Unless you’re a “numbers person,” lists of figures and statistics can quickly make your eyes glaze over. Sometimes, however, it’s necessary to share numbers and statistics with a congregation. These include attendance records, offerings, fundraising progress, budget distributions and more. How can you present that data without overwhelming readers?

The answer is infographics. These charts and graphs are valuable tools for providing numerical data in a simple, digestible form.

Our October issue contained an article about design lessons from Pinterest, a popular social-networking site that uses infographics to present data in a small space. USA Today’s “Snapshots” feature also effectively represents numbers through visuals.

Not only do most readers prefer glancing at a chart to perusing lists of numbers, but the “picture” an infographic provides will also help people remember the material longer.

Thanks to modern page-layout and word-processing programs, infographics can be creative and interesting while providing key details. Just follow these tips:

- Although you can dress up infographics by incorporating clip-art and symbols, don’t make them too busy or complicated. An infographic must provide information quickly and easily.
- When creating infographics, include all the necessary information: a title, the purpose of the graphic and correct numbers. Include a legend next to the graphic or labels within it to help readers understand the information.
- As with a photograph, you can add a caption to offer a more complete explanation.
- Carefully proofread each infographic and double-check all numbers and stats.
- Use caution when placing infographics on your church website. You may not want some information, such as financial figures, widely available on the Internet.

Read on to learn about the three main types of infographics and how to dress them up.

Continued on page 2
Pie Chart

This visual compares the proportion of parts to the whole. As its name suggests, its shaped like a pie with wedges cut in various sizes to reflect particular groupings or amounts. For example, you might use a pie chart to show how the church's budget is distributed.

When you create a pie chart, don't split it into more than eight pieces. Otherwise, the pieces become too small to recognize or label. Use different colors or screen tints to differentiate the various slices. For added visual interest, you can "pull" one piece out of the pie to emphasize it, tilt the pie, add a shadow or try a three-dimensional effect.

Bar Chart

This infographic makes comparisons. You might use a bar chart to compare opposites such as income vs. expenses in the church budget, percentages such as the number of active church members in various denominations or averages such as the amount of money your church spent on VBS in each of the last five years.

Bar charts may have simple horizontal or vertical bars, be three-dimensional or be shaped like a thermometer or something similar for extra pizzazz.

Line Graph

Line graphs are ideal for showing changes over time. Draw lines from point to point to show progress made. Line graphs can show the progress of a fundraising project over a year's time or compare the relationships between information patterns. For example, you can demonstrate the relationship between age and volunteerism.

Limit each graph to three or fewer lines to avoid confusion. Use different colors or screen tints to help separate lines from each other.

To add visual interest, put the graph inside an illustration. You might set the graph inside an outline of a church to show the progress of a capital-campaign fund. Or put it inside a Christmas tree to chart donations for a holiday charity.

As you experiment with infographics, you'll make numbers approachable and appealing to readers.
Printed newsletters supplement e-news

These days, printed church newsletters seem almost obsolete. The trend toward e-newsletters can definitely save time and money, but what other impacts does it have on a congregation? Switching solely to an e-newsletter can leave certain gaps:

- Some people feel as if news doesn't get around as well as it did before.
- Other people feel less connected with the congregation than when the newsletter came to their doors each month.
- There may be a misperception that the church has become less active — possibly because people no longer have a church calendar to post on the refrigerator.
- Not everyone has Internet access or is computer savvy.

The key is to remember that print and e-newsletters work in conjunction with each other. E-mailings and a website definitely add to a church's communicating power, but they can rarely replace the older means entirely.

A printed newsletter is called a "push medium" because it's placed before members and they don't have to do anything to receive it. You've pushed the material in front of them, and they'll see it when they sort their mail.

An e-newsletter or website, however, is called a "pull medium" because viewers must remember that the material is supposed to be there, log on, type in an address or open an e-mail program, and then find the material. Recipients have to do the work to pull the information to them.

