PRINCIPLES FOR CHOOSING AND CREATING CONTENT FOR CHURCH WEBSITES

Copywriting

KISS (Keep it simple, stupid)

Keep messaging clear and easy-to-read. Make it clear what you want people to do (e.g. click a button, watch a video, fill out a form, scroll down the page... this is called a **call to action**).

Everyone is not your audience

Pick a group (or groupings) as your key demographics, and write to them, not everyone!

Key broad groups for most churches:
- Existing church members
    They will dig for information - and hopefully you'll direct them along the way during external communications, on Sunday mornings etc. But you can of course theme information that they will recognise (e.g. big events like carol services...)
- Christians looking for a new church
    They will probably know what they are looking. Simple details like Sunday service times may suffice, but they might also want to know about leadership, denomiation etc - but let them dig!
- People looking to come back to faith/church
    They will look for Sunday, or an appropriate event to come along to - but they'll respond well to warm and casual text monst likely.
- People who're looking to explore faith.
    Make it easy for them to understand - not Christian jargon where possible - and where it's unavoidable, explain it! Key questions - "Am I welcome?", "Where is it", "When is it". Try and dispell fears/unknowns (you can dress casual, enjoy the service - you can 'sit it out' if you want to...")

Connect Socially if you can!

We mean Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc - whatever you can manage. You're better off not having social media if you can't manage it - and empty feed looks less inviting than none at all!

Get people to invest

Encourage people to click, watch, share etc. Get them to invest in what you're saying and doing!

Don't water it down.

Church isn't a social club, or a business, it doesn't need to please everyone. But pick your battles. E.g. you probably don't need to address the problems of homosexuality here (or if you do, remember to tackle gluttony, other sexual sin, worshipping false idols, the problem of the love of money...), but be clear - 'we love Jesus' etc.

HOME PAGE

This is you big splash. You do not need to feature everything here! Keep it simple, concise and put your best/most relevant foot forward!

Menu

Menu's have 'levels'. The options you see at all times in the main menu, with a 'sub-menu' that drops down further options upon clicking. Choose wisely - and think about how you might 'categorise' pages. Not all pages need to make an appearance, but can be part of the user journey as they browse through pages.

Above the Fold

This is the section that people see on their screen when the page loads. Make it count!

This top section (with the light blue background) could be one image with a button, or a series of sliding images and headers to highlight a few things. There's no real right or wrong answer - but the key question is "What do we need people to know the most".

Logo

Menu   Menu   Menu

Main Headline
Subheader

Button

Interesting Healine

Homepage Paragraphs

Keep paragraph short and sweet - get to the point, but keep in informal (unless formal is your chosen voice). Remember, blocks of text will put people off reading altogether, but make sure you say what needs saying (or say 'click here for more')

This first paragraph will almost certainly be 'below the fold'. What's key is getting the headline for this section to 'grab the reader's attention' and convince them to scroll down the page.

