

TEAM SETUP

Build your team on paper first. Fill this out with a pastor and your team leader.



LEADERSHIP

STAFF MEMBER OVER THE TEAM

PHOTOGRAPHY TEAM LEADER

WHO DECIDES WHAT GETS POSTED

WHO ANSWERS QUESTIONS ON SUNDAY

Pick someone who isn't on stage or in the production booth.

ROLES

☐ Everyone shoots and edits

☐ Some shoot, some edit

☐ One editor edits everything

PHOTOGRAPHERS

EDITORS

HANDOFF

FINISHED PHOTOS GO HERE

TELL THIS PERSON WHEN THEY'RE READY

☐ By text

☐ By email

☐ In our scheduling app

☐ In a team chat

WHO POSTS TO SOCIAL MEDIA

WHO UPDATES THE WEBSITE AND PRINT

EQUIPMENT THE CHURCH PROVIDES

☐ Cameras

☐ Lenses

☐ Cards and batteries

☐ Editing computer

☐ Editing software

☐ Cloud storage and backup

☐ Team badges

☐ Camera bags

☐ Phone mounts

WHERE THE GEAR IS KEPT

WHO TAKES CARE OF IT

WHAT WE WEAR AND HOW WE SCHEDULE

☐ Normal Sunday clothes

☐ All black

☐ Team shirt or lanyard

SCHEDULING TOOL

SCHEDULE GOES OUT BY

BIG EVENTS ARE ASSIGNED BY

TEAM EXPECTATIONS

Fill this out with your photographers and a pastor. Revisit it at every check-in.



WHO TO GO TO

PHOTOGRAPHY TEAM LEADER ON SUNDAY

PHONE

BACKUP CONTACT

PASTOR OR STAFF MEMBER OVER THE TEAM

DELIVERY

☐ Same day by _____

☐ Next day by _____

☐ Within ____ days

EDITED PHOTOS FOR A SUNDAY

EDITED PHOTOS FOR A BIG EVENT

UPLOAD THEM HERE

WHO POSTS THEM

WHEN THEY USUALLY POST

SERVING RHYTHM

☐ Every week

☐ Twice a month

☐ Once a month

☐ Sundays only

☐ Sundays and events

☐ Events only

SUNDAYS THIS PHOTOGRAPHER ALSO GETS TO SIT AND WORSHIP

CHECK-INS AND CARE

☐ Every two months

☐ Quarterly

☐ Twice a year

NEXT CHECK-IN DATE

HOW WE'LL SAY THANK YOU

ANYTHING ELSE WE AGREED ON

REVIEWED TOGETHER BY

AND

DATE

The global church has local rules.

Much of this guide reflects common practice in the United States. Many other countries treat photos of people as protected personal information, with stricter rules on consent, notice signs and children. Here's the short version. Details are on the next page.

WHERE	MAIN LAW	ADULTS IN A SERVICE	CHILDREN
United States	No single national law	Notice is common practice. Consent is needed to use a face in advertising.	Written parent permission is the standard practice.
United Kingdom	UK GDPR	Notice, door signs and an easy opt-out. Consent for close-ups and promotion.	Written parent consent.
European Union	GDPR	Clear notice and an easy way to say no. Some countries add image rights.	Written parent consent.
South Africa	POPIA	Consent must be voluntary, specific and informed.	A parent or guardian must consent. An opt-out notice usually isn't enough.
Canada	PIPEDA and provincial laws	Depends on the province. BC, Alberta and Quebec matter most.	Written parent consent.
Australia	Privacy Act	Covers larger organizations. A newer privacy tort applies to everyone.	Follow your state's child safe standards.
New Zealand	Privacy Act 2020	Covers churches of every size. Explain why you take photos and how you'll use them.	Take extra care and get parent consent.

Tell people

Signs, a slide and a line in your bulletin.

Make opting out easy

A camera-free section and a simple way to ask.

Get it in writing for kids

Signed parent consent, kept on file.

Delete when asked

Quickly, kindly and everywhere it lives.

The children column shows common church practice. It isn't always a legal requirement. **These four habits work in every country.** They go a long way toward meeting the law and keeping trust.

Country by country.

United States

There's no single national law on church photos. People at a public gathering have limited privacy expectations, and a church can set photo rules on its own property. Using someone's face to advertise or promote can require consent under state law. A few states, including Illinois, Texas and Washington, regulate face recognition data, so check before turning on face tagging in a photo library.

