

01

Church website mistake 1 of 7

The homepage is a bulletin board

A church homepage has one job in the first five seconds: show a visitor who you are and what to do next. Too many open with a wall of notices instead.

What it looks like

- ✗ No photo at the top, or a small photo boxed inside a column
- ✗ A flat color block or a texture (wood grain, marble, a flag) where a photo should be
- ✗ The first words are "Welcome! Thank you for visiting our website."
- ✗ A calendar widget, Verse of the Day, announcements, and a member login stacked side by side
- ✗ Small, dense text, with paragraphs cut off behind "read more"

Why it matters

We hand-scored 147 church websites to learn what separates a good one from one that needs replacing. A security certificate, a mobile tag, and the copyright year barely made a difference. The clearest signal was what the homepage opened with.

The good ones opened with a real photograph and a sentence that said something. The ones that needed replacing opened like a noticeboard, however tidy it was.

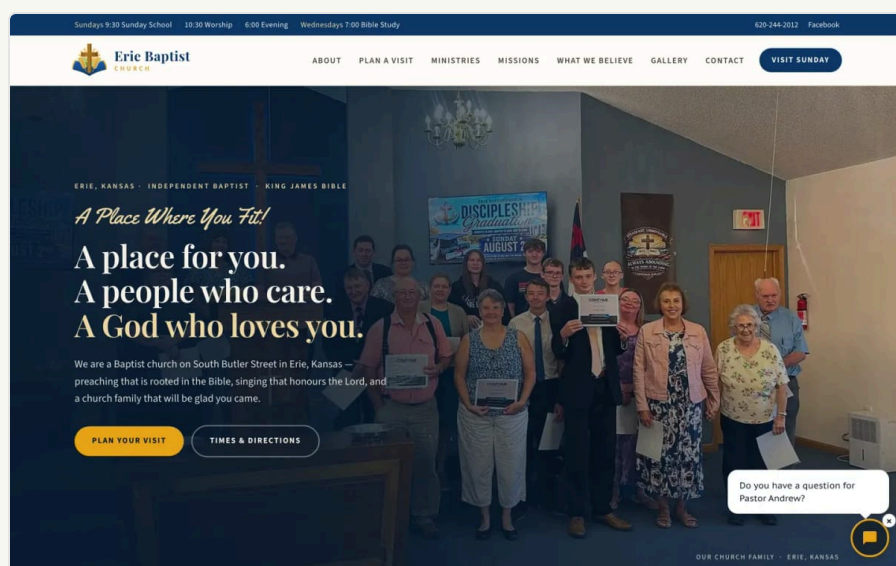
Five-minute check

If you can't tick every box, start with the fixes on the next page.

- ☐ Open your homepage on a phone. Is the first thing you see a real photo of your church?
- ☐ Do the first words say something about your church, rather than welcoming people to a website?
- ☐ Can you see when and where you meet without scrolling?
- ☐ Is there one main button, not five?
- ☐ Is the top of the page free of widgets such as calendars, verses, and logins?

How to fix it

- 01 Pick one real photograph, such as your people on a Sunday or your building on a clear day, and run it edge to edge across the top. Skip the stock photos.
- 02 Replace "Welcome to our website" with one sentence that is true about your church. "A small church where everyone knows your name" beats any welcome line.
- 03 Put your service time and address directly underneath.
- 04 Give the visitor one obvious next step, such as "Plan your visit."
- 05 Move announcements, the calendar, and the member login further down the page or onto their own pages.



What it looks like done well

Erie Baptist Church

Erie, KS

Their own congregation fills the screen, the headline says "A place for you. A people who care. A God who loves you." and every service time sits in a bar across the top, with one main button: Plan your visit.

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dfd.llc/church-website-development

All seven: 1. The homepage is a bulletin board · 2. Service times are hard to find · 3. Nothing for first-time guests · 4. It breaks on a phone · 5. Old events are still up · 6. Only one person can update it · 7. No one is watching the domain