

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIPS & TWEETS

By Kevin D. Hendricks



Daylight Saving Time is a bizarre moment when we change the clocks and confuse everybody. In the fall we set the clocks back an hour (“fall back”), and in the spring we set the clocks ahead an hour (“spring forward”). Somehow this gives us more daylight to work with, but few people can explain how or why (or if) it works.

But all this time changing happens on the weekend—specifically the wee hours of Sunday morning—so church services are uniquely affected.

If people forget, they’ll show up an hour early in the fall and an hour late in the spring. So it’s always helpful to remind your congregation about Daylight Saving Time.

IS IT REALLY NECESSARY?

OK, so not everybody thinks it’s a good idea. There’s been some debate recently about how churches should respond to Daylight Saving Time—or even if they should respond.

Some argue that modern technology does the time changing for us, so nobody needs a reminder. Others shrug at the idea of worrying about someone showing up early to church.

So let’s explore why Daylight Saving Time should still matter and why it presents your church with an opportunity.

DOES TECHNOLOGY SAVE US?

Smartphones and other intelligent devices are nearly ubiquitous these days, making the annual spring forward and fall back happen automatically.

So does anyone really need a reminder?

Well no, you don’t actually need a reminder to change the time on your iPhone. That happens automatically.

For that matter, no one needs a reminder to change the time on their not-so-smart oven or other analog clocks. The point of reminding people isn’t so they can literally change all their clocks (though some of us could use help with that).

We remind people about Daylight Saving Time so they can prepare themselves for the shift.

Waking up late is kind of jarring. Losing an hour of sleep can throw off your schedule (ask anyone with toddlers). And going to bed knowing you can sleep in an extra hour? That’s bliss.

It helps to know a one-hour time shift is coming and respond accordingly.

Your phone may change the time automatically, but it doesn’t give you a head’s up that you’re losing an hour of sleep. (And some of us still rely on old-school alarm clocks that don’t automatically change the time. My iPhone updating automatically will not make me on-time to church.)

So Daylight Saving Time is an opportunity for the church to be helpful. Why wouldn’t you want to be helpful?

IT'S ABOUT BEING WELCOMING & GRACIOUS

Some folks have shrugged off the fall reminder by saying it's not a bad thing if once a year people show up for church early.

That's a pretty funny joke. We can all appreciate that some church services have a constant stream of people showing up after things have started.

But in practice, not caring if people show up an hour early (or 45 minutes, for the late-comers) is an awful way to treat people.

Not every church has people in the building an hour before the service starts. So you're going to shrug at someone showing up to a locked building? I've attended church all my life, and I can tell you if I forgot about Daylight Saving Time and showed up an hour early, my family would go out to breakfast and probably not make it back to the service. I can only imagine what a first-time guest would do. They'd probably never come back.

Responding to Daylight Saving Time is about being welcoming and gracious.

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIPS

OK, let's get to the nitty-gritty stuff.

- ☐ Yes, it actually is *Daylight Saving*, not *Daylight Savings*. Casual usage has made *savings* common, but the correct usage is *saving*.
- ☐ Remind your congregation about Daylight Saving Time. You don't have to make a big deal, but a simple reminder can be incredibly helpful.
- ☐ On the Sunday before Daylight Saving, put reminders in the bulletin and/or in announcement slides.
- ☐ The week of Daylight Saving Time use more immediate communication channels, whether that's email, social media, text messaging, etc.
- ☐ Post something to your primary social media channels on Saturday evening as a final reminder.
- ☐ You can also have some fun on social media and share funny quotes, random thoughts, or engaging questions.
- ☐ Be gracious with those who forget.
 - ☐ In the spring, folks might show up an hour into your service. You can have some fun with this by giving them a late-comers welcome. Note: A gracious welcome would be a table in the lobby with some extra donuts. A not-so gracious welcome would be pointing out the late-comers from the platform. Not cool.
 - ☐ In the fall, folks might show up an hour early. Show up with them and be prepared with some donuts.
- ☐ In the spring, when everyone loses an hour of sleep, offer an incentive to those who show up on time. Donuts and coffee can be a nice surprise when you're extra sleepy. (Yes, donuts make everything better.)

