

PowerChurch Software Newsletter - Summer 2012

Welcome to the Summer 2012 edition of the PowerChurch Software Quarterly Newsletter. In this issue, we have some exciting things to announce for PowerChurch Online users, important information about changes to your bar coded mailing labels and more...

Intelligent Mail Bar Codes

Back in 2008, the USPS announced new bar code technology, the 4-State Customer Bar Code, now known as the Intelligent Mail Bar Code (IMBC). The new standard of bar code contains information about the mailer, the recipient, and the mailing itself. It was announced that the IMBC would eventually replace the old Postnet bar codes. Versions 9 and 10 of PowerChurch Plus were both updated with IMBC at that time in 2008. All new versions released since that time have also inherited this functionality.

A letter from the USPS was recently sent out to all registered mailers that the IMBC will officially replace the Postnet bar codes January 2013. If you are currently sending bar coded mailings and are using the Postnet bar codes, you can make the switch in PowerChurch Plus Versions 9 and higher under File > Preferences > Mailing Label Setup. If you don't see the setting, make sure you have downloaded and installed the latest Maintenance Release from www.powerchurch.com/mr. You will need a Mailer ID from the USPS to complete the setup of your IMBC. You can apply for this online if you haven't already, at gateway.usps.com.

This may also be a good time to take another look at PowerChurch Mailroom, an add-on subscription product for PowerChurch Plus that integrates CASS certification (address standardization) and PAVE presort mailings. It helps organize your mailings and generates all the necessary paperwork and labels to get the best discounts possible on your postage. For more information, visit www.powerchurch.com/products/mailroom. Unfortunately, PowerChurch Mailroom is not compatible with PowerChurch Online at this time.

PowerChurch Online Mobile Web Access

We have been getting many requests over the last few years for a mobile app; a replacement for the old Pocket PowerChurch system. The problem was always trying to narrow down what the next big device was going to be. As time goes on, the market only gets more splintered. Blackberry, iOS (iPhone/iPad), Android, and Windows Mobile are all still active players in the market and are completely separate operating systems on different types of devices. We simply don't have the manpower to develop separate apps for all these different systems.

But, they all do have one thing in common: web browsers. The only logical step we could take was to develop a web-based app that would securely serve up the information to any web browser. This means that you can access it on your iPad, Android phone, desktop computer, netbook, etc. In May, we rolled out a beta test of PowerChurch Online Mobile Web Access, which covers all these bases and is a much more effective replacement for Pocket PowerChurch than we could have created with separate platform-specific solutions.

If you have PowerChurch Online, you now have mobile web access. You will only need a web browser and a user profile set up in PowerChurch Online to access it. Connections to the mobile web access system do not count against your concurrent user licenses in PowerChurch Online. So, you can still have two users working in the IDS Client, and an unlimited number of people in the mobile web access system. Use the information below to get started using it.

m.mypowerchurch.com

To log in, you will need to know your organization's PCUxxxxx login, your PowerChurch Plus user name and password. Below is a video demonstration of the system and all you can do with it.

If you are not currently a user of PowerChurch Online and feel you would benefit from any of its great features including the mobile web access, visit www.powerchurch.com/products/pconline for pricing and information.

Making a Difference

Julia Field - Developing People and Programs in Mississippi

We know that your work extends beyond what happens at your desk. For each of you who enters data, collects membership information, manages contributions or plans events, there is a personal story to tell. After speaking with many of you, we were inspired to share some of your stories with others.

Name: Julia Field

Title: Financial Secretary, Meadowwood Baptist Church

Passion: Helping people contribute by doing what they love

Why PowerChurch: The online option means working whenever, from wherever.

Julia has worked for Meadowwood Baptist Church for 15 years, and her devotion and enthusiasm for the place is evident in her joyous and lilting voice. "We are GROWING. People naturally seem to find what they have a heart for and work in that ministry. I love seeing that happen! It's so exciting."

While Meadowwood is not a mega-church, its growth through the coordination of many new ministries means that the administration has to stay organized to keep up. From Operation Christmas Child to Vacation Bible School to running a coffee shop where

"tweens" and teens relax and enjoy fellowship, Meadowwood stays busy knitting members and community together. PowerChurch Online is part of the toolkit used to keep things running smoothly behind the scenes.

Because the church is not networked, PowerChurch Online was a perfect choice for them. The ability to access all of the modules by multiple users in multiple locations affords the staff the freedom to accomplish tasks without being tied to their desks. "You know I love PowerChurch," Julia laughs. "I'm a promoter! Our ability to access the modules we use from anywhere keeps us from having to duplicate work or do things the old fashioned way. I know we would have to work twice as hard to finish our tasks and have to create 'workarounds' that aren't efficient."

As Financial Secretary, Julia handles contributions, budget items, payroll and accounts payable, among other tasks. "The contribution statements and our ability to keep track of everything so easily without hand-written or Excel files is amazing. I couldn't begin to tell you how much time we've saved because of PowerChurch Plus. It's made it possible for us to spend time on things we'd rather be doing."

One of those things is their full-sized library that is so well-stocked and used by church members that there is routinely a line of people waiting to check out books and other media. "We used PowerChurch Plus' membership module to set up our library card system so that all members were included. The library's use and popularity has grown tremendously."

"The next thing we're going to add is the nursery check-in module. I purchased it and am planning to play around with it when I get a chance to breathe," she says. "We've really needed it and I look forward to making it a part of our systems here."

Meadowwood is currently focused on what is next for them with regard to expanding membership, outreach, building projects and where they want to be in the next ten years. It's called their 20/20 Vision project.

You make a difference all over the world. PowerChurch makes it easier. Read previous installments of Making a Difference at www.powerchurch.com/stories/.

Forum Q & A

The Support Forum on our web site is a very active online community of our users and Tech Support staff members. There you can browse through thousands of questions and answers, or post your own.

From General Questions:

Q. I'm getting a message that says "Cannot update cursor PCINFO1, because it is read only" when I log in.

A. This message indicates that your Windows user account does not have proper permissions to make changes to the PowerChurch Plus data files. Check the sharing permissions on the PowerChurch directory to make sure you and all other users and groups have Full Control.

From Membership:

Q. I am working on creating a church directory and want birthdays and anniversaries listed with the members' names.

A. The built-in Church Directory report has a Details layout, which lets you choose multiple date fields to include on the report.

From Accounting:

Q. I am reconciling my bank statement and the amount needed to balance is a missing entry. I can see the transaction on other screens and reports.

A. Verify the date of the transaction is not later than the bank statement date and that the account you are reconciling was actually used in the transaction you entered.

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