European Union

The same GDPR rules apply across the EU, and some countries add their own image rights. Expect clear notices for everyone, written consent for children, and an easy way for anyone to say no.

Canada

The federal law, PIPEDA, mostly covers commercial activity, so many churches fall outside it. Provincial laws can still apply. BC's privacy law covers non-profits, Alberta's covers some, and Quebec's Law 25 can apply too.

New Zealand

The Privacy Act 2020 applies to almost every organization, churches included, whatever their size. Tell people why you're taking photos and how you'll use them, and take extra care with children.

United Kingdom

Under UK GDPR, a photo of someone you can recognize is personal data. Many churches publish a photography privacy notice, post signs at the door and offer a camera-free seating area. Get written consent for children and for close-up or promotional use.

South Africa

POPIA treats identifiable photos as personal information. Consent has to be voluntary, specific and informed. For anyone under 18 it must come from a parent or guardian, and a "tell us if you object" notice usually isn't enough.

Australia

The Privacy Act covers organizations above a revenue threshold, so many smaller churches fall outside it. People can now sue over serious invasions of privacy, whatever the size of the church. State child safe standards often shape photo rules for kids.

Everywhere else

Treat the practices in this guide as a starting point, not the finish line. Ask your denomination, network or a local attorney what applies where you serve. Many denominations already have a policy you can adopt.

General information only, not legal advice. Laws vary by country, state, county and city, and they change. Check with a local attorney or your country's privacy regulator before you set policy.

"Let every person be subject to the governing authorities."

ROMANS 13:1 (ESV)

Volunteer photographer agreement.

Sample wording only. This is not legal advice. Laws vary by country, state, county and city. Have your church leadership and a qualified attorney review and adapt this form before you use it.

VOLUNTEER PHOTOGRAPHER AGREEMENT

Church name and logo here

- 1 Serving.** I volunteer to take photos and video for _____ ("the Church"). I am not an employee and I receive no pay.
- 2 Rights to the photos.** *Choose one with your attorney.* **Option A, transfer:** I assign to the Church all copyright in photos and video I take while serving. **Option B, license:** I keep my copyright and give the Church a permanent, free, worldwide license to use, edit, crop, add text to and share the photos in any format, without credit or payment. Either way, this continues after I stop serving.
- 3 Personal equipment.** If I use my own camera, lenses, phone or other gear, I do so at my own risk. The Church is not responsible for loss, theft or damage. If I use Church equipment, I will follow the Church's policy for its care and whether it may leave the building. *Ask your insurer what your policy covers.*
- 4 Files and privacy.** I will upload all photos to the Church's shared folder within _____ hours. Once my team lead confirms they arrived safely, I will delete them from my cards, devices and personal cloud accounts. I will not post, sell or share church photos on my own accounts or portfolio without written permission.
- 5 Children and safety.** I will follow the Church's photography and children's ministry policies, including the do-not-photograph list.
- 6 Removal requests.** If someone asks not to be photographed or asks for a photo to be removed, I will honor it and tell my team lead.
- 7 Conduct.** I will serve respectfully and follow direction from my team leaders. Either of us may end this arrangement at any time.

VOLUNTEER NAME

SIGNATURE

DATE

PARENT OR GUARDIAN, IF UNDER
18

SIGNATURE

DATE

CHURCH REPRESENTATIVE

SIGNATURE

DATE

Parent consent and sign wording.

Sample wording only. This is not legal advice. Laws vary by country, state, county and city. Have your church leadership and a qualified attorney review and adapt this form before you use it.

PARENT OR GUARDIAN PHOTO CONSENT

_____ takes photos and video at services and events to share the life of our church in print, on our website and on social media. We never post children's names or check-in information with photos.

CHILD'S NAME

AGE OR GRADE

CHOOSE ONE

- ☐ **Yes.** My child may appear in church photos and video.
- ☐ **Yes, but no face.** Hands, from behind and wide group shots only.
- ☐ **No.** Please don't photograph my child. We'll give them a _____ so the team knows.
- ☐ **Please talk with me first.** There's a custody, foster care or safety situation.

You can change your choice anytime by telling _____. If you ever want a photo of your child removed, ask and we'll take it down.

