

Web Site Working Group

Report to Church Council - October 17, 2006

CONTINUED INCREASE IN SITE USE

Site statistics for the third quarter 2006 continues to increase in activity over the same period in 2005. The number of visits increased about 3 times, from 1,860 (2005Q3) to 5,603 (2006Q3). The number of distinct internet origins responsible for these visits grew from 781 (2005Q3) to 1,306 (2006Q3), an increase of about 60 percent.

2006 MONTH	VISITS	AVERAGE VIEWS	DISTINCT ORIGINS
July	1,656	2.68	435
August	1,801	3.13	377
September	2,146	4.27	494
Cumulative*	21,331	4.51	3,706

*Period: 2004-12-17 to 2006-10-15

Quick Interpretation: Since we began operating this web site (on December 17, 2004), we've had 21,331 visitors (not necessarily unique visitors).

We've noticed that our visitor growth rate was slower than our Second Quarter, quarter-to-quarter, comparison. We believe that this may be partially due to our inability to keep the site as fresh as necessary to attract returning visitors.

Some areas of our web site, such as the News section, the Calendar, and motivational areas (Sermons, Personal Reflections, etc.), have become a little stale because we don't have the time resources to maintain them as well as they should. We could use a little assistance to help with timely reporting of the news and to encourage people to contribute to the motivational areas of the site.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Desperately Seeking A Reporter. We're still looking for one or more reporters and writers to help our website become the best it can be! We have many potential projects on which you can cut your teeth...from the very simple one or two liners to full-blown articles. Pick the project that fits your time and talent...and volunteer.

USE THE WEBSITE TO ACHIEVE YOUR OBJECTIVES

Our website can be a useful vehicle for disseminating and collecting information as well as providing a convenient way for visitors to directly contact our ministers, church office or lay leadership on an individual basis. The WSWG encourages each lay leader to consider how the web site might help solve his or her communications or data collection projects. If you're not sure we can help you, please contact us to get a fresh pair of eyes to look at your project and suggest possible alternatives.

RECENT ACTIVITIES

While we are continually improving the website to make it more friendly and informative, we made several recent improvements that are worth noting.

- **Improved Main Menu** - Our main menu is a little more intuitive now.
- **Quick Notes & Announcements** - A first place to check on our 'splash' page on your visits. Our problem is keeping the information fresh. This is an area that would be better served by someone who could focus on these types of items.
- **Lectionary Readings** - At the request of Ken Welsh we experimented with putting the Lectionary Readings online. It

Philip T. DiPeri, October 2006

is now a fully automated area and is currently being completely managed from home by Carol Munson on a volunteer basis.

- **Image Gallery** - We've recently started to concentrate access to the photo essays associated with selected events. This would be an area for someone to develop content and make it much richer than WSWG could.
- **Christian Ed Schedules** - At the request (and help) of Lucia, we've posted Acrobat versions of the various Christian Education Schedules.
- **Communication Support** - We've attempted to anticipate some needs that the website can help solve. Some of these include:
 - More visual request for Soup Kitchen volunteers
 - Special display for the recent Coffeehouse fund-raiser.
 - A 'countdown' clock (to add visual interest) showing how long until the Service Auction.
- **Technical Improvements** - We've continued to automate the website's back-end operation. Most of the displays are generated from the information loaded in various databases we've been continuing to populate. The time we spend with data input reduces our available time to improve and maintain the site infrastructure. We could use some help here.

ONGOING INITIATIVES

Sunday Sermons: We've started to make sermons available. Preparing sermons is a daunting task, especially for our Ministers. Transcription and editing require time...a very scarce resource. If there is a volunteer out there who can help our Ministers with this activity, everyone would appreciate it.

Council Minutes - Online Version: We expect that an edited version of the Church Council minutes will be available soon on an ongoing basis.

Council Meeting Agenda: At the April meeting WSWG proposed that the Council authorize posting of its Meeting Agenda on the web site about a week ahead of time to help facilitate community communication and participation in the issues facing our church.

Communications Group Concept: The WSWG introduced the idea of organizing the churches' internal and external communications efforts around the concept of a Communications Group at the Council's February meeting.

At the May Council meeting, WSWG proposed chartering an independent study of this concept as to its appropriateness, usefulness and viability to our congregation at the earliest opportunity. No action was taken

We continue to strongly urge the Council to proceed with this task.

Permission Forms: As of this date, there are still 29 (of approximately 85) Permission Forms not submitted.

Council Officers (2), B&G (2), CE (5), CO (2), Finance (1), Music (1), Trustees (1), Auditing (1), Collections (4), Floral (2), Memorial Gifts (3), Nominating (1), Pastoral Relations (1), U&G (2).

The WSWG hopes that we'll do better with next year. The objective of this initiative is to foster better communications within our Church Community and with the larger community.

All WSWG Reports are posted online.