REPORT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

To the 146th Council
of the Diocese of the Northeast & Mid-Atlantic
of the Reformed Episcopal Church

"(12). A Committee on Public Relations, consisting of five members, which shall endeavor to publicize by various news media all events and matters of interest occurring in the Diocese and its Parishes."

What are the means by which your church relates to the public? First off, there is the building and the sign out front. Secondly, there are your leaders, your rector or vicar or parish wardens. But most importantly, there are the members of your congregation. Each one of you is relating to the public in your interactions with friends, neighbors and co-workers. That interaction says a lot more to an outsider than a "Who We Are" pamphlet in your vestibule or on a webpage.

Yet in this day and age, your website is often the first thing a stranger will check when they hear about your church. And just as with a nice sign or your building, what they see tells them something about you in the first few seconds. The imagery you use, and the friendliness or helpfulness of the site, tells them what kind of people make up your church.

More than half of all visits to websites are happening from smart phones these days, compared to desktops and laptops which have much larger screens. The interface is also different, as there is limited room on a smart phone screen for buttons or clickable lines of text. Does your church website look good and work well when visited on a smart phone? Try it yourself. Visit your own website, try to find a picture of your building, the address, the service times, and the Contact page. It's not easy.

We hope you have been enjoying the increased flow of information and prayer requests from the Diocese via the more frequent NEMA News emails. If you are not getting this, you can CLICK HERE to sign up or send an email to: admin@rec-nema.org requesting a subscription. Contributions or suggestions are always welcome.

Another aspect of public relations is what happens when a crisis strikes your church. Does your church have a crisis management plan? Natural disasters, active shooters or attackers, or even the sudden discovery of sexual abuse or financial mismanagement can cause a public relations disaster for your congregation. Pre-planned communications and responsibilities are vital to managing the crisis. If you have concerns about your church's plan, email us at: admin@rec-nema.org.

The season of Advent and Christmas is coming soon, and we have a tradition of posting special events from our churches on a special Diocesan webpage in order to draw visitors. Please let us know how we can help your church expand your online appeal by featuring your upcoming events. Note also the REC-BFM Advent Appeal is coming up; a brochure is available on the Diocesan Council page HERE.

Respectfully submitted,
Gregory Wright, Chairman