

USING MUSIC ONLINE - COPYRIGHT

Music is a key part of many worship services, and in the digital world, a wonderful way to involve and engage viewers of all ages.

There are several copyright permissions that come into play however, when streaming or webcasting a worship service.

It is not always an easy area to navigate, but below are some useful tips and guidance that will help you include music *legally* into your online services

Using live music online or in a live stream

If you are primarily looking at streaming direct to Facebook or Youtube, the Performing Rights Society (PRS) now has an agreement with both these platforms.

This means that they pay PRS a licence fee which covers *live* performance of songs on their platforms, as long as you are not monetising them (not usually a problem for churches!).

What this **does not** cover is: publishing lyrics or downloading the video and uploading it on another platform other than Facebook and Youtube.

It also does not cover streaming your services through Zoom.

If you are wanting to do any of these exempted activities you most likely need to purchase a [CCLI streaming licence](#).

The cost of the streaming licence reflects how many people are in the congregation and can be as little as £20 for the year.

CCLI Streaming Licence

- CCLI introduced their [streaming licence](#) in mid-March. It is available to any church that holds the 'base' 'Church Copyright Licence'.
- For churches who are streaming their services via YouTube, Facebook or Zoom, the CCLI Streaming Licence will cover you for *live* worship music performed as part of that stream. (This would include services streamed or webcast via YouTube but embedded into the church's own website).
- If the church is hosting the stream/webcast through their own website, they will need the [PRS for Music Limited Online Music Licence \(LOML – more below\)](#) in addition to the CCLI Streaming Licence.
- The CCLI Streaming Licence includes the right to show the words on screen.
- The CCLI Streaming Licence allows a church to make recordings of the services available on their website indefinitely.
- If a church is using recorded music as part of the stream (such as a cd), additional rights come into play which **are not** covered by CCLI Streaming Licence.

Using pre-corded / cd music:

- Using such music is much harder and best avoided if possible. However, we appreciate that not all churches will be able to provide live versions of songs.
- There are several Christian organisations that provide apps or software that provide backing tracks for worship. [iSingWorship](#) and [Worship Backing Band](#) are at present, giving churches permission to use their pre-recorded tracks as part of their streams for free – usually as long as a credit to their website is included. (Please check their websites for full terms)
- The Church of England has also launched a collaboration with St Martin-in-the-Fields and the Royal School of Church Music, to provide [a resource of rights-free music](#) for Church of England churches to use on streamed services. They are available via the [A Church Near You resource hub](#) providing you have a [CCLI Streaming](#) Licence.
- Ideally our advice - and that of CCLI - would be to contact the copyright holder for the recording you want to use, and ensure you have their permission before playing a pre-recorded track as part of a stream. This is more work and time consuming, but you at least have reassurance.
- Infringing copyright could be costly or lead to a strike against you on your streaming platform. You may initially get a warning, asking you to verify you have the permission of the copyright holder – if you don't, that part of your service could be muted.

Other creative content

- Permission should also be sought from the owner(s) of any other creative works included a service. If reproducing bible verses, or liturgy, usually there will be copyright information in the front of the publication, and usually they will allow for only a certain proportion to be reproduced.
- For any images etc. the same rules would apply as in normal circumstances. Never assume that you can take an image found on Google and use it in a church service or include it in a service sheet or similar without permission.
- With regard to a Service Sheet, as long as there are appropriate licences/permissions in place, making that service sheet available online should be fine.

ZOOM

- If you are using Zoom to stream your services, you will need both a CCLI licence and a PRS Online Limited Music Licence, as Zoom is not set up for streaming licences – their platform has not caught up with the dramatic change in use over the last 6 weeks!

- If you are using Zoom for a private meeting, i.e a small group, this is considered 'domestic' so you don't need a licence – if you were meeting in person in someone's home you wouldn't have needed to purchase a licence! However, with a public broadcast service through Zoom, you do.
- Please also be aware of new security updates issued by Zoom and follow the best practice guidance on keeping meetings secure.
 - [Zoom Security blog update from Zoom](#)
 - [Top tips to use Zoom safely](#)
 - [Link to National Church Safeguarding advice on using Zoom safely with young people](#)

We appreciate this is a complex area and may seem prohibitive, but music, books, images, and any creative work, are someone's intellectual property and livelihood, so it does need respecting.

Further help

There is now updated guidance on music copyright on in the [FAQs section of the Church of England COVID-19 page](#)

If you require any additional help, please contact Jennifer Ross, Communications Manager and Bishop's Media Adviser on: jennifer.ross@rochester.anglican.org