

Overview of the use of basic church copyright and license products

This is intended provide a basic overview for informational purposes only

Most churches have questions around determining general music license needs and the differences between music reproduction, performance, and streaming rights. Because churches increasingly use technology to create, distribute or display songs, service sheets and content, it's important to become familiarized with a few of the different copyright license options.

Churches qualify for an important exemption in the U.S. Copyright Law (section 110[3]). What this exemption provides for a church is that they don't need a performance license to play or perform most Christian or secular music "in the course of services at a place of worship". What this basically means is an exemption only during worship services in your church facility. When outside the context of religious services, churches have the same performance copyright responsibilities as everyone else; the exception does not extend to printing / copying, live-streaming, recording, or use outside of the service. A few churches can get by without a license if they are only using their blue hymn book singing traditional hymns/psalms. However, that really isn't the norm for many.

Below are three general areas of concern in regard to the use of music and copyright licensing:

Reproduction: These licenses grant you the ability to print songs in bulletins, liturgies, programs, and song sheets for use during your church service.

Performance: These licenses grant you use of copyrighted music outside of religious services (think: VBS, youth gatherings, weddings, retreats, dinners, meetings, guest speakers, picnic, concert, community events, etc).

Streaming / Video: Most broadcast or re-broadcast requires special performance licensing (think: website, podcasts, radio, internet-streaming like Facebook, YouTube, etc.)

There are private companies that will handle these copyright and licensing tasks for churches for a fee (biggest are CCLI and CSS). Unfortunately, there really is not a single license that covers all potential church's copyright licensing needs. Pricing varies and can be based upon average weekly attendance of the church, a one-time use, weekly use, monthly or annual.

1, Reproduction: These licenses grant you the ability to print songs in bulletins, liturgies, programs, and song sheets for use during your church service. They may also provide some limited rights to audio reproduction (limited recordings) or projecting lyrics for congregational singing. Each license is a little different; each organization has their own catalog of music and resources that they cover so do explore the options.

Most of these licenses provide for printing and copying songs, hymns, and lyrics in bulletins or programs for congregational use and basic recording of a service. Remember, it *does not* grant performance rights needed for a church to use that music outside of worship services or stream them online. A few license options include:

- ✓ **CCLI:** Large inventory of Christian music providing copyrights for reproduction (print songs, bulletins, songbooks), store lyrics (for visual projecting), printing songs for bulletins, and basic recordings of live services. Prices start at \$133 for smaller congregations.

- ✓ **One License:** (competitor to CCLI). Permission to download / reprint copyright music owned by member publishers (but not for copying music for your choirs). Runs about \$200 yr. for small churches. The diocese sometimes signs up for a one-week license just for a large event (eg. diocesan convention) to make sure we have expanded music coverages if needed.
- ✓ **RiteSong:** Episcopal music library; download music and lyrics. Includes copyright for The Hymnal 1982, The Hymnal 1982 Service Music, Wonder, Love and Praise; Lift Every Voice and Sing II; Enriching Our Music 1 & 2. Runs about \$120 year for small churches.

2. Performance: Churches qualify for an important exemption in the U.S. Copyright Law (section 110[3]). What it provides for is that churches usually do not need a performance license to play, sing, perform, or present copyrighted music (Christian or secular) during a worship service. However, outside of services and/or other church occasions, events, or performances you probably will need the appropriate performance license. Securing a performance license grants churches the right to perform live or play pre-recorded versions (eg. CD's, MP3's, Spotify, etc.) on their campus or during events (think: VBS, youth gatherings, weddings, retreats, dinner, retreats, concerts, guest speakers, community events, etc.).

- ✓ **CCS "Pm" (Perform Music)** license for facility performances; this license (CCS Pm) The license covers all 25 million songs from ASCAP, BMI and SESAC, including all genres of Christian, holiday and secular songs without reporting. Allows a church to use / perform licensed music for services, events, functions, summer programs, etc. It also allows for the use of streaming services like Spotify, Pandora, or Amazon Music at your church. An annual license usually runs about \$229 per year.

3. Streaming / Video:

In addition, if your church streams your full worship services online with the music (not just the sermon), you'll potentially need a streaming license to cover any copyrighted songs that are included in the stream. Most broadcast or re-broadcast requires special performance licensing (website, podcasts, radio, internet-streaming like Facebook, YouTube, etc). The variety of media can be tricky to work with, but a good rule of thumb is if the music is played "outside" of your church building during a service, you probably need to be covered. Live video streaming a service is a great way to connect but copyrighted content can be detected / blocked even while live-streamed on Facebook Live and YouTube. There are exceptions so do check as needed

- ✓ **CCS "Wc" (WorshipCast)** license is for website music streaming. Useful if you broadcast / stream full services with music (not just sermons) on website, Facebook Live, YouTube, etc. Includes secular music via ASCAP, BMI, SEASAC (about 25+ million songs).
- ✓ **CCLI Streaming and PodCasting License:** Allows for streaming / podcasting your live-recorded worship service music on your church's website or other streaming services. It does NOT provide coverage for secular songs (via ASCAP, BMI, SEASAC license)
- ✓ **CVLI:** is a video use license. It covers the such use as playing movies, TV shows, and video clips in and outside of worship.