Although each medium has its place, whenever you replace a push format with a pull format, you've reduced the amount of communication that's occurring. Here are ways to use the formats to supplement each other. After all, you can never have too much publicity.

- Maintain multiple means of communication. If you broadcast your news via e-newsletter, print, website and verbal announcements during worship services, you increase the likelihood that word will spread.
- Use one medium to support the other. When you mail a print newsletter, for example, also send an e-mail teaser about a particular story. Or announce via e-mail that your website has been updated and include a link.
- Print hard copies of a newsletter for uses that an e-newsletter can't fulfill. Send them to visitors, homebound members and unchurched people in your community. Keep copies of the printed newsletter available throughout the church. Also print one for the church archive.

FEATURE: Spotlighting a subscriber's newsletter

Send birthday wishes via calendar

The Messenger uses a full-page calendar each month to inform readers about church members' birthdays. Names are listed alphabetically in the appropriate date squares. If you try a similar format, you can use the new themed "months of the year" artwork in this issue of The Newsletter Newsletter for page headers. In any empty blanks, you can insert smaller seasonal graphics. The calendar is ideal for hanging on a refrigerator or family bulletin board.

The Messenger is a publication of Calvary Baptist Church, Florence, South Carolina.
THE BASICS

Make sure your subjects and verbs agree, part 2

This month, let’s look at more complicated sentence constructions.

Mixed subjects
When the word or is used with a compound subject, the subject closer to the verb determines whether the verb should be singular or plural. To avoid awkward-sounding sentences, put the plural subject closer to the verb whenever possible.

Either the study guides or the CD is free. (singular verb)
The secretary or the pastors check in every day. (plural verb)

Collective nouns
Words such as family, congregation, team and committee can be either singular or plural. They’re singular when members are acting as one unit and plural when members are acting as individuals. Verbs change accordingly.

The congregation has reached a decision. (The congregation is acting as a unit.)
Each month the committee asks the church to reimburse them for personal expenses. (The committee is acting as individuals.)

If a collective noun-verb combination sounds odd, simply reword the sentence to avoid the problem.

Each month members of the committee ask the church to reimburse them for personal expenses.

Pronoun agreement
Many people now use their as a common pronoun. But words such as everyone are singular, while their is plural.

Wrong: Everyone needs to pick up their permission slip.
Right: Everyone needs to pick up his or her permission slip.

It becomes awkward, however, when you must use his or her more than once.

To fix that, use plural antecedents and pronouns:
The Sunday school children need to pick up their permission slips and get them signed by their parents.
Or avoid pronouns entirely:
All permission slips need to be signed and returned by Sunday.

From a worship bulletin in Orlando, Florida:

Sunday School open house

Come enjoy a special treat!
Join us from 9 to 10 a.m. next Sunday.

This doesn’t sound like much of a treat.

Send your own bloopers to service@NewsletterNewsletter.com.

ART TIP

Use month artwork as a yearlong series

This issue of The Newsletter Newsletter contains 12 “months of the year” graphics you can use throughout this — or any — year. With their seasonal elements, these images will work well on newsletters, websites, calendars, bulletin boards and more. Because the month graphics are similar in style, they’ll give a cohesive look to an entire year’s worth of publications.
**“Star Maker”**

God made stars to shine at night.  
Sparkling stars to give us light.  
Who but he can make a star?  
One that twinkles clear and bright?  
God, the Maker of each star  
Knows just where they shine at night.  
And the God of every light  
Formed each child with love just right.  
Who but he can make a child?  
One that smiles with such delight?  
God, the Maker of each child  
Prospers them to sparkle bright.  

—MaryAnn Sundby

**Freedom in Christ**

No man in this world attains freedom from any slavery except by entrance into some higher servitude. There is no such thing as an entirely free man. If there were one such being, he would be lost in this great universe, all strung through as it is with obligations. It is not whether you are free or a servant but whose servant you are; this is the question. It is not by striking off all allegiances, but by finding your true Lord and serving him with a complete submission, that you can escape from slavery.

