unhide

A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR CHURCH LEADERS

The 5 Reasons Your Church Isn't Showing Up on Google

WHAT WE DO

Somewhere in your city, someone searched for a Bible Study this week.

We help Apostolic churches be found by the people already looking for them. Most of what keeps a church hidden comes down to five gaps, and each one can be fixed.

01	An incomplete Google Business Profile
02	A website missing local context
03	A thin or outdated review presence
04	Unanswered questions from seekers
05	Unclear information for AI search

"Church marketing isn't a sales pitch: It's part of our obligation for outreach. The hedges and byways now include online too."

Adolfo Marquez

THE CURRENT REALITY

People search before they visit. If they can't find you, they won't visit.

2,900

monthly U.S. searches for “Apostolic church near me” alone

U.S. search volume, Sept. 2026

2.5B

monthly users of Google’s AI Overviews, the answers at the top of search

Google I/O 2026 keynote

700M

weekly ChatGPT users; about half of what they say to it is a question

OpenAI usage research

Every month, roughly 7,700 searches in the U.S. ask where to find an Apostolic church or what Apostolics believe. The searcher gets a map, a few reviews, and increasingly an AI-written answer, often before seeing a single church website.

That is where many churches lose people they never knew they had. A profile with old hours, a site that never names the city, or beliefs that aren’t written anywhere public reads, to a stranger, like a church that isn’t there. When a church says nothing, the answer gets written from someone else’s words.

WHAT HELPS

Make your church clear, current, and easy to find.

01

Complete your Google profile

Correct hours, address, photos, and service times that match your website.

02

Say who and where you are

Name your city, explain what you believe, and make a first visit easy to plan.

03

Answer real questions

Write plainly about what seekers ask, and invite members to leave honest reviews.

Your profile is the first place people look for hours, events, and more. Is it updated?

WHAT THE SEEKER FINDS

A pin on the map with no hours, no photos, and a phone number that may no longer work.

Before anyone reaches your website, they usually see your Google Business Profile: the card with your name, hours, photos, and reviews in Search and Maps. When it's unclaimed or half filled out, Google has little to show and a stranger has little to trust.

The cost is a visit that never happens. Someone who can't tell whether you meet on Sunday, or where to park, may simply try the next listing. And a profile that looks neglected can make a living church look closed.

WHAT HELPS

Claim it, complete it, keep it current.

01

Claim and verify it

Make sure your congregation controls the profile, not a former volunteer.

02

Fill in the basics

Name, address, phone, website, service times, category, and recent photos.

03

Update it when things change

Holiday hours and special services belong here too.

Google can’t send people to a church it can’t place.

WHAT THE SEEKER FINDS

A homepage that never says which city you serve, and no quick way to find the address on a phone.

Searches like “Apostolic church near me” depend on location. A website that never names your city or service area gives search engines little to match you to those searches, and gives the visitor no clear sense of where you are.

Visitors also decide quickly. If directions, service times, and what to expect on a first visit take more than a moment to find, a church can look harder to attend than it really is.

WHAT HELPS

Say clearly and consistently where you are.

01

Name your city

Include your city and state naturally in your homepage title and main text.

02

Keep details consistent

Your address and contact details should match your Google profile exactly.

03

Plan the first visit

Directions and service times that are easy to find on a phone.

Reviews are how people trust now. If people only see the bad, you've lost them.

WHAT THE SEEKER FINDS

Only a handful of reviews, and none from the last few years.

Reviews help a prospective visitor understand what people experience at your church, and they are a trust signal for search as well. In most cases the members love the church. Nobody has simply asked them to say so.

A profile with no recent reviews gives a seeker nothing to go on. Someone choosing where to visit for the first time may pick the church that gives them something.

WHAT HELPS

Ask honestly, and keep it steady.

01

Invite real experiences

Ask members and visitors to share an honest review in their own words.

02

Respond with care

Thank people, and never share private pastoral information.

03

Keep it clean

No bought reviews, no incentives, and no choosing only the people you expect to be positive.

If you don’t answer, someone else will. Let’s be always ready…

WHAT THE SEEKER FINDS

“What do Apostolics believe?” answered by a stranger with no stake in the truth, or one with a grudge.

People ask real questions before they ever walk in: What do Apostolics believe? Is speaking in tongues biblical? What happens on a first visit? Those first two phrasings of the belief question alone draw nearly 1,000 U.S. searches a month (U.S. search data, Sept. 2026).

When a church doesn’t answer, the questions don’t go away. They get answered by people outside the church, and sometimes by people with a bias or a vendetta. An honest-hearted person looking for truth then receives a skewed picture, and may never get as far as asking you.

WHAT HELPS

Let the church speak for itself.

01

Write down what you believe

Plain pages on your beliefs, in language your community and seekers both understand.

02

Answer first-visit questions

Parking, children, service times, and what to expect when someone walks in.

03

Make Bible Study easy to request

A clear next step for anyone who wants to learn more.

AI answers are written from what's public... whether it's true or not.

WHAT THE SEEKER FINDS

A person describes their problem to an AI, and your church is never among the answers it recommends.

People now bring their problems to ChatGPT and Google's AI the way they once brought them to a pastor or a friend: a hard season, a question about God, a search for somewhere to belong. For many, these answer engines have become a modern-day oracle, and they build their answers from what is publicly available.

If a church is unclear online, it won't come up as a recommended answer to someone's problem. If we don't guide people with the tools available to us, they default to whatever options the oracle chooses for them. Clear public information gives these systems a better source, though being included or cited is never guaranteed.

WHAT HELPS

Give the answer a source worth quoting.

01

Publish plain pages

Beliefs, location, leadership, and Bible Studies, written in ordinary text.

02

Keep facts current

Old details get repeated. Update them when anything changes.

03

Use clear headings

Don't lock key information inside images or video.

A CLOSING WORD

There are many voices. The one with the mic wins.

I started unhide because a church that's easy to find is easier to walk into. Too many faithful congregations are hard to find online. Not because anyone did something wrong, but because nobody had the time to sort it out.

If you take one thing from this guide, pick one of the five gaps and fix it this week. Search for your church on Google Maps. Check the hours and the address. Then ask what a first-time visitor would want to know, and see whether your website says it.

If you'd like a second set of eyes, I'm glad to talk it through. No pressure and no jargon.

Adolfo Marquez
Founder, unhide

READY WHEN YOU ARE

See how unhide can help your church be found.

unhide.online ↗

Search results vary by location and change over time. These steps remove common gaps; they do not guarantee rankings or attendance.