Virtually tangible?

By [Steve Thorngate](#)
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In the tireless (and sometimes tiresome) debates over social media, I come down pretty firmly on the "pro" side. Of course, that doesn't mean that I'm enthusiastic about *every use* of these media, any more than newspaper diehards necessarily find, say, [Page Three](#) to be a worthy end for newsstand dollars and dead trees.

For instance, [this](#) seems like an especially poor use of Twitter. Twitter can be useful to churches in countless ways not immediately related to worship life, and even a silly liturgical innovation like a [tweeted Stations of the Cross](#) seems pretty benign to me. But *communion* via Twitter? I'm not one to go all book-of-order-thumper every time someone gets a bit [loosey-goosey around the altar,](#) but this is seriously stretching the definition of "altar" and, especially, "around."

Whatever your sacramental theology, it doesn't seem like there's much left without physical elements and physically gathered people (i.e., [two or more](#)—yes, I'm in favor of bringing the elements to the sick and homebound). I like Dave Allen's [comments](#), especially this:

> "[Twitter is] a community that's as real and tangible as any local neighbourhood and we should be looking to minister to it," [said pastor Tim Ross].
>
> [Dave]: No, you are confusing 'tangible' with 'popular'.

Exactly right. I'm not sure how I'd go about making the case for a Twitcharist, but I might start by not referring to a virtual community as "tangible."