted at least 2 weeks prior to publication may not be included in the blog. Information should have a wide audience (at least half of readers).

My VOTL

Church-Wide Contacts

- *Purpose:* Church-wide contacts include emails sent to the following groups: Victory of the Lamb, Members, Member and Attender Group. These emails may include invites to special events, needs requests for major events, and other information pertinent to the entire church community.
- *Limitations:* Needs requests should only be sent to the Member and Attender Group. Emails that do not pertain to at least half of the group members will not be sent to the groups. These contacts will only contain information about events sponsored by Victory of the Lamb. Emails will not be sent to these groups on two consecutive days, so requests may be delayed.

Participant Group Contact

- *Purpose:* Emails to participant groups (such as Victory Kids or Worship Arts) are sent to notify group members of upcoming events, needs, or other requests. Every effort should be made by group leaders to ensure that the list of group members is up-to-date and that only people involved in the group receive communications related to the group.
- *Limitations:* Emails to groups will only be sent by group leaders or individuals designated by the group leader to communication with the group. Emails should not pertain to topics or events not sponsored by or related to Victory of the Lamb.

Facebook (FB) Page

Facebook Profile

- *Purpose:* The Facebook profile is the first impression that potential visitors have of our church. The profile picture should typically remain as our logo. The banner should be our sermon series graphic or another graphic related to a special event (Holy Week, Christmas, etc.). Images selected for the Facebook banner should contain minimal text and include a link to our website in the description. The information located in the profile should accurately depict the beliefs of our church and provide viewers with information needed to engage with our church (in person and online).
- *Limitations:* Images used for the Facebook banner and profile pictures should not contain copyrighted material or images unrelated to our church. Images should not contain pictures of people for which consent has not been obtained to use likeness.

Facebook Post

- *Purpose:* Facebook posts are intended to share vibrant, refreshing, and welcoming messages from our church about the people and events related to Victory of the Lamb. Posts should appeal to a wide audience (over 50% of potential viewers). Prior to posting, admin of the site should have the following in mind: purpose of post, next steps audience could take after viewing post, and plan for moderating the post. Typically, Facebook posts are intended to share

information, engage our FB audience, or serve as another online platform for sharing news (such as that posted in our blog).

- *Limitations:* Consideration should be given to the quantity and frequency of posts. Posts should not contain any offensive or derogatory words or images. Consent should be obtained for use of any images that contain attendees of church events. Post comments will be moderated by staff or volunteers, and comments deemed inappropriate should be removed as quickly as possible.

Facebook Event

- *Purpose:* Facebook Events are created for major outreach events or church services that would appeal to a wide audience. Events should include date, time, location, an appealing graphic, and a link to an applicable webpage within *victoryofthelamb.com*. After creating events, followers should be encouraged to RSVP for the event with “interested” or “going”, share the event on their pages, and check into the event when it occurs.
- *Limitations:* Events should not be created for small groups or for events that do not appeal to at least 50% of the audience on Facebook. Only events sponsored by Victory of the Lamb should be created and shared on Facebook.

Facebook Groups

- *Purpose:* Facebook Groups are sub-sections of followers who want to communicate with one another for an expressed purpose. Groups should be closed groups (meaning that an admin of the group must approve a new member or new members must be invited by current members). Groups should be moderated by one of the admin for the Victory of the Lamb Facebook page. When establishing a new group, moderators should do the following: write a purpose, choose an intended audience (considering current Victory FB followers who may be invited to the group), decide how to best moderate comments and posts for the group, and plan a general strategy for engagement.
- *Limitations:* Groups should not be created under the Victory of the Lamb FB page without consent of one of the Victory FB administrators. Content posted within the group should not contain any offensive or derogatory words or images. Posts should not be intended to sell goods or services.