—Phillips Brooks

**Get moving**

Faith is the word that describes the direction our feet start moving when we find that we are loved. Faith is stepping out into the unknown with nothing to guide us but a hand just beyond our grasp.

—Frederick Buechner

**Special dates**

- New Year’s Day, January 1, 2013
- Epiphany, January 6, 2013
- Baptism of the Lord, January 13, 2013
- Martin Luther King Jr.’s Birthday Observance, January 21, 2013
- Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, January 18-25, 2013

**Preparation for worship**

As the wise men followed the star to the infant Jesus, we’ve followed the leading of your Spirit to come today and worship you, Lord. We bring our gifts of prayer, praise and thanksgiving.

“I have called you by name,” says the Lord to each of us. “You are mine” (Isaiah 43:1). Thank you, God, for claiming and loving me. Amen.

We lay our cares before you, Jesus, trusting you to lead us in right paths. Help us sense your guidance in this worship service.

We pray for our worship leaders this morning [evening], and for the preacher who delivers your message to us. Be in their hearts and bless their ministry, to the glory of your name.

**Words of welcome**

Today we celebrate the Epiphany of the Lord — when the Messiah was first made known to Gentiles as well as Jews. God’s love is for everyone. Welcome!

Welcome to worship this winter morning! As brothers and sisters in Christ, we gather to praise his name, hear his Word and be strengthened to share his love with others.

Jesus Christ is the light of the world! We welcome you, one and all, into the light that no darkness can overcome.

We welcome everyone to this house of worship. We are one family, united in our heavenly Father and our Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

- “Laughter rises out of tragedy, when you need it the most, and rewards you for your courage.” —Erma Bombeck

- “Faith never knows where it is being led, or it would not be faith. True faith is content to travel under sealed orders.” —J. Oswald Sanders

- “Transitory gods are not able to save or bring happiness to the human heart. Only God is able. It is faith we must rediscover.” —Martin Luther King Jr.

- “We will open the book. Its pages are blank. We are going to put words on them ourselves. The book is called Opportunity and its first chapter is New Year’s Day.” —Edith Lovejoy Pierce

© This month’s Content is available on the CD in both .txt and .doc formats (cont0113).
For the dark times

Lighthouses are now a popular decorating theme for living rooms, calendars, cards, screen savers, towels and more. Many images are infused with shimmering light to symbolize Christian faith and hope.

Yet the purpose of a lighthouse isn’t to look pretty against a sunny sky — although it does — but to illumine a ship’s way beneath heavy, dark clouds or a moonless night. Indeed, the lighthouse itself doesn’t even light up until its surroundings grow dark!

Surely Jesus loves to share our joys, and we praise his glory during life’s bright times. But God’s primary purpose for coming to live among us was to save us from the storm of sin; to illumine our path through the darkness of death, in all its forms; to be the light guiding all people safely home. Jesus’ light shines for us day and night, rain or shine, to bless us with faith and hope.

[Image above: LIGHTHOUSE_10003, LIGHTHOUSE_10003C]

For the new year

Hold fast to your faith (Hebrews 4:14)
Assemble with the saints (Hebrews 10:25)
Pray earnestly every day (1 Thessalonians 5:17-18)
Pray for great blessings (Malachi 3:10)
 Yield not to temptation (1 Thessalonians 5:22)
Neglect not your talents and opportunities (Galatians 6:10)
Examine yourself daily (2 Corinthians 13:5)
Work diligently for the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58)
 Yield your members to righteousness (Romans 6:11, 16)
Exercise yourself in godliness (1 Timothy 4:7)
 Aim for a perfect, mature faith (Hebrews 6:1)
Redeem the time (Ephesians 5:15-16)

—Gus Nichols

Only is enough

God is not looking for the best qualifications, best ability, best charisma, best prospects type of people — not that he would turn down these sorts automatically, because it’s also true that some of the most gifted people in our society have also been some of God’s best servants. But that is a coincidence and not a requirement. I think that is because God knows that the vast majority of men and women fall into the “I am only” category. But only is enough with God’s help, and it would amaze you what God can make of them.