PARENT OR GUARDIAN NAME

SIGNATURE

DATE

PHOTOGRAPHY HAPPENS HERE

We take photos and video today to celebrate our church family, and we may share them in print and online. Prefer not to be photographed? Tell a photography team member or a greeter and we'll honor that. Want a photo removed? Just ask.

About notice signs

In the US, signs usually aren't required by law. They're a simple way to set expectations and reduce risk. Other countries can be stricter, so see pages 22 and 23. Post one at main entrances and kids check-in, and add the same note to event registration pages.

Build a library, not just a feed.

"We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might, and the wonders that he has done."

PSALM 78:4 (ESV)

Shoot the first-time guest journey

Parking, signs, front doors, greeters, kids check-in, coffee, a seat. Your Plan a Visit page needs these more than any worship shot. A guest who has seen your doors feels less nervous walking through them.

Hold a staff photo day

Once a year. Same backdrop, same light, same crop. Add new staff as they join so the website never has a missing face.

Cover every ministry

Each ministry needs a few current photos for its web page and promos. Check them off every quarter.

Shoot evergreen photos

Your building in every season. The empty room in great light. Signs, coffee cups, open Bibles, hands. No faces means fewer permission questions, and they never go out of date.

Offer a picture day

Free family portraits for your church directory. Families get a gift. You get smiling, willing people and a signed release on the spot.

Name it so you can find it

Add keywords to your Finals, like baptism, lobby or worship. Your designer can search instead of scroll.

PHOTO LIBRARY CHECKLIST

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| ☐ Building outside, each season | ☐ Parking and entrance | ☐ Front doors and signs |
| ☐ Greeters and welcome | ☐ Kids check-in area | ☐ Coffee and lobby |
| ☐ Worship, wide | ☐ Pastor and staff headshots | ☐ Baptism |
| ☐ Communion details | ☐ Small groups | ☐ Students |
| ☐ Kids ministry, per policy | ☐ Serving and outreach | ☐ Prayer, from behind |

EVENT

DATE

ARRIVAL TIME

PHOTOGRAPHERS AND CAMERAS

BEFORE THE SERVICE

45 TO 60 MIN

- ☐ Sync cameras with the team before you shoot
- ☐ Close-ups of the band and vocalists at rehearsal
- ☐ Building and signage as people arrive
- ☐ Greeters and ushers welcoming people
- ☐ Coffee and lobby conversations
- ☐ Kids check-in and volunteers, per your policy
- ☐ Guest and next steps area in use
- ☐ Volunteers serving with badges or lanyards

AFTER THE SERVICE

10 TO 15 MIN

- ☐ People staying to talk and catch up
- ☐ Pastors talking with people up front
- ☐ Families together on the way out
- ☐ Upload, check every file arrived, then format your card

DURING THE SERVICE

60 TO 90 MIN

- ☐ Welcome, announcements and scripture reading
- ☐ Wide shots of the full room during worship
- ☐ Wide and tight shots of each vocalist and musician
- ☐ Hands raised, people singing, faces not backs
- ☐ Down the rows: open Bibles and people taking notes
- ☐ Pastor preaching: wide, tight and a range of expressions
- ☐ Prayer and communion, quietly, no burst mode
- ☐ Baptisms, dedications or guests on the order of service
- ☐ The production team at work

FOR YOUR DESIGNERS

- ☐ Horizontal and vertical versions of key shots
- ☐ Open space beside the subject for text
- ☐ Everyday, non seasonal shots for future use

NOTES FOR THIS SUNDAY (WHERE THE LIGHT IS BEST, SPECIAL MOMENTS, WHO TO WATCH FOR)

HOLIDAYS AND SPECIAL SERVICES

Christmas, Easter, Good Friday, graduations, anniversaries and big Sundays



SERVICE	DATE	ARRIVAL TIME	PHOTOGRAPHERS AND CAMERAS
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BEFORE THE SERVICE

60 MIN

- ☐ Sync cameras with the team before you shoot
- ☐ Stage design and decor before the doors open
- ☐ Special music and kids choir at rehearsal
- ☐ Communion elements and candles up close
- ☐ The building with a full parking lot
- ☐ Greeters welcoming guests in holiday outfits
- ☐ New signage, welcome desks and guest gifts

