

ONLINE WORSHIP : COPYRIGHT FAQs

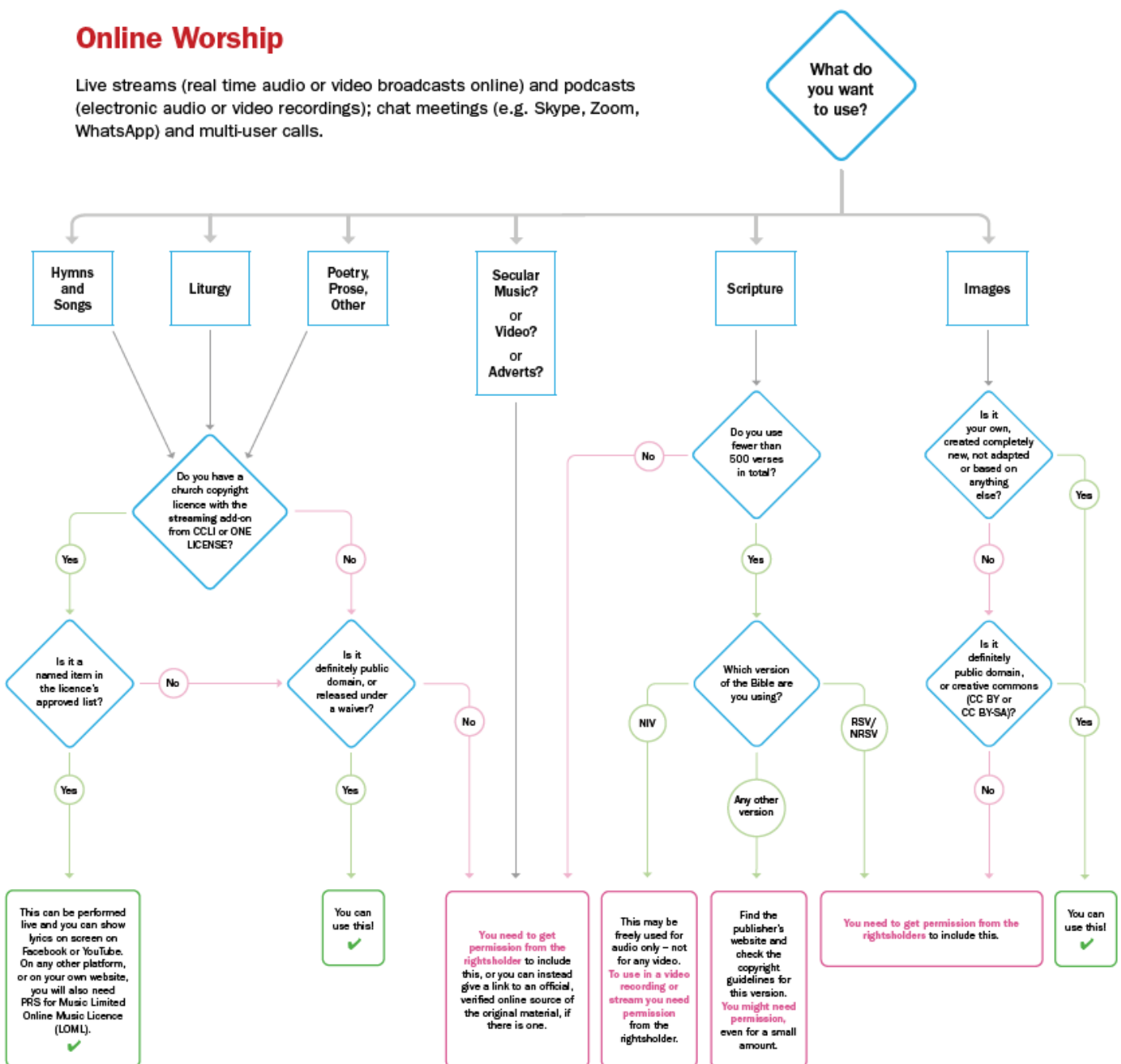
Most information contained in this document is adapted from the Methodist Website here: www.methodist.org.uk/copyright

The FAQs below aim to collate current copyright guidance for issues that may arise when sharing worship online (whether live or pre-recorded, on any platform). The information provided is accurate to the best of our knowledge at the current time (Sept 2021) but there is possibility for error, grey areas, or that it could change in time. Yorkshire North and East Methodist District is not able to provide legal advice and where there is uncertainty, would recommend seeking professional assistance.

The simplest overview is this flowchart from the Methodist Church, which can be found online here: www.methodist.org.uk/media/17969/online-worship-flowchart.pdf

Online Worship

Live streams (real time audio or video broadcasts online) and podcasts (electronic audio or video recordings); chat meetings (e.g. Skype, Zoom, WhatsApp) and multi-user calls.



How can I use liturgy or scripture in online worship?

