



Executive Summary

Episcopal Church National Awareness TV Campaign

“The Episcopal Church Welcomes You”

Introduction

The Episcopal Church TV Ad campaign will take our message about the Episcopal Church and what we teach to the American people through the medium that most influences their lives...TV.

This is a time of change for Episcopalians and the Episcopal Church. By the year 2020, many envision there being twice as many Episcopalians as there are today. *2020 The Episcopal Church in Mission* is a movement of reconciliation that “seeks to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.” This ambitious campaign will require several communication strategies **including reaching the general public through broadcast television.**



The Episcopal Church Office of Communication is asking the General Convention to consider an advertising program that will reach the largest national audience of viewers while making the most efficient use of advertising dollars.

Why use a TV ad campaign to raise awareness?

“Television is the medium of the culture, because people watch TV and people form their opinions from television,” says The Reverend Canon Michael Hansen, executive officer of the Diocese of California and member of the team that created the spots. “We wanted to get out brand out there, we wanted people to understand what the Episcopal Church is about through these ads.”

Who are the Target Audiences?

The ads use an ironic and humorous approach to reach three primary groups of viewers:

Seekers – The spots attract people who are open to Christianity, but have little knowledge about the Episcopal Church and what it has to offer.

Fallen-Away Christians – We show them this is not the church they remember from their past.

Active Members – The spots remind us of what we stand for as a church, and help build our sense of community. They give us something to talk about when sharing about our spiritual life with friends, co-workers, relatives and neighbors.



*“Will you come back to church if we
promise not to throw the book at you?
Whoever you are,
the Episcopal Church welcomes you.”*

Connecting viewers to parishes

The primary result of the TV campaign will be increased public awareness of the Episcopal Church. This will influence choices to visit Episcopal parishes, and will help distinguish the Episcopal Church from other Christian churches. The results are sometimes surprising.

Episcopal parishes in San Francisco and Utah alike reported increases in visitors and return of fallen-away members. Seekers who are leaving other denominations find the spots intriguing and inviting, as did this former Mormon in Utah who wrote,

“By the way, those Episcopal TV commercials do work. I saw the “Where do women stand in our church?” commercial, and that’s what led me to go to the website and email you. I am now an active member of St. James and I plan on getting baptized into the Episcopal Church at Pentecost. I feel so much better about myself spiritually and physically being a part of the Episcopal Church.”



www.EpiscopalChannel.com was the site used for the San Francisco Campaign. A similar site will be built for the national campaign.

One direct response to the TV ads is to visit the web site shown in the spot’s tag for more information about the Episcopal Church. This national web site will allow visitors to find information about what we believe, search for nearby congregations and provide links to their local web sites.

For an example of a response site, visit www.EpiscopalChannel.com, the web site used when the campaign aired in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Telling what we stand for as Christians

There are 14 spots that portray the Episcopal Church as a diverse and inclusive community. The spots use humor and irony to reach viewers.

The spots include a range of themes:

- ethnic diversity
- women’s role in the church
- contemporary relevance
- doubt and faith
- inclusivity and hospitality
- justice and peace



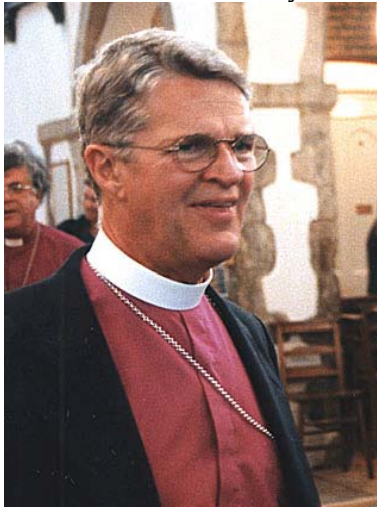
“Did you know that more than half of our world wide members are people of color? Whoever you are, the Episcopal Church welcomes you.”

An opportunity and challenge in evangelization

“Whoever you are, the Episcopal Church welcomes you!”

The ads have proven to get more seekers, fallen-away, and church shoppers to come and sample our churches. But what happens if the visitor encounters a coffee hour experience that defies all of the hospitality and inclusivity promised in the TV spots?

The national campaign plan must include preparation of our parishes to receive visitors and find ways to integrate them into parish worship and mission.



Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold sees the TV ad campaign as having immediate implications for evangelization, both in terms of the seekers who respond to them, and also in terms of church members seeing the spots and saying, "Oh, that's what we're all about."

In preparation for a national campaign, it is vital that parishes at the local level "equip the saints" to greet and include newcomers once the campaign is on the air. Griswold sees both an opportunity and a challenge, and asks, "How do we make congregations not just places of welcome, but places where people will encounter something authentic that will make them want to grow with that congregation?"

How the TV Ads were created

The Diocese of California and GraceCom Media Ministry of Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, created the TV spots. Emmy winning director and producer Canon Rick Johnson headed the production project.

These TV ads are based on concepts developed for print ads by the Rev. George Martin and the Church Ad Project in the 1980s. The TV ads blend new contemporary themes with timeless values to create thought-provoking messages. The 14 spots' messages are directed to a range of demographic groups.



"Is the information highway speeding you toward isolation? It's time to reboot your soul. Whoever you are the Episcopal Church welcomes you."

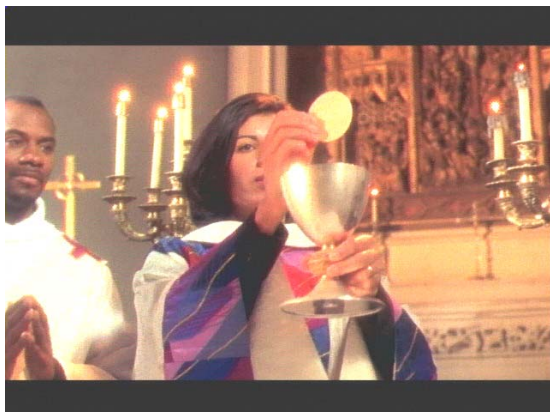
The spots have been recognized for their excellence in the following festivals:

2002 Telly Award – *Best Public Service Announcement (1st, 2nd & 3rd Place)*

2000 Aurora Gold Award – *Best Advertising Campaign – Public Service Announcement*

2000 Summit Creative Award – *Best Public Service Announcement*

The spots were directed by Canon Rick Johnson, and shot on film by cinematographer Mike Elwell. Editor Eric Salter finished the spots in the GraceCom facility. Robbin Atherly and Six Foot Two Productions, who have animated projects for Disney and feature films, created the state of the art animations and effects. Dino Johnson created the original music.



*“Where do women stand in our church?
Right at the altar. Whoever you are,
the Episcopal Church welcomes you.”*

The 15-second TV spots are aired in pairs, usually as “bookends” to a pod of commercials. This delivers two impressions for the price of a 30-second ad.

Production of the TV ad campaign was undertaken as part of the Episcopal Diocese of California’s 150th Anniversary celebration, under leadership of The Rev. Canon Michael Hansen. The TV spots aired for six weeks in 2000, and again during the 2002 Winter Olympics. The 14 spots introduced hundreds of thousands of San Francisco Bay Area viewers to the message, “Whoever you are, the Episcopal Church Welcomes You.”

Preparing the Parishes for the Campaign

The campaign provides an enormous incentive for every Diocese to train and prepare the parishes to respond to seekers and newcomers with the kind of hospitality the TV ads promise. A ground level strategy is essential to the success of the campaign and lay leadership must partner with clergy in preparing the congregations.

When the spots aired in the San Francisco Bay Area and the Diocese of Utah, the dioceses had been organized to leverage the TV ad campaign and prepare the parish congregations. Here are some elements that helped support parish hospitality:



*“Jesus had his doubts, why can’t you?
Whoever you are,
the Episcopal Church welcomes you.”*

- Congregation members attended workshops, “Getting the Most Out of the Ad Campaign,” that gave tips on how to be more hospitable when newcomers present themselves at church.
- Parishes created print advertising and marketing collateral including door-hangers and flyers.
- The diocese provided seed money to help cover costs such as printing and postage.
- Each parish was requested to designate two congregation members to act as ambassadors of hospitality to newcomers.
- The Church Ad Project offers posters and print ads for local newspapers featuring themes that reinforce the TV Ad campaign.
- There was distribution of welcoming materials throughout their neighborhoods.
- Groups began work six weeks before the ads ran on television.
- The ads refer visitors to a web site where they can learn more about the Episcopal tradition and locate parishes in their area. This is the principal direct response mechanism to provide more information and connect seekers to nearby congregations.