AFTER THE SERVICE

15 TO 20 MIN

- ☐ Families in their holiday outfits. It's okay to ask them to pose.
- ☐ People greeting new members and guests
- ☐ The photo backdrop with people in it
- ☐ Pastors talking with people up front
- ☐ Upload, check every file arrived, then format your card

DURING THE SERVICE

75 TO 105 MIN

- ☐ The same decor again once the room fills up
- ☐ Wide shots from the back and from the side of the stage
- ☐ Soloists, duets and the kids choir, wide and tight
- ☐ Candlelight on faces. Raise your ISO and hold steady.
- ☐ Communion, prayer and the invitation, quietly
- ☐ Baptisms: the moment, the cheer and the hug
- ☐ Pastor preaching, wide and tight

OUTDOOR EXTRAS

IF PLANNED

- ☐ People waiting for the activity to start
- ☐ Kids running, shot wide or from behind
- ☐ Low angle shots from down in the grass
- ☐ Parents watching their kids
- ☐ Winners with their prizes, with a parent's okay

NOTES: WHO'S DOING WHAT, WHERE TO STAND, WHERE THE SUN WILL BE

INDOOR EVENT

Conferences, men's and women's events, banquets, VBS, fellowship dinners



EVENT	DATE	ARRIVAL TIME	PHOTOGRAPHERS AND CAMERAS
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BEFORE THE EVENT

- ☐ Sync cameras with the team before you shoot
- ☐ The building exterior and event signage
- ☐ Volunteers setting up and preparing
- ☐ Decor details: tables, centerpieces, stage
- ☐ Caterers or kitchen team cooking

ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION

- ☐ Guests arriving and parking team helping
- ☐ Check-in, name badges and welcome gifts
- ☐ Merch or resource table in action

THE MEAL

- ☐ Candid shots of people eating and laughing
- ☐ Food details and the serving line
- ☐ Wide shots that show a full room
- ☐ Volunteers serving and cleaning up

THE MAIN SESSIONS

- ☐ Hosts and speakers, wide and tight
- ☐ People listening, laughing and taking notes
- ☐ Worship during the sessions
- ☐ Open Bibles and people praying
- ☐ Games, challenges and audience moments
- ☐ Volunteers being recognized and thanked
- ☐ The tech team in the booth
- ☐ Childcare rooms, per your kids policy
- ☐ Creative shots of the atmosphere

WRAPPING UP

- ☐ Group photos of attendees and the team
- ☐ People leaving and the space at the end
- ☐ Volunteers breaking down
- ☐ Upload, check every file arrived, then format your card

NOTES: SCHEDULE, SPEAKERS' NAMES, SPECIAL MOMENTS

OUTDOOR EVENT

Picnics, outreach days, outdoor baptisms, egg hunts, block parties, camps

ENDUO
MEDIA

EVENT

DATE

ARRIVAL TIME

PHOTOGRAPHERS AND CAMERAS

BEFORE THE EVENT

- ☐ Sync cameras with the team before you shoot
- ☐ Set white balance to Daylight or Cloudy
- ☐ Walk the site. Note where the sun is and where the shade is.
- ☐ Tents, signage, games and food stations
- ☐ Volunteers setting up and prepping food

DURING THE EVENT

- ☐ One wide shot that shows the whole space and crowd
- ☐ People arriving and being welcomed
- ☐ Games and activities in action
- ☐ Kids playing, shot wide or from behind
- ☐ Low angle shots from down in the grass
- ☐ The grill, the food line and people eating
- ☐ Families on blankets and neighbors talking

OUTDOOR BAPTISMS

IF PLANNED

- ☐ The crowd gathered at the water's edge
- ☐ Each person going in, wide and tight
- ☐ Coming up out of the water
- ☐ The celebration, hugs and towels

GOLDEN HOUR

- ☐ Groups with the sun behind them
- ☐ Warm candids as the light gets low
- ☐ Creative shots: sun flare, details, silhouettes

WRAPPING UP

- ☐ A big group photo before people leave
- ☐ Volunteers cleaning up
- ☐ Upload, check every file arrived, then format your card

Outdoor light tip: overcast days are your friend. In harsh midday sun, move people into open shade or put the sun behind them so they aren't squinting.

NOTES: WEATHER PLAN, WHERE THE SUN SETS, SPECIAL MOMENTS

BAPTISM SUNDAY

Baptisms in a service, at a pool, a lake or a river. Talk to every candidate ahead of time.

