

Communication Desk Report 2023

Introduction.

We are living in a time where there is so much information available and where we also receive so much information, that it is impossible to read it all. I want to start this report with a quotation from Liz Papadpulos:

“EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION REQUIRES MORE THAN AN EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION. WHEN DONE RIGHT, COMMUNICATION FOSTERS UNDERSTANDING, STRENGTHENS RELATIONSHIPS, IMPROVES TEAM WORK AND BUILDS TRUST.”

Personally I like this quote as it reminds me and you, that the communication within the CAPE CHURCH is much more than just the exchange of information.

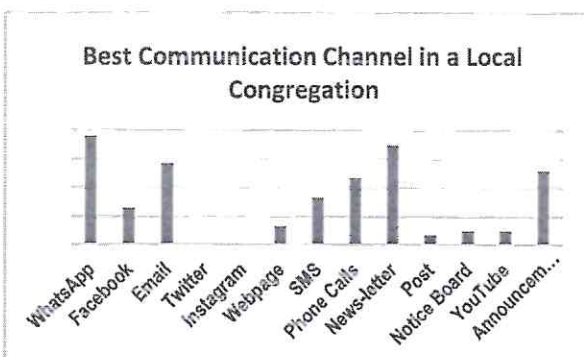
When communication takes place, it should help us as the CAPE CHURCH **to grow in understanding** of who we are as an individual congregation, but also as the greater body of Christ within the CAPE CHURCH of which we are all part of. Communication should not only **strengthen our relationship** with God, but also with each other as individuals and as individual congregations.

Communication should assist us to strengthen ourselves and others to be GOD’S CHURCH here and now. Through communication **trust is built** between the different congregations.

As the CAPE CHURCH we are always seeking ways to improve communication on different levels. But we also aware that communication can also be better. But what the quote reminds us of, is that communication requires more than an exchange of information. This means information flows both ways: from the congregations to each other and the CAPE CHURCH and from the CAPE CHURCH to the congregations.

Communication Survey Feedback June 2022.

A survey was sent out to the pastors and the chairpersons of all the congregations of the CAPE CHURCH. Out of all the congregations only 8 congregations submitted their responses and feedback. The aim of this questionnaire was to give the Church Council an idea of what communication is taking place within the congregations and what kind of communication is required from the congregations.



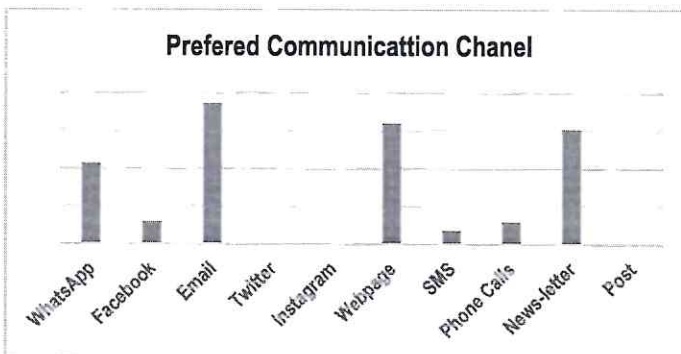
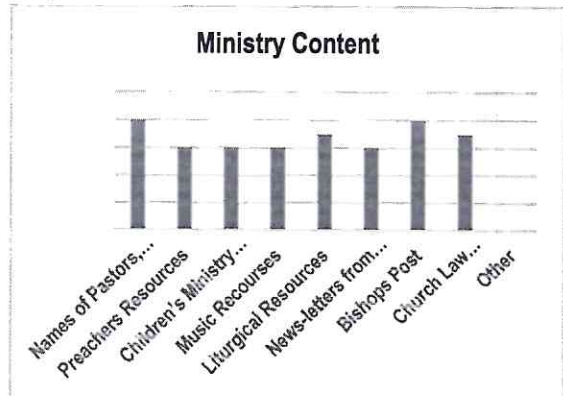
The most preferred communication channels for congregations to communicate with their members. Most congregations make use of WhatsApp, emails, phone calls and their newsletter to communicate with their members. Not one of the congregations uses use of Instagram and Twitter.

