

# TTT378 - Guidance For Those Hosting Parts of Sunday Worship Series. Part 5 - Announcements and Updates

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03 September 2024

## Introduction

Today, we continue a series exploring why we do what we do at a Sunday gathering. Last week, we focussed on public prayer. This week's topic is announcements and updates.

What are we talking about? I have in mind giving us an update about HOPE Worldwide or informing us of an event hosted by another church. It could be an internal matter like an upcoming meeting for the men in the church, the parents, or the preteens.

Why do we need a whole article about something simple and straightforward? Let me offer two reasons:

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## Importance

If the announcement is important enough to bring to the congregation, it is worth doing well. Presumably, it is something significant and of spiritual value. I assume you either wish to inspire people or call them to some kind of action (or both). The way in which announcements are made makes a huge difference to the outcome.

## Respect

Let's say you are making a five-minute announcement. If you make it to 50 people, you have just used up 4 hours and 10 minutes of the congregation's time. Respect their time by preparing well.

Now, let's discuss some tips for effective announcements and updates.

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## Tips

- **God:** Announcements and updates are about God's work in your community. When preparing what to share, the ultimate question is not what to communicate or how, but "Where is God in this?".
- **2 People:** Don't make announcements that apply to 2 people in the room. You're better off speaking to those two people in the fellowship rather than taking up the time of the other 48.
- **Necessary?** Don't make announcements simply for *the sake* of them when a WhatsApp message would do the same job. A service without announcements is still a valid assembly!
- **Reasonable number:** Keep the number of announcements and updates in any service to a reasonable number. Once we get beyond three, everyone's attention tends to drift.
- **Jargon:** Remember that guests visiting our services will not have context. Therefore, cut out jargon (see [TTT376](#)) and make no assumptions. For example, "We give to HOPE worldwide" confuses a visitor. However, "We give to the charity HOPE worldwide" is a simple change that makes it clear. Or, again, rather than "HOPE houses homeless people", it is better to say, "The charity HOPE worldwide has a programme called 'Two-Step' that helps homeless people find accommodation."
- **Informing/Inspiring:** Be clear whether you are mainly *informing* us about something or attempting to *inspire*/persuade us to take action. Information looks like, "The preteen camp dates are....", while inspire/persuade looks like, "It's important to sign up for the preteen camp between now and next Sunday because...." In general, put dates and essential information on a slide, bulletin, or special handout and reserve the spoken announcement for persuasion. Again, be clear whether you are informing us about something or inspiring us to take action. It may be both, but bear in mind that information tends to become rather dry unless it has a point.
- **Scripture:** Use Scripture where appropriate. For example, if I were making an announcement about church 'jobs' that need doing, I would introduce the announcement by quoting 1 Peter 4.10 or Romans 12.3-8. Do not force a Scripture into an inappropriate context, but if you can find a relevant verse, by all means, share it.
- **Clarity:** Finally, when preparing your announcement/update, ask yourself this question: "Is what I want the church to do as a result of this announcement *clear*?"

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## Questions for reflection & discussion

What, in your opinion, is the *point* of announcements? When have you seen them done in a meaningful way? What was happening that made them effective?

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## Summary

Bear in mind these tips are guidelines, not rules, and there will be occasions to deviate from the ideas above. However, they represent healthy habits and techniques that will keep the church family informed while, hopefully, not boring or confusing us!

It's time for the challenge of the week. The next time you have an opportunity to make an announcement or share an update, seek to make it about *God's work*.

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## Next week

Next time, we will consider best practices for sharing our testimony.

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Please add your comments on this week's topic. We learn best when we learn in community.

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<https://aim.moodlecloud.com/>.

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Keep calm and carry on teaching.

God bless, Malcolm