- ❑ Know your audience. Some groups of people need more reminders than others. Some groups are more likely to show up early or late. Some cultures will be completely unfamiliar with the idea of Daylight Saving Time. You know your church, so respond accordingly. Maybe your congregation is on the ball and they don't need reminders. Or maybe you have a church of refugees who aren't familiar with the concept and you need to do some helpful educating.
- ❑ Have some fun. All this clock changing is kind of goofy, so it's OK to make light of it. It's important to be gracious and welcoming, especially for guests, but you can still make jokes. Just don't make jokes at other people's expense.

DAYLIGHT SAVING TWEETS

We've got a few sample posts you can share on social media. Not every post will work for every church and you probably only need a few of them, but hopefully you'll find some options that work.

- **Simple reminders for spring:**
 - Don't forget about the Daylight Saving Time change this weekend. Remember to set your clocks forward so you show up on time to church.
 - Nobody understands Daylight Saving Time, just go with it. Set your clocks forward so you're not late for church.
 - Your smartphone will automatically update the time for Daylight Saving. But it won't help you automatically adjust to losing an hour of sleep. We've got some coffee that can help with that.
 - Remember: This weekend the clocks spring forward for Daylight Saving Time. Plan accordingly, or you'll walk in during the sermon and become an instant object lesson.
- **Simple reminders for fall:**
 - Don't forget about the Daylight Saving Time change this weekend. Remember to set your clocks back so you show up on time to church.
 - Nobody understands Daylight Saving Time, just go with it. Set your clocks back so you're not super early for church.
 - Your smartphone will automatically update the time for Daylight Saving. But it won't help you decide how to use that extra hour. Show up early and join us for donuts with the folks who forgot about the time change.
 - Remember: This weekend the clocks fall back for Daylight Saving Time. Plan accordingly, or you can be here early to help us set up.
- **Ask questions:**
 - All right, can anybody explain how Daylight Saving Time actually works? No fair using Wikipedia!
 - Any tips for helping children adjust to the Daylight Saving time change?
 - Anybody know which two U.S. states do not observe Daylight Saving Time? (Answer: Arizona and Hawaii)
 - (Spring) Thanks to Daylight Saving, everyone loses an hour this weekend. Will you go to bed at the regular time and lose an hour of sleep, or go to bed early and lose an hour of your day?

- (Spring) The start of Daylight Saving Time means a lost hour of sleep, but it also means it will be lighter later. Is it worth it?
- (Fall) Thanks to Daylight Saving, everyone gets an extra hour this weekend. What are you going to do with your extra hour?
- (Fall) The end of Daylight Saving Time means an extra hour of sleep, but it also means it's dark super early. Is it worth it?
- **Random thoughts & facts:**
 - Your smartphone automatically adjusts the time for Daylight Saving. If only it automatically adjusted the children.
 - I refuse to change my clocks this weekend. I'm going to be a time traveler.
 - Ah, Daylight Saving Time—the clock in my car will finally be right again.
 - We can thank Benjamin Franklin for Daylight Saving Time. He proposed the idea in a 1784 essay. Unfortunately, it was satire.
 - Daylight Saving Time was first implemented during World War I as a measure to conserve energy.
 - Is Daylight Saving Time worth it? Results are mixed. Some studies show it reduces energy use, other studies show energy use increasing.
 - You're not alone: Only one-third of Americans think Daylight Saving Time is “worth the hassle.”
 - 48 of the 50 U.S. states observe Daylight Saving Time. Arizona and Hawaii are the two that don't.

TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY

More than anything, Daylight Saving Time is an opportunity. Engage your community, offer help, be gracious.

If you need more help with Daylight Savings Time, our [Courageous Storytellers](#) membership site has ready-made social media graphics you can use.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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COURAGEOUS STORYTELLERS

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