Call to action

Button

Help people choose

Keep people clicking by helping them choose which option they need (e.g. "kids work", "youth" or "small groups"). People will choose the most relevant.
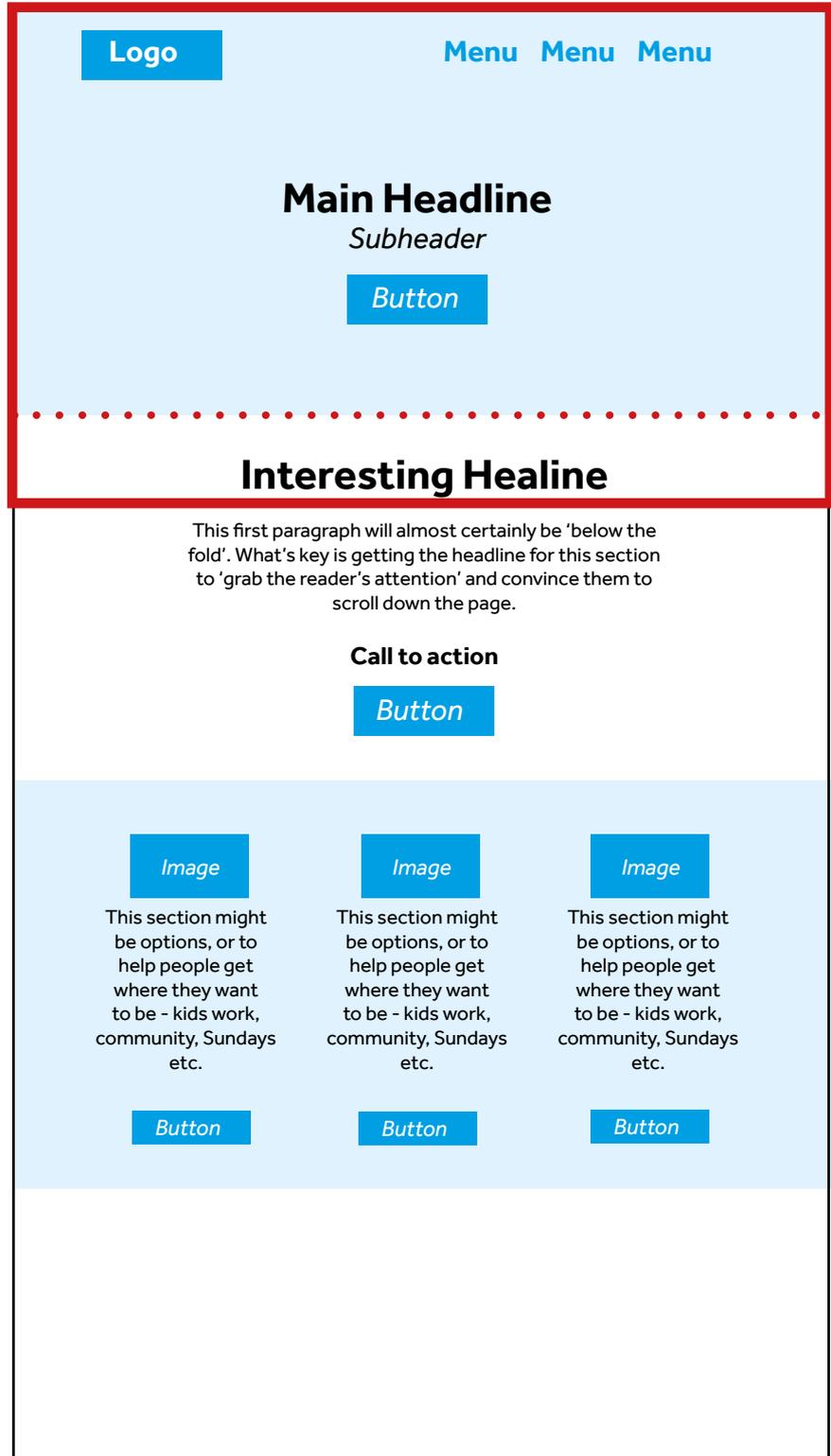
Image

This section might be options, or to help people get where they want to be - kids work, community, Sundays etc.

Button

Image

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Button

Image

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Button

Page length

Long pages are OK! Just keep sections clear and concise - don't add in unneccessary sections.

Footer

At the bottom will be the 'footer'. You can add in plenty of links here!

STANDARD PAGES

These are non-home page pages! You can edit this content yourselves with ease. Keep it simple and on point.

Logo   **Menu**   **Menu**   **Menu**

Page title
Interest, short subheader

In Wordpress you'll be able to change the wording, add photos and more! But as a general rule, keep it nice an clear. Add in links in the text to other pages as needed. Remember to maintain your chosen 'Voice' throughout, and keep in concise.

People will not read blocks of text. Either simplify what you're saying or break up the text. Bullet points are OK as well!

Page links
Page 1
Youth
Community