Quick answer: check bible translation guidelines and that copyright holders have given permission

Liturgy: most liturgy is copyrighted and so you would need permission from the copyright holders to use it in online worship (however, many have given permission during COVID-19 – you just need to check). The Methodist Church has made copyright concessions during the pandemic (currently until August 2022) and so you can use liturgy from The Methodist Worship Book, however, be aware that some materials in there are not the intellectual property of The Methodist Church and so will need separate permission to be used. Check the acknowledgements on pp.601-605.

Scripture: the use of scripture varies depending on whether you are reproducing it in written, audio or video methods, and depends on the translation. Many offer a ‘fair use’ policy, but you will need to follow individual Bible guidelines for using bible verses and it varies for different versions. For example, the NRSV and RSV originally said it could not be used for audio, video or any other online purposes without permission, but have since changed their stance to say that up to 500 verses can be quoted in any form. The NIV can be used for audio but cannot be included onscreen as text. The KJV (21st Century) may be used in any form up to 200 verses without prior written permission. The ESV may be used for audio up to 250 verses without prior written permission, or up to 1000 verses if only in written format. In all cases the total verses cannot amount to a whole book of the bible, and you will need to display copyright information, credits or the book, chapter and verse of the bible passage (as deemed by the individual translation guidelines).

How can I use YouTube videos in online worship?

Quick answer: You need permission from the copyright holder. There is no license which allows you to use other artists videos. Personal permission must be sought.

YouTube videos are not public domain. There is a common misunderstanding about what is meant by “public domain” with regards to the Internet. While work published on the Internet may be publicly accessible, it should not be assumed that it is therefore in the public domain. Video rights can be complicated, as rights are held in the visuals, the sound and the combination of the two; each part can have several copyright holders. Third-party videos are not covered by any of the CCLI or ONE LICENSE licences, or streaming add-ons, available. Ideally, link to a YouTube video, rather than trying to insert any third-party videos in your online worship and be sure find an official version to link to. Some YouTube content is copyright free, or the copyright holder has given permission for people to use the video. Make sure you check first before using content from YouTube that you do have their permission to use it in online worship.

How can I include songs/hymns in online worship?

Quick answer: This is a complex question and depends on multiple factors.

Context

The words and tune to a song often have different copyright terms unless all are written by the same person and released at the same time. The arrangement may be by someone else completely and have a further copyright. In addition, there are rights in the performance of the song – held by the performers. This means that there may be lots of copyright holders and multiple areas to consider.

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Third-party worship videos

See the question below on where to find copyright free songs/hymns that you can use (these content creators have publicly waived copyright or performance rights during the COVID-19 pandemic). If you want to use other worship videos created by someone else then you would need to seek permission directly from the copyright holder, just as with YouTube videos mentioned above. This is often easy to do and achievable in a Christian context but would need to be done on a case by case basis. (Note: you may still need additional licences to use third party worship videos – see following question on licences).

Public Domain songs/hymns

Some songs/hymns are in the public domain (either all rights have expired, which is usually 70 years since the author died; the authors have explicitly put a work into the public domain; or there never were any copyrights). These do not have copyright restrictions or require additional licences to perform, which is great for churches. However, be aware that even if the music is out of copyright, the arrangement might not be. Also remember you won't be able to use other people's (third-party) recordings of public domain songs/hymns without their permission. For a list of public domain songs/hymns click here: <https://songselect.ccli.com/search/results?List=publicdomain>

Pre-recorded video

There are some differences depending on if you are pre-recording or live streaming your worship service. The standard CCLI licence (which most churches already have) permits recording your worship service to put online and also recording songs in your live worship services, (from the CCLI Song Select list) provided that: they do not contain artists backing tracks or recordings; the recordings are online for those who cannot attend the service; and the quantity made and distributed does not exceed fifteen percent (15%) of the size of your licence. If you are making the recordings more widely available, want to show lyrics, or you want to live stream worship, then you will need an additional streaming licence.

Streaming Licences

If you have the correct licences in place (see following question for what licences you need) then you can perform many songs/hymns in online worship (played by your organist, worship group, choir, or other musician) or use other people's (third party) performances if they have given permission (see below question on where to find songs/hymns you can use) as long as they are contained in the licence companies authorised lists (for CCLI you just need to search this list: <https://songselect.ccli.com>). The licences also allow you to show lyrics on screen. The songs must be fully credited under the guidelines provided and the use must be reported as directed in the licence terms. Note that these are licenses that are in addition to the standard CCLI licence that your church may already hold. Streaming Licences do not cover any music that is not on their approved lists, even if performed by your music team. If you want to use any other music, then you need to seek permission directly from the copyright holder. If you do get permission, you will still need to have the streaming licence in order to live stream or upload a video with the song/hymn or show lyrics.

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What licenses do I need for online worship?

Please note: we have used the CCLI licences as an example here, but you can also get equivalent streaming licenses from ONE LICENCE (they have a different library of songs/hymns that you are covered for).

