

Effective Communication: A Guide for Congregations

Audio Recordings

What's Being Done

Many congregations provide a "tape service" to shut-ins, audio taping the worship service and delivering the tapes to people who cannot attend worship. Some store the tapes for archival purposes.

Audiotapes also come in handy for transcribing the sermons, which can then be posted on the congregation's Web site (providing another way for members who miss worship services to keep current).

Digital recordings can be saved on CDs and DVDs and/or posted on the congregation's Web site. Duplication of CDs is fairly inexpensive, and some congregations have mailed disks to people in their vicinity (see "Direct Mail), giving people a window into what worship is like.

Tips

Make sure the equipment is first-rate and tied into the congregation's sound system.

Use a recorder that will automatically record on both sides of the cassette.

Watch for copyright issues.

- Since pastors are called, not hired, sermons are their intellectual property, not the property of the congregation.
- It is fine to audiotape one copy of a service for short-term use by individuals (shut-ins or others not able to be present), as long as the tapes are not archived in any way and as long as they are not duplicated. Such tapes may be broadcast on the congregation's Web site or on local media once.
- Seek special permissions for the copyrighted music and texts used in the service before duplicating such tapes.

