

Taking Pictures at Church and Putting Them on Your Church's Website

During the year, many churches are having a lot of additional activities, especially where children and youth are involved. A good example would be VBS, children's camp, youth camps, youth mission trips, children's musicals. When these events occur, out come the cameras to capture these exciting events.

Then the question arises, what do we do with these pictures? Many times these pictures are put on the church's website or some other social media website. They are put on the World Wide Website or in other official church printed publications without consideration to the individuals in the pictures or without the individuals' permission.

The problem is that the church may NOT use anyone's image without his/her permission unless the photograph is taken in a public place. A church is not considered a public place. A church service or church events are open to the public but are not considered a public place because the church is not owned by a government and the government has not opened it to public access. Streets and parks are public places, but anything that is privately owned is not public.

Today churches are being sued because of the posting of photographs of individuals on websites or in printed material without permission or consideration

What is a church to do? Get a permission slip or photo release form signed by the parent for any minor's photo. Also a photo release needs to be signed by any adult when his/her photo is used. One way to accomplish this is to get the photo release or permission form signed when all of the other registration forms are filled out and signed for the event. By using a permission slip or release form, the person has authorized the church to use any photo that might be taken. Even with permission forms signed, all personal reference should be omitted.

If a volunteer for the event takes some pictures of the church event and places them on a social media website he/she should be asked to take them down. The church as an organization has the release or permission to use the photo while the volunteer does not.

SAMPLE of a photo release, See Attached

:

info@yourchurchmatters.com

Photo Release Form

I hereby grant permission to **First ABC Church (insert your church name)** to use my photograph(s) on its Web site or in other official church printed publications without further consideration.

I acknowledge the church's has the right to crop or treat the photograph(s) at its discretion.

I also acknowledge that the church may choose not to use my photograph(s) at this time, but may do so at its own discretion at a later date, up to **(insert time period)** years from the date of .the photograph was taken.

I also understand that once my image is posted on the church's website, the image can be downloaded by any computer user, anywhere in the world.

Therefore, I agree to indemnify and hold harmless the church, its trustees, pastor, associate pastors, deacons, its members and designees from any claims arising out of the use of my photograph(s).

The church reserves the right to discontinue use of any photograph(s) without notice.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Signature: _____

(If the above name is of a minor, a parent or guardian must sign)

Date photograph taken: _____

Description of Photograph: _____

