PREACHING & TEACHING

Church Podcast

How to turn what your church already produces every week into a podcast people outside the building will actually listen to. Four decisions, in order, with the recording notes that matter when the source audio is a room microphone rather than a studio.

a first season · 4 segments

Four decisions and a first-season plan. The sermon is already recorded; almost everything here is about what you do to it afterwards.

BEFORE YOU RECORD

- A raw sermon upload is not a podcast. It has twelve minutes of announcements on the front, a congregation coughing, and no opening that tells a stranger what they are listening to. Thirty seconds of topped-and-tailed intro fixes most of it.
- The room microphone that sounds fine in the building usually sounds distant in headphones. A lapel mic on the preacher, recorded separately, is the single largest quality jump available and costs very little.
- Publish on the same day every week. A church podcast that appears on Tuesday, then Thursday, then the following Monday trains people not to look for it.

01. Decision one: who is it for

decide first

[this decides everything else, so do not skip it]

There are three real answers and they produce three different podcasts. Members who missed Sunday. People considering visiting. People who will never visit and found you by searching a topic.

Most churches say all three and end up making the first one while hoping for the third. That is fine, but decide it consciously, because the intro, the title and the length all follow from it.

02. Decision two: the sermon, or something else

decide second

[the sermon feed is easiest and the least distinctive]

The sermon feed costs almost nothing because the recording already exists. It is also what every church does, which means it competes with every church.

The alternatives are cheaper than they look. A fifteen-minute midweek conversation between the preacher and one other person about what did not fit into Sunday. A daily two-minute reading. A monthly interview with someone in the congregation about their actual work.

[pick one format and commit for a season - twelve episodes before you judge it]

03. Decision three: what gets cut

every week

[the difference between an upload and an episode]

Cut the notices, the offering, the greeting of visitors, and anything that refers to a room the listener is not in. Cut the first thirty seconds of throat-clearing before the sermon starts.

Then add fifteen seconds at the front: the name of the church, the name of the preacher, the passage, and one sentence on what the sermon argues. A stranger deciding in the first ten seconds needs all four.

04. Decision four: where it lives, and the first season

once

[one feed, submitted once, everywhere]

A podcast is a hosted audio file plus an RSS feed. You submit that one feed to Apple and Spotify once, and every episode afterwards appears automatically. Nothing needs re-submitting.

For the first season, publish three episodes before you announce it. An empty feed with one episode converts badly and a feed with three looks like something already running.

[title episodes for the subject, not the date - 'Sunday 14 September' tells a stranger nothing]

USAGE

Free to use. Adapt it, record from it, publish under your own name. No credit required.

Record it with Hilite — hellohilite.com

Studio-quality audio from your laptop mic. Free to start.