

I'm Walter B. Klockers, Pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Moses Lake, Washington.

When I served a church in McGregor, Texas, I wrote a weekly column for the religious section of the local newspaper (The McGregor Mirror). I found that it was a great way of connecting with the community as well as getting free advertising for our church.

When I was called to Moses Lake, I contacted the editor of the Columbia Basin Herald and asked if I could do the same thing here. She said that they did have a religion section years ago and welcomed the idea of jumpstarting it again.

After writing for a number of months, I learned that not all of our members subscribe to the paper. So, I asked the newspaper if I could also reuse my column online. The Herald gave me permission to do so if the newspaper was given credit.

So, I started an online blog – using wordpress.com – where I reprint the weekly pieces. There was no cost to this. After some time though, I decided to take it a step further. I purchased a domain name with the ending of “.com” This gave me even greater visibility on the internet. I also added features to the website which included more layout options. My website is: [imperfectexpressionsoffait.com](http://imperfectexpressionsoffait.com)

Immanuel has its own Facebook page. It is under the category of a Facebook “community” page. The URL is: [facebook.com/ilcmoseslake/](https://facebook.com/ilcmoseslake/)

I linked the articles from the website to Immanuel’s Facebook page. I shared them to my personal page as well. These actions added to the number of people reading the weekly pieces that I submitted to the newspaper.

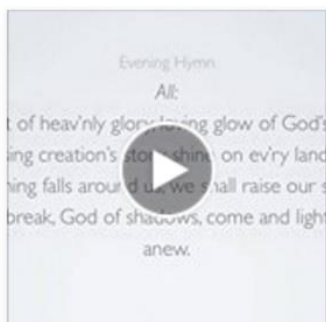
I then discovered another way of increasing readership. As a “community” page on Facebook, there is an option to “boost” each post. Here is what that looks like:



### Immanuel Lutheran Church

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Our Wednesday Lenten Soup Suppers (6:00 PM) and Worship (7:00 PM) are open to the public. The service will feature Holden Evening Prayer, which is a beautiful liturgy. Here is a sampling that runs through a portion of this worship format. For the first service, on February 17th, we will also be presenting to God new music created by Immanuel's worship team.

	<h3>Holden Evening Prayer Part 1</h3> <p>The first section of Holden Evening Prayer by Marty Haugen, Service of Light. Music available at <a href="http://www.giamusic.com/products/P-3460.cfm">http://www.giamusic.com/products/P-3460.cfm</a></p> <p>YOUTUBE.COM</p>
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368 people reached

Boost Post

A boost is a way of advertising. You pay a fee to have your particular post show up on the news feed of other Facebook users. To do so, Facebook steps you through the process of selecting your target audience: you type in key words that you think these people of interest might use in their posts (like “church”), and then select the desired age and geographical ranges.

I boosted a number of my articles and received “likes” from church members, as well as those who were not members, within the Moses Lake area.

I then decided to try something different. In the past, I taught a six-session class on prayer. I decided to teach it again in Moses Lake. However, instead of offering this event at the church, I checked out a local restaurant that had meeting space and reserved that room.

I posted the information for this upcoming class on our church Facebook page and boosted it.

At first, I spent \$15.00 on boost advertising, but soon learned that the target audience was much larger. As an experiment, I wanted to see the maximum potential of what this might yield. So, I took a risk. I swallowed hard and ended up spending \$41.00.

At first I thought that was a lot of money and perhaps a waste of my personal funds. However, in the end, twenty people signed up for the class. Four of these people were not members; two have now been attending worship services on a regular basis, and one of those is now a regular member of a women’s circle. The two others attended a service during Holy Week.

Here are the results of that boost:

The screenshot displays the Facebook Boost Post interface. On the left, a summary box shows: 2,630 Paid Reach, 88 Actions, and \$41.00 Budget Spent. Below this, a bar chart shows engagement metrics: 12 Page Likes, 59 Post Likes, 7 Comments, and 10 Shares. The ad details on the right include: Ad Stopped on February 7th at 6:03pm, Targeted to ages 16-65+, Male and Female, in Moses Lake, Washington. The ad text reads: "Interested in a class on prayer? Beginning in February, Pastor Walter Klockers will be teaching a class called Prayer 101. This is open to the general public. There is more than one way to pray. This course covers some of the ways we may do so. The hope is that the course will help expand the possibilities of what prayer can mean for a person.... See More". The ad received 60 Likes, 4 Comments, and 13 Shares. The ad was boosted by Walter B. Klockers.

Metric	Value
Paid Reach	2,630
Actions	88
Budget Spent	\$41.00
Page Likes	12
Post Likes	59
Comments	7
Shares	10

That \$41.00 was a great investment in evangelism. (A newspaper ad for Christmas or Easter services may run \$250.00).

At Immanuel Lutheran, we now have an emphasis upon holding a number of events outside of our church walls. We boost many of these on Facebook, such as: Our Prayer Shawl Ministry – a knitting and crochet group -- that occasionally meets at Starbucks. (Two people have expressed interest in participating who are not members). I have offered to show my macro photographs of insects and spiders to classes in the local schools. (I will be doing so soon for a kindergarten class because of boost advertising; the teacher who responded to the post is a non-member). We are putting up a “Little Free Library” on the street just outside of our doors. Check out [littlefreelibrary.org](http://littlefreelibrary.org) (One person is interested in helping who is a non-member).

The Church Council has recently approved an advertising budget for Facebook boosts. We typically have been giving these a maximum of \$15.00 per boost.

Boosting Facebook posts has proven to be a great evangelism tool for Immanuel Lutheran. One key thought is that we especially promote events that we now hold outside of the church walls. This has proven to be more welcoming to the stranger.

I was pleasantly surprised to discover that there are plenty of grandparents on Facebook. Their children and grandchildren often have set up their accounts. That way they are connected to their lives on social media and easily follow family updates. So, it is not just “younger people” who are Facebook users.

I’ve learned that boosting posts on our Facebook page is money well spent on Evangelism.