The best communication that works in these congregations are WhatsApp, the Newsletter, emails and the announcements on a Sunday

morning. **The biggest challenge with communication** seems to be the same among all the congregations, that people do not seem to read nor pay attention to the information that they have been sent. Another challenge is that older congregation members struggle with technology.

All 8 participating congregations acknowledged that they receive the communication from the Church office via email. This information is sent to the pastors, the chairpersons and in some instances the secretaries.

The congregations listed the following preferred resources to assist them in their various ministries: basic information of the pastors and the chairpersons of each congregation. Here we need to be aware of the POPI act in order to be compliant. The second highest request from the congregations was that the bishop's post be placed on the webpage. Followed by resources pertaining to the church law and liturgical resources.



The congregations were asked to also indicate in which way they would prefer the CAPE CHURCH to distribute this communication. Here most of the congregations opted for receiving communication through email, which has been the norm up to now. This is followed by information that is communicated through the webpage.

Office of the Bishop

The CAPE CHURCH has employed a secretary on a part time basis with flexible hours. Mrs Althea Weyer is a member of the St Crucis. A challenge for the Office of the Bishop is that the congregations fail to notify the Office of the Bishop of any changes in their church committees, or when new delegates have been elected. For communication to flow it is vital that the Office of the Bishop is informed. Please utilize the Office of the Bishop. Mrs Althea Weyer can be reached at the following email address: office@elcscape.co.za

Bishop Filter sends out a Bishops post on a bi-monthly bases, to communicate the happenings within the congregations, information regarding changes in Pastoral Posts, information regarding the different ecumenical church bodies to which we as the CAPE CHURCH belong and information that enables US to be church with and for the people. As congregations you are encouraged to share the bishops post in your newsletters and on your social media platforms. The Bishop's Post is also available on the Webpage.

Webpage

Our webpage address is: <https://www.lutherancape.org.za/> Mrs Erika Gertholtz is our administrator using her passion to service the church. Thank you for all your hard work with the webpage and trying to keep it up to date. Please make use of the webpage in the following ways:

- By keeping your congregation page section up to date with contact details and information.
- Sending through your special congregational events so that they can be uploaded to into your congregational section.
- By emailing your newsletter to be uploaded on the webpage.
- Photos and short videos can also be sent through to Erika.

Here are some statistics of the webpage from September 2022 until September 2023:

- 2,800 users who have accessed the webpage before accessed the webpage again.
- 5,500 users accessed the webpage for the first time.
- 61.2% users are woman and 38.8% are male.
- When looking at users by their language: English 2.294; and German 407.
- Users according to age group: 45-54; 35-44; and 55-64 make uses of the webpage the most.
- Users by country: South Africa 2000; Germany 326; United Sates 166; China 67; United Kingdom 37.
- Most users search via their mobile phones at 51.2% which is followed by 48.6% who search with the computers.

Erika's vision for our webpage is that we all, as members of the Cape Church help build a webpage that is a source of information of the resources that we have to offer. For instance: daily devotions, ideas for children's ministry and youth, and resources for the divine services. Erika's email address is create@piceri.co.za please feel free to contact her with suggestions and information.



MS 365 Data Base

With the help of Mr Detlev Ahlert, Bishop Filter, and myself, we are trying to build a data basis for all the congregations. Each congregation and pastor will have their own email address. The aim is to create a Data basis where pastors, chairpersons, synod delegates, circuit conferences delegates, preachers, and church council members have access to their related shared files. Thank you

for all your hard work Detlev. Please feel free to contact Detlev if you should have any questions: detlevahlert@gmail.com.

Conclusion.

Dear Synod delegates, our communication can continuously be improved. We need to remember that communication begins with each one of us choosing to open and read an email or a social media post. It begins with making time to read the correspondence and engaging with the correspondent and enable a dialogue. We can have the best information system in the world, but if we do not make a conscious choice to engage with correspondence then all is in vain.

Let us then communicate with one another in order to grow in understanding. May we choose to communicate to enable us to strengthen our relationship with each other so that we can built trust in God's Church namely the CAPE CHURCH.

Kind regards

Pastor Hans-Peter von Fintel