

Website Committee report
September 11, 2023 QBM

Dear Friends

This report is intended to share some basic information about what our church is doing online and what impact its having. First off, you should know that there are 3 separate but related “profiles” of our church that are available online: (1) our website, christiansciencefairfax.com, (2) our Facebook group, “Christian Science in Fairfax, Virginia”, and (3) our Google Business Profile, “Christian Science Church, Fairfax”. Of these, the website is the most complete picture of our church and of Christian Science; the other 2 are for more specific purposes and have more limited information – including links to get to our website.

You may recall that we launched our redesigned website way back in July of 2021. Watchfire New Media was our design company, and they have continued to provide ongoing support to our website – doing things like posting items on our blog page, such as the Wed evening readings. They’ve done a good job. The website still looks fresh and is easy to navigate. It represents us well.

In late 2021, after the website was launched, we hired Watchfire to restart our Facebook group which they have done. At that time, our Facebook group was effectively inactive as we had not posted any new content in well over a year. It was not connected to our new website. Today we are active on Facebook again and are attracting followers. The link to our website is helping Facebook users get to our website to find out more about us.

The Google Business Profile was created late in 2022 and updated earlier this year with Watchfire’s help. The GBP is a standard template Google provides to businesses and other organizations and which Google uses to respond to search requests. For example, if you search for a type of business – coffee shop, church, etc. immediately following any paid advertising will be a section called “Places”. This is the listing of business profiles that relate to the search topic. We are now showing up there for topics like “Christian churches in Fairfax”.

One final note is that Google has been in the process of overhauling their website data tracking program for the past 2 years. It finally launched in July of this year. So while we haven’t had much data to share up until now, going forward we will. I have a just a few numbers to share tonight, with a promise of more to come in future QBMs.

Here are answers to some common questions:

How many people visit our website? 114 over the past month

How many of those used Facebook/GBP to reach the website? A total of 30 over the past month

How long do people stay on our website? An average of 1 minute 43 seconds

What pages most popular on the website? (1) homepage (2) blog page (3) service times

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How many Facebook followers do we have? We have 176 followers, of whom 27 saw content in the past month

How many people see our GBP? 54 over the past month

We'd all like these numbers to continue to grow, and we will continue to work with Watchfire on ways to do that. One conclusion so far though, is that we are clearly reaching more than just our membership through these online activities.

One final point, is that although our efforts are targeted primarily at those unfamiliar with CS and our church, we recognize that they can also provide value to our members. In particular, we encourage your use of our website, including the members-only page, where you can view QBM minutes, our Bylaws, our membership list, etc. It is password protected and is not available to non-members. If you don't know how to find or access that, please let the clerk know and we will send instructions. We want this to be a useful resource area for everyone and also take just a bit of work off the plate of our clerk.

In closing, from Message for 1902:

When the human mind is advancing above itself towards the Divine, it is subjugating the body, subduing matter, taking steps outward and upwards.

Respectfully submitted
John Baker