Facebook Paid Ads

- *Purpose:* Facebook paid ads are intended to share information about our church with specific audiences or the community. Ads may be created to promote specific events (such as soccer camp or Easter), or may be created through “boosting” particularly popular posts that share something positive about our church.
- *Limitations:* Ads should be used sparingly, for specific audiences, and with intended outcomes.

Instagram Page

Instagram Profile

- *Purpose:* The profile on Instagram is the first impression that potential visitors have of our church. The profile picture on Instagram should remain as our church logo. The profile information should include a link to the Victory of the Lamb primary site, our address and contact information, hashtags associated with Victory of the Lamb, and a statement about who we are.
- *Limitations:* The profile information should not be changed frequently but should accurately reflect the beliefs of Victory of the Lamb.

Instagram Posts

- *Purpose:* Instagram posts are intended to connect followers with Victory of the Lamb and with Jesus, building an online community of believers. Posts should be crafted to tell a story about our church and those who attend it. Posts may consist of images including: photos of people engaging in our church, Scripture references and related images, excerpts from sermons, reposts from other churches, and videos related to the worship experience at Victory of the Lamb. Posts should have a specific, focused purpose and center on one aspect of church.
- *Limitations:* Cross-posting between Facebook and Instagram should be limited and done intentionally. Blog updates should not be posted on Instagram. Photos of attenders should not be used if consent has not been obtained.

Instagram Stories

- *Purpose:* Instagram Stories are short videos or image collections that tell followers what's going on at Victory of the Lamb. Stories should be created in relation to a particular event or sermon series. Stories are posted for 24-hour periods, so they should be updated on a consistent basis and utilized regularly.
- *Limitations:* Instagram Stories should not be random videos or live posts; they should be created and utilized for a specific purpose.

Leadership Team Updates

- *Purpose:* Leadership Team Updates are intended to provide information from leadership team meetings to our members and attenders. These include information about updates from each member related to their designated area, discussion topics, and contact information for the members. Leadership Team updates are posted monthly on our website. A link to this document should also be included in the weekly blog.
- *Limitations:* Leadership Team Updates contain only information recorded by the team secretary. Some topics from the meeting may be redacted from the minutes in the case of sensitive or confidential information.

Community Marketing

Mailed Postcards

- *Purpose:* Mailed postcards are created and distributed with the Victory of the Lamb bulk mailing permit for the specific purpose of promoting a church event. These should appear professionally created, include the church logo and contact information, follow all branding principles, and have an intended “next step” for the recipient.
- *Limitations:* Mailed postcards should be utilized sparingly as a marketing tool and will only be sent in conjunction with digital advertising/publicizing.

Hand-Delivered Cards

- *Purpose:* Hand-delivered invite cards should be created to promote specific events or activities sponsored by Victory of the Lamb. They should contain the church logo, basic contact information related to the event, and be visually appealing. Invite cards should be distributed to church attenders with instructions to hand-deliver cards to friends, family, and neighbors who might be interested in our events.
- *Limitations:* Hand-delivered cards should not be created by individual groups for distribution.

Electronic Sign

- *Purpose:* The digital sign, located on Loomis Rd. outside of the Victory of the Lamb building, should be utilized to publicize service times and special events for church. Due to timing, there is a limit of 3 topics advertised at any given time with the digital sign. Designs should contain text that is high-contrast to the background and should contain limited text.
- *Limitations:* Detailed designs and designs with excessive text will not be displayed on the sign.

Other Community Marketing (T-Shirts, Posters, Banners, cups, etc.)

- *Purpose:* Other items may be created for marketing purposes, including but not limited to: banners, t-shirts, posters, stickers, water bottles, cups, and wristbands. All materials should have Victory of the Lamb name and/or logo on them. These materials should adhere to Victory of the Lamb branding guidelines whenever able and appropriate.
- *Limitations:* Materials should not be printed with service times or any other information that may be subject to change. Designs for marketing materials should be approved by church leadership (staff, leadership team, service team leaders) prior to printing and purchase.