—Alastair Symington

Fresh start

Here’s a mixture of fun and serious thoughts about the fresh start we receive with each new year of life in Christ:

• “The best angle from which to approach any problem is the try-angle.” —Author Unknown
• “Great ideas need landing gear as well as wings.” —C.D. Jackson
• “God gives us dreams a size too big so that we can grow into them.” —Author Unknown
• “Life is full of obstacle illusions.” —Grant Frazier
• “Nothing is impossible with God.” —Luke 1:37, NIV

Reading the Bible with children

As infants, my sons received children’s Bibles. The short stories and bright pictures were perfect for their early introduction to the Christian faith. Soon they started reading the stories back to us. But as their comprehension improved, children’s Bibles became “too young” for them, while the regular Bible wording was still beyond their grasp.

Then I tried reading from a modern-language paraphrase. I chose The Message, but others will work, too. No need to worry about a lack of pictures; kids are adept at imagining events. Not sure what passages to read? Consult the scripture references accompanying the stories in a children’s Bible. Read the story yourself first, to know where to stop and to avoid less child-friendly passages.

However you share God’s Word with youngsters, there are no sweeter words to a Christian adult than “Mom [Dad, Grandma, Auntie ...], let’s read the Bible!”

—Heidi Mann

A voice

Despite a brain tumor that took her voice for two years, Pranitha Timothy has led more than 50 rescue operations to save slaves in India. As director of aftercare for International Justice Mission, she works to give “a voice to the voiceless.”

Timothy credits God for protecting her during the dangerous missions, which have included run-ins with slave owners. “God goes before us into the places of darkness and makes the paths straight for us to bring rescue,” she says.

Although Timothy’s voice returned feebly, she says it’s powerful in God’s hands. Most importantly, she says, God has transformed her heart and filled her with compassion.
A New Year poem

Another fresh new year is here …
Another year to live!
To banish worry, doubt, and fear,
To love and laugh and give!
This bright new year is given me
To live each day with zest …
To daily grow and try to be
My highest and my best!
I have the opportunity
Once more to right some wrongs,
To pray for peace, to plant a tree,
And sing more joyful songs!

—William Arthur Ward

Celebrating Epiphany

Epiphany, from the Greek word epiphaneia, means an appearance or manifestation. Christians celebrate this festival each year on January 6, the 12th day after Christmas. Epiphany ends on Ash Wednesday, when Lent begins.

Epiphany marks the coming of the Magi, or wise men, to worship the baby Jesus. Because the Magi were Gentiles, Epiphany symbolizes the first recognition of Christ by non-Jews. It’s a reminder that Christ came as the light — and Savior — of the whole world.

The traditional color for Epiphany is green, indicating life, growth, hope and eternity. Symbols for the season include a light, candle, star, crown, gifts and a globe. Epiphany has become a time for reaching out and “showing” Jesus as the Savior of all people. It’s also a reminder to engage in Christian community and to heal divisions.

The difference

There’s a significant difference between having religion and having a relationship with Christ. The key word in religion is do. It is a present-tense verb. Do. Do. Do. You need to be baptized. You need to join the church. You need to learn the catechism. You need to be confirmed. You need to take communion. You need to … And the list goes on. Religion is based on the idea that we must do things in order to win the favor of God and receive salvation.

Having a relationship with Christ is not based on the word do; it is based on the word done. Everything we need for salvation has already been done. We have been accepted by God “through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Hebrews 10:10, NIV).

—Edward G. Dobson, Simplicity: Finding Order, Freedom, and Fulfillment for Your Life

The ultimate resolution

Resolutions are easy to make but oh so hard to keep. In fact, many people refuse to make them for that very reason. After all, by February, most people have broken them, and by March they don’t even remember what they were. It’s just too hard to change, so why try?

Yet Scripture exhorts us to be more like Christ, to forgive our enemies, to tithe and to be thankful in all situations. Shouldn’t we resolve to put some of these into practice, even if ever so imperfectly?