Strategy for the Media Buy

This pilot campaign will achieve national reach through the cable TV channels that are viewed by our principal target demographics. This will allow us to spend our media budget with the most precision. Using a national agency with media-buying clout, we will implement a strategy for placing the TV spots at specific times and during specific programs to reach our target audiences.



*"We all feel lonely sometimes.
Come into community with us.*

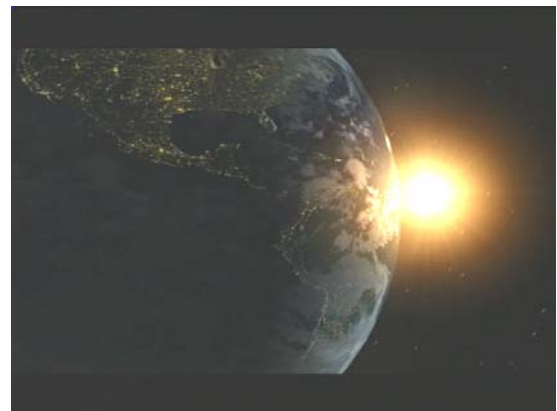
Whoever you are, the Episcopal Church welcomes you."

The budget request for this project is \$750,000 including church training materials, production and licensing, agency fees, and cost of airtime. While this is a substantial amount, it is not nearly enough to achieve saturation in the general public. By comparison, a recent Lutheran campaign cost \$7 million, and the Methodists spent \$25 million. Therefore, our project will focus on raising awareness within the demographics most likely to be interested in the spiritual and religious aspects of life.

Local dioceses can build upon the national ads with local media buys.

The complete series of 14 spots is available for local airing, with local tags that direct viewers to a diocesan site or toll-free number. The Episcopal Media Center has been licensed to distribute the spots to individual dioceses, and can provide information on how to implement the campaign and buy TV time on a local basis once the national campaign has finished.

Contact Nan Ross at 800-229-3788



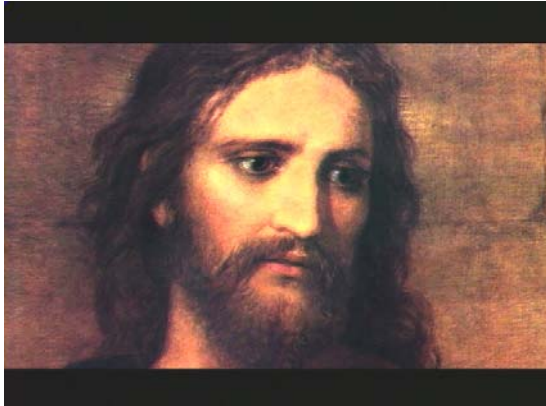
*"Without God, the world can become
a vicious circle. If you seek justice and peace,
the Episcopal Church welcomes you."*

Ad Campaign Results

The Episcopal Diocese of Utah ran the TV campaign in 2002. The Rev. Dan Webster, communications director for the diocese, reported, "We were very impressed with the impact that these spots made in our area, given the number of visits to our website increased ten times, as well as the number of phone calls... There were a lot of people who came away with a better understanding of what the Episcopal Church believes in and what we teach."

Parishes reported an increase in attendance due to the increased awareness from the ad campaign. The TV spots helped people overcome their reluctance to visit a local parish.

Clergy, while wearing their collars in public, reported being approached by people who mentioned the ads and then inquired about the Episcopal Church. There was also a bolstering of “esprit de corps” among Episcopalians who were seeing their church presented on TV for the first time.



*“Jesus died to take away your sins,
not your mind. Whoever you are,
the Episcopal Church welcomes you.”*

A recent Lutheran TV campaign raised recognition levels from 25% to 35% unprompted, and from 30% to 60% prompted. In Utah, *The Episcopal Church Welcomes You* campaign produced similar results. In addition, visits to the diocesan web site increased tenfold.

A Demo Video is available

If you would like to see a demo video of the TV ad campaign with testimonials on the results in California and Utah, contact mcollins@episcopalchurch.org.