	No licence required	CCLI Standard	CCLI Streaming Licence add-on	Limited Online Music Licence (LOML) from PRS
A broadcast or recording of your sermon or talk only on any platform	✓			
Broadcast or recording of a song only, that you have written and performed yourself (and hold ALL the copyright for) on any platform	✓			
A broadcast or recording of a public domain song/hymn only , performed by you or worship group on any platform	✓			
A broadcast or recording of your worship service online without any songs/hymns on any platform		✓		
Recording (not live) of your service on any platform with songs/hymns (from the CCLI list) performed by you – only distributed to up 15% of your congregation size. No lyrics.		✓		
A broadcast or recording of a song that you have written and performed yourself (and hold ALL the copyright for) within an online service on any platform		✓		
A broadcast or recording of public domain songs/hymns performed by your worship group in an online service.		✓		
A broadcast or recording of your service with songs/hymns (from the CCLI list) performed by your worship group on YouTube, Facebook, or Instagram (with lyrics)		✓	✓	
A broadcast or recording of your service with songs/hymns that you have obtained direct permission to use (such as using a copyright free YouTube video or playing a CD which you have permission) on YouTube, Facebook, or Instagram (with lyrics)		✓	✓	
A broadcast or recording of your service with songs/hymns (from the CCLI list) performed by your worship group on any other platform, such as your website or Zoom (with lyrics)		✓	✓	✓
A broadcast or recording of your service with songs/hymns that you have obtained direct permission to use (such as using a copyright free YouTube video or playing a CD which you have permission) on any other platform, such as your website or Zoom (with lyrics)		✓	✓	✓
Using a song/hymn on any platform not included in the CCLI list		Check you have permission.		
Using a YouTube video on any platform.		Check you have permission.		

Update 2021: The new CCLI “Streaming Plus” licence covers using original audio (commercial recordings) for many popular songs (but not all – check the list first. It’s not the same as those covered by the standard CCLI Streaming Licence). This new licence allows you to include artist’s audio but not their official music videos or lyric videos (you’d need to create your own). For audio not covered by CCLI Streaming Plus or for any music video, you need to contact whoever owns the rights to get permission.

Why does Zoom (or your website) need an additional license?

Quick answer: YouTube, Facebook and Instagram have their own deals with PRS whereas Zoom doesn't and so you are not covered for the 'performance'.

If you're live streaming or uploading a video via YouTube or Facebook (or Instagram, which is owned by Facebook) then they have their own agreements for Performance rights with PRS for the content they host. If you're only streaming on those platforms, you don't need your own PRS licence. However if you're live streaming or uploading video anywhere else, such as directly on your website (not the same as embedding a YouTube video on your website) or showing video through Zoom then you will need the PRS Limited Online Music Licence (LOML) to cover the performance.

Will my broadcast be blocked on Facebook or YouTube if I include songs/hymns?

Quick answer: Having and displaying your licences helps, however YouTube & Facebook may still block, mute, or put a copyright claim on your video or live stream if you use songs/hymns even if you have the proper licences in place.

This can be unavoidable unfortunately, as YouTube and Facebook have automatic systems that can detect when you have used copyrighted music in your videos or live streams. In most cases the consequences will not affect you (such as not allowing monetisation), and if they do, you are able to easily challenge the claim by providing evidence of your licences. It can be useful to notify YouTube in advance of a live stream that you are going to be using copyrighted material but have licenses that cover it, and you can contact YouTube by navigating to the Help Centre and following the links to "Public Safety and Copyright". It is also useful to display details of the licences or permissions you have within your video/live stream or in the description.

Where can I find copyright free images to use in online worship?

Here are a few sites where you can obtain copyright free and royalty free images for use as backgrounds, sermon illustrations, or in other ways in online worship:

- <https://unsplash.com>
- www.pexels.com
- <https://ministrydesigns.media>
- www.churchmotiongraphics.com
- <https://pixabay.com>
- <https://freebibleimages.org>
- www.canva.com

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Where can I find copyright free song/hymn videos or audio for use in online worship?

District Online Worship Library www.yorkshirenemethodist.org/digital-resources/#bank We have set up a library of resources for online worship in Yorkshire North & East District to share recorded songs and hymns around the district and hope to expand the content available over time.

Here are some additional organisations and artists that have given permission for their versions of hymns and worship songs to be used in online worship during the coronavirus pandemic (You should include any copyright info or credits alongside the video or recordings - and note that permissions have been given for during the Covid-19 pandemic, but may be removed again at a later date. You may require a CCLI or similar streaming licence to use the material).

- [Evangelical Movement of Wales](#) (approx 100 hymns)
- [South Cliff Methodist Church](#) (approx 100 hymns)
- [Everingham Music](#) (approx 88 hymns)
- [Reawaken Hymns](#) (approx 49 hymns)
- [Matt Beckingham](#) (approx 84 hymns)
- [Chet Valley Churches](#) (approx 300+ hymns)
- [Paul Coleman](#) (approx 130 hymns)
- [Victoria Methodist Bristol](#) (approx 92 hymns)
- [Frodsham Methodist Church](#) (approx 95 hymns)
- [Rend Collective - Worship Club](#) (approx 7 songs)

You can find a list of all Singing the Faith hymns and what license your church needs to perform/use it on this page [here](#)