Peter admonishes us to be holy as God is holy (1 Peter 1:15-16). That’s the ultimate New Year’s resolution — all but certain to be broken repeatedly before the sun sets on the first day. Yet though we fail, are we not better for trying?

Are you ready?

“It is a solemn thing to part company with the old year,” said J.C. Ryle (1816-1900), the first Anglican bishop of Liverpool. “It is a still more solemn thing to begin a new one. All before us is uncertain; we know not what a day may bring forth, much less what may happen in a situation.”

Ryle offered this challenge for the days and months ahead: “Walk more closely with God, get nearer to Christ, seek to exchange hope for assurance. Oh that you may endeavor so to grow in grace every year, that your last things may be far more than your first, and the end of your Christian course far better than the beginning!”

Bible Quiz

What is the Hebrew meaning of the word Amen?
A. So be it.
B. We praise you.
C. Thank you.
D. Please, God!

Answer: A

Amen (a·men') adv., interj.
As you head into 2013, create a special journal for the new year.

What you need:
- Spiral notebook (with a plain-colored cover)
- Foam letters, numbers and shapes
- Stickers
- Jewels and glue (optional)

What you do:
- Decorate the notebook cover with letters and numbers. Options include “2013,” “Journal” or your name.
- Decorate with foam shapes, stickers or jewels.
- Write in the journal daily—or whenever possible—recording life events, thoughts, prayer requests and more.
- Keep the journal private or share it with your friends and family.

Want to start the new year off right? Remember to always ask God for guidance.

Directions: Write each word (or word part) in the correct numbered box to complete Proverbs 16:3, NIV.
Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your judgments are like the great deep; you save humans and animals alike, O LORD.

Psalm 36:8, NRSV
Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:4, NRSV

Learning Tower of Babel

TOON_9939

Excited About Evangelism

REMEMBERING
Martin Luther King Jr.

MLK_9898C

You’ll Be Missed

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

MISS_9895C

March

NEW_9912

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Christian Flag — Dating to the early 20th century, the Christian flag represents all of Christianity, though it’s been used primarily in the Americas and Africa. The red Latin cross symbolizes Jesus’ blood shed on Calvary to grant us eternal life. The blue background represents Christ’s faithfulness even unto death, as well as our baptism into Christ. The white field signifies Jesus’ purity, nonviolence and surrender to God’s will, plus the peace we gain by surrendering ourselves to Christ.
ART INDEX

January 2013

Let’s Make Some MUSIC

ART TIP
Combine art from THANKS_9908 and BUDGET_9905 to create a new graphic.

Also on your CD in animated GIF format!
ART TIP
Combine art from HEART_9913 and ANNIV_9906 to create a new graphic.
Try Background Art!
You will find this on the CD in full size (8 1/2" X 11"), allowing you to place it on a full sheet of paper without having to resize the art.
ART INDEX

JANUARY 2013

SUBMIT YOUR REPORTS

PRAYERS FOR NEW DRIVERS

MANY MEMBERS, One Body

The VALLEY of DRY BONES

REMEMBERING MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

July

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Back by Popular Demand

ART INDEX

PowerPoint Art

Use these PowerPoint images for your presentation displays. Each image is 1024 x 768 at 72 ppi. You’ll find more PowerPoint images online at www.NewsletterNewsletter.com.
What's in Store?

Heaven and Hell

Budget Basics

Art Index January 2013

ART INDEX

Combine art from EPIPHANY_9917 and DEC_9884 to create a new graphic.

APR_9876

EPIPHANY
J A N U A R Y  2 0 1 3

ART INDEX

Retirement Party

Let's Make Some MUSIC

Special-Needs Outreach

Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your judgments are like the great deep; you save humans and animals alike, O LORD.

Psalm 36:6, NRSV
Try the Photo Art!
You will find this on the CD in full size (4" x 6"), allowing you to place it on a bulletin cover without having to resize the art.

The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed.