



COPYRIGHT FOR MUSIC VIDEOS AND TRACKS

Can we use music videos and other clips in church?

What do we do if we don't have musicians in our congregation?

Many congregations want to be able to use video clips in worship, whether for in-person or online worship. Increasingly, congregations find themselves without musicians at least some of the time.

Using YouTube, Spotify, Vimeo, and other sharing platforms can be problematic. In essence, these are intended (under Australian law) for personal use rather than in a shared setting like worship because it is considered that the music performers and creators of the music videos should be paid a fair royalty for their work.

It can be confusing to work out what you can and can't show and how to find clips that can be used legally. This guide aims to make this as clear as possible and help congregations find appropriate resources to share.

YouTube

To use a YouTube clip, you need to:

- Have permission from the creator of the clip to use the actual clip.
- Check if the performer/s of the music are the same as the person who made the clip or the original songwriter – if not, you also need to get their permission to use the recording.
- Report the use of the song via your CCLI/ONE LICENSE licence – make sure you have selected the livestreaming/podcast options if you're using it online.

Be very wary of the many clips out there where someone has taken a recording from an artist without permission and created their own video content.

You are more likely to get legitimate permission to use a clip if you focus on official music videos by the original artists.

- Always visit the official YouTube channel of the band and check the 'Show More' section under the clip and/or visit the band's website.
- Check the copyright information on the band's official website, as sometimes permission is granted for their clips to be used.

Some bands make their music videos available freely for use in worship:

- **Emu Music** has quite a lot of their song videos on their website available for free download and for use in worship at emumusic.com – the congregation must report the song's use via CCLI.
- **Colin Buchanan's** website states: 'Colin gives you permission to use any of his clips or YouTube footage for streaming online and asks that you report any song usage through your CCLI licence.'
- **CityAlight** also allows the use of their clips. Visit cityalight.com/about/#faq
- You may know of other bands who do a similar thing.

It's also worth noting that YouTube and Facebook are known to 'take down' or serve warnings/infringements to people/organisations using copyright-covered music, even if you have the licence to use it. The congregation will then need to appeal to prove it has the appropriate licence (for example, through CCLI or ONE LICENSE). To lessen the chance of this happening, include the licensing acknowledgements in the 'Show More' section under your videos.

Other sources of music video clips

Several sites produce music videos for contemporary worship music, either on a pay-per-download or annual licence basis. These are legitimate ways of using music videos in various settings (be careful to read the terms of usage for each site). They often have various choices for backgrounds and may offer a choice of songs with or without vocals. In most cases, you will still need to report the use of the songs through CCLI.

- Some large groups/organisations like **Hillsong** have their own online stores where you can purchase videos/audio tracks.
- Music videos may be purchased from sites such as **Worshiphouse Media** and **WLV (worship lyric videos)**: www.worshiphousemedia.com/worship-tracks or www.worshiplyricvideos.com/songs. Costs per music video are about \$4–15 USD. This may seem expensive, but once you have bought them, you have them for reuse.
- A group of LCA musicians have created **Hymnsing** at hymnsing.com.au/shop, where you can buy CDs, DVDs and downloadable albums featuring well-loved hymns and songs in both video and audio formats that can be used in worship.

Music backing tracks

- For traditional hymns, the **LCA Worship Planning Page** has free downloadable MP3 backing tracks for almost all of the LHS (except those tunes under copyright). These can be used freely, including in livestreaming. See www.lca.org.au/worship/wpp/modernised-hymns-2
- **CCLI** now has a **Streaming Plus** licence add-on that allows for the use of master tracks (audio tracks recorded by the original artists) in both streaming and regular worship services. For more information, visit au.ccli.com/streaming
- Currently, platforms such as **Spotify** and **Apple Music** are off-limits. There is a clause in their terms and conditions that state that it is for private (one person) consumption and not for broadcast in a public space (church).

Other types of video clips

If congregations want to use non-music YouTube clips (for example, skits and children's stories), it is much better to go to the website of the producer of the skit to see if they have a pay-to-download system.

Big companies like **The Skit Guys** or **Saddleback Kids** are much easier and safer to connect with than smaller people/groups, which may not have permission to use the images, music, etc, in the first place.

The Big Studio Movie Licence (www.bsml.com.au) covers use of whole films and film clips in services and all ministry areas from Disney, Roadshow, Warner Bros., Sony, 20th Century Studios, Marvel, Pixar, eOne, Transmission, Icon, Rialto, Studio Canal, Madman, Pinnacle, Palace.

CVLI (<https://au.ccli.com/what-we-provide/church-video-licence-screenvue/>) provides a licence to publicly show film scenes during services and full-length films during outreach and social activities. It covers films from many studios, including Fox, Paramount, Universal, DreamWorks, Focus Features and NBC/Universal Television.

More information

- ONE LICENSE has a great article explaining the YouTube issue and offers some good advice: news.onelicense.net/2021/03/11/using-other-peoples-youtube-videos

Resources

- **Worship Life – Lutheran Media – Livestreaming Tips & Checklist** (lutheranmedia.org.au/worship-life) offers tips to help you livestream or prerecord your worship service and sermon, worship CD/DVD ordering, and downloadable videoed Lectionary Sermons.
- The **Worship Planning Page** has an Online Worship section (www.lca.org.au/worship/wpp/churchhome/) that includes the livestreaming checklists and advice, plus links to streamed worship services from other LCA congregations.
- **Worship Service DVDs** – Lutheran Church of Australia (www.lca.org.au/commission-worship/worship-service-dvds) – these DVDs are great for people who can't get to church and congregations to use as their (non-streamed) worship service when they don't have a pastor.

Questions?

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