

Who is authorized to speak for your congregation?

It is strongly recommended that your organization have a designated spokesperson. When a crisis arises and the local media come to visit it is important to have one person who is assigned the task of publically disseminating information. This will keep all external messages consistent.

It is important that all staff and volunteers understand the procedure and are trained to say to the media, "You will need to address any questions to _____ he/she can be reached at _____."

One congregation we know was prepared and it was a good thing as they had a family in the congregation make the evening news. Over the next few days three local television stations had sent a crew to the church to interview anyone willing to talk to them. **Volunteers had to quickly be reminded to say, "You need to address any questions to Pastor _____. He can be reached at _____."**

The stations eventually connected with the Pastor and he ended up with a sound bite on the local news. He handled the situation in a professional manner.

Even though the church was prepared it still was not easy. The film crews attempted to talk to kids and volunteers of all ages.

Think through how your congregation might handle a similar situation.