SERVICE DATE ARRIVAL TIME PHOTOGRAPHERS AND CAMERAS

BEFORE THE SERVICE

45 TO 60 MIN

- ☐ Sync cameras with the team before you shoot
- ☐ The baptistery or pool set up, lights on
- ☐ Details: robes, towels, certificates, shirts
- ☐ Candidates with family and friends, with their okay
- ☐ Pastors praying with candidates, if they're comfortable
- ☐ Walk your angle. Know where the changing areas are and never shoot toward them.

AFTER THE SERVICE

15 TO 20 MIN

- ☐ Each candidate with family, dry and changed
- ☐ A group photo of everyone baptized
- ☐ Hugs and celebration in the lobby
- ☐ Upload, check every file arrived, then format your card
- ☐ Send each person their photos privately within the week

DURING THE BAPTISMS

20 TO 40 MIN

- ☐ A wide shot of the room as baptisms begin
- ☐ Each candidate stepping into the water
- ☐ **The moment they come up. This is the shot. Stand where you can see their face.**
- ☐ Family and friends cheering, crying and clapping
- ☐ The pastor's face during the moment
- ☐ Testimonies shared on stage, wide and tight
- ☐ The first hug out of the water

FOR YOUR DESIGNERS

EVERY TIME

- ☐ Horizontal and vertical versions of the best moments
- ☐ A wide shot of the church celebrating
- ☐ Water and towel details with no faces

NOTES: CANDIDATE NAMES IN ORDER, WHO'S DOING WHAT, WHERE TO STAND

SYNC YOUR CAMERAS ON THE COUNT OF THREE.

Every camera stamps each photo with its own clock. When the clocks don't match, photos from different shooters land out of order. Sync them and the whole day plays back in order, from the first hug in the lobby to the last song.

1

GATHER

Before you start shooting, get every photographer together with cameras in hand.

2

MATCH THE CLOCK

Everyone opens the date and time setting and enters the exact same date, hour and minute.

3

COUNT IT OUT

One person calls it: "One, two, three." On three, everybody presses OK at the same moment.

4

CONFIRM

Check that every camera matches down to the second. Then go shoot.

Then: when you import, sort everything by capture time. Culling and filing go faster because the story is already in order.

OUR PHOTO STANDARDS

Pull your ten favorite photos your church has ever taken. Write down what makes them work. That's your standard. Hand this page to every new photographer.

WHY WE PHOTOGRAPH

OUR LOOK IN THREE WORDS

OUR EDITING PRESET IS CALLED

OUR TOP TEN PHOTOS LIVE HERE

ALL PHOTOS UPLOAD HERE

OUR COLOR AND EDITING STYLE

- ☐ Warm ☐ Cool ☐ Bright and airy ☐ Dark and dramatic ☐ Natural, minimal edits
- ☐ Black and white

KIDS AND STUDENTS

- ☐ Faces are okay with parent approval ☐ From behind or hands only ☐ No kids in public posts

WHO APPROVES WHAT GETS POSTED

WHO KEEPS THE "DO NOT PHOTOGRAPH" LIST

SHOTS WE ALWAYS WANT

SHOTS WE NEVER POST

CAMERA BAG CHEAT SHEET

Cut along the dashed lines. Laminate them. Keep a set in every camera bag.

BEFORE YOU SHOOT

- Battery charged, spare packed
- Card formatted, RAW on
- White balance set for this room
- Clocks synced: "One, two, three, OK"
- Badge on, order of service read

WHITE BALANCE

- **Outdoors:** Daylight or Cloudy
- **Indoors:** Fluorescent, Incandescent or Custom
- **Auditorium:** set it manually, skip Auto
- **New room?** Check it again
- Blue skin on a warm day? Fix it now.

GET THESE SHOTS

- Wide stage, then tight faces
- Lobby connection and laughter
- Pastor: many expressions
- Families in everyday clothes
- Space for text, both orientations

SERVE WELL

- Move quietly. No chairs.
- No burst mode in prayer or communion
- Guests and kids you don't know: not up close
- Watch the background and name tags
- Not sure? Flag it for your lead.

AFTER THE SERVICE

- Upload to the shared folder today
- Year, month, date, your name
- RAW and JPEG in separate folders
- Check uploads, then format
- Nothing on personal accounts

REMEMBER WHY

You're not just taking pictures. You're helping tell the story of how God is moving through your church.