

PowerChurch Software Newsletter - Spring 2014

The year-end rush is over. We have taken the opportunity to do major updates on the web site. In this issue of the newsletter, we cover some new and improved features on the web site as well as reintroduce some existing functionality you may not be aware of.

Heartbleed Bug

A few weeks ago, news spread of a security exploit in the OpenSSL library that runs on many web and e-mail servers. It goes by the name of the Heartbleed Bug. Though it was just discovered the first week of April, the bug has been in place since March 2012 and reportedly affected over 66% of servers on the internet. Our server administrator was on task and had the powerchurch.com server updated with the appropriate fixes immediately. It is recommended that you change your password on this and any other site that announces that the necessary updates have been installed to protect against the Heartbleed bug.

For more information about the Heartbleed Bug, visit www.heartbleed.com.

Please note: *PowerChurch Online servers were always safe, because they do not run any of the affected software.*

Knowledge Base Updates

In the last six months, we have published a few new articles in the Knowledge Base:

- [Comprehensive Error Message Reference List](#)
- [Installing PowerChurch Plus upgrades](#)
- [Moving PowerChurch Plus from one computer to another](#)
- [Photo Quality in PowerChurch Plus](#)
- [Processing Deceased Members in PowerChurch Plus](#)

We have also greatly improved the search functionality in the Knowledge Base. Your search terms will now return more relevant results. Many articles and videos that only applied to older versions of the program have now been archived. This means, when browsing or searching through the Knowledge Base, there is less clutter that doesn't apply to your needs as a user of one of the more recent releases of the software. Lastly, there was an update made to display the 20 most popular (most viewed) Knowledge Base items on the front page of the Knowledge Base. From there, you can click the link to "Browse All Knowledge Base Items" which will list all items in alphabetical order.

Web Site Design and Responsive Layout

Nearly a quarter of all visitors to powerchurch.com this year were from small resolution mobile phones and tablets. While the design of our web site is fairly easy to navigate and looks nice on regular notebook and desktop browsers, it did not translate well onto small screen mobile devices. Through many hours of development and testing, we have transitioned to a responsive layout, which adjusts the design of the site to fit the device you are using. Users with high resolution desktops and notebooks should not notice much of a change to the site, while mobile users will have a much more pleasant experience on the site.

Web Site Resources

The powerchurch.com web site is packed full of user support and training resources:

- [Knowledge Base](#). The Knowledge Base is a repository of technical articles and videos. All of the previous issues of this newsletter are archived there as well.
- [Maintenance Releases](#). Maintenance Releases are program updates that contain bug fixes and minor feature tweaks. These updates are free of charge and it is recommended that you always keep your program up to date with the latest release. PowerChurch Plus Version 10 started notifying you when new updates were available, while Version 11 added the ability to automatically download and install the update for you.
- [Training Videos](#). Online training videos are an extremely valuable resource for new customers as well as new employees of existing organizations. Our training video series range from one hour to three hours long and are made up of a playlist of shorter videos. Whether you watch the videos from beginning to end, or jump around the playlist, our online training videos help you to use the software to its fullest.
- [On-site Trainers](#) and [Seminars](#). The directory of authorized teaching consultants is made up of third-party companies and individuals who have been authorized by PowerChurch Software to offer training and consulting services for our products. A few of these consultants also offer training seminars from time to time that are a day or two spent in a classroom environment.
- [User Support Forum](#). The forum is an online message board where you can post questions and answers, interacting with other PowerChurch users, Technical Support, and Product Development staff. It has been online for over ten years and is a valuable resource that can bring advice and insight from long-time PowerChurch users. As a company, it provides us valuable feedback as well, being able to observe how people are using the program and what advice they have for new users coming in and getting things set up for the first time.

PowerChurch Plus Version 9 Compatibility Change

We have been receiving a lot of calls and e-mails over the last couple of months from PowerChurch Plus Version 9 users concerning some very serious problems they have been having with the program. There are error messages, corrupted database files, files missing completely, etc. Unfortunately, because of the age of the program (V9 turns ten years old later this year) it doesn't support most modern backup devices like

flash drives, external hard drives, or even DVD/CD combo drives. Because of this, Version 9 users often do not have backups of their data when all goes wrong.

There have been six new releases of the program since Version 9 and we can only keep the latest two versions under maintenance. Because of the recent problems that Version 9 users have been experiencing, we can no longer recommend that you use it on newer computers. In this case, "newer" is relative to a ten-year-old program.

These problems can be expected from Windows Vista, 7, and 8. Also, because one of the specific compatibility issues is related to 64-bit versions of Windows, even Windows XP 64-bit is not supported. This means the PowerChurch Plus Version 9 can only "safely" be used on 32-bit Windows XP computers. Earlier this month, Microsoft ended support and security updates for Windows XP. It is recommended that users of Version 9 and prior of PowerChurch Plus consider [upgrading to the latest, Version 11.5](#).

Feature Focus

This is the 16th issue of the quarterly newsletter. Each issue, we spotlight one or more features in the program to introduce, demystify, and otherwise encourage their use. There are sometimes videos to go along with them. Now we need your help. We're out of ideas!

Send us an e-mail through the contact page on the web site with your suggestions for future newsletter articles and what features you would like to see highlighted. If it is something that you have had ongoing problems with or never been able to implement, let us know about your experience. That will help us frame future articles in the most appropriate context.

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. Click the link below to read some recent examples.

From PowerChurch Online:

Q. If I log onto PowerChurch Online, then leave it idle while I go work on something else, I get an error message saying the connection to the host was broken and it asks if I want to reconnect.

A. The IDS Client will automatically disconnect you after four hours of inactivity. If you are getting disconnected more frequently than that, it sounds like your network card might be going to sleep. Here is a Microsoft article about setting the network adapter to never sleep: support.microsoft.com/kb/2740020

From General:

Q. Our Contribution Statements show a line indicating a total amount for pledges for the entire year. Is there any way to change that to read the year to date amount of the pledge?

A. I suspect that when you're running your statements, you're asking for dates for the

full year. That's the only way the entire pledge amount will show up. By default, a year to date calculation is shown.

From Membership:

Q. Does it make sense to include an individual over 18 years old that still lives at home in the parents' family profile as opposed to having his/her own household?

A. How would you print them in a church directory? If you want to include them in family pictures and list them together with their family in the directory, then yes. But, if they're independent, move them to their own household to list them separately.

Created: 04/24/2014

Last updated: 04/24/2015