



St Thomas' Livestreaming Information & Policy

Last Edited: April 2024

Why do we record and broadcast our services?

- First and foremost, it is an act of worship. It is one of the many ways we are able to express our adoration for God and to bring glory to His name. The Production Team are encouraged and expected to worship God through the role they're serving in.
- We do this to draw others into encounter with God. It's not only providing a window into what our services look and sound like, but we're partnering with the Holy Spirit to direct peoples' hearts and minds towards God.
- We are capturing and declaring what God is doing. Humans are forgetful beings, yet scripture tells us to *remember* God's goodness. We have been gifted the opportunity to record what God is up to. Just as God's people in the Old Testament built altars to the Lord at the place and time he spoke to them (e.g. Genesis 35:14-15), so we are building modern-day equivalents in the form of recorded and broadcasted services.
- It makes what we do more accessible. Whilst watching a church livestream is not a viable replacement for gathering in-person, it is nevertheless a key tool we are called to use to offer worship, bible teaching and connection with God to a wide range of people.
- Recording our services is a useful resource. It goes beyond simply the people watching live on a Sunday morning. Many people watch the service back during the week. We extract portions for use as podcasts and social media content. We use it as an archive tool to look back on specific times in the life of our church.

[Watch Taylor's Testimony to see how this work online is affecting peoples' lives.](#)

Why are we pursuing a dynamic, cinematic, handheld style in our broadcasts?

- It takes viewers from feeling like a fly on the wall to feeling included, involved and immersed. Using handheld cameras, incorporating movement, and shooting from particular angles makes the viewer feel like they are right there in the room. It helps our online audience feel more seen and known and heard.



- It is a tool we can use to highlight what the Spirit is saying and doing. Having the ability to quickly change position, angle, zoom and focus means we can more flexibly follow where the Spirit is leading and reflect that in our broadcast. We are not bound and restricted by fixed camera positions and angles.
- It facilitates an environment conducive to worshipping God. High quality production is not a prerequisite to worship, however if done right, can remove distractions and direct peoples' attention towards the presence of God.
- To emphasise the fact that church is a community, a family, and not a performance from those on-stage. Sensitively including shots of our congregation worshipping, and showing the context in which we're gathered, reinforces the truth that church is not a spectator sport, but is instead a gathering of believers from all backgrounds and life-stages, united to worship God and learn from His word.
- We are navigating how to communicate the never-changing gospel of Jesus in the ever-changing world of modern media. A dynamic, cinematic, handheld broadcast posted online is a format that is interesting and engaging for a large audience in today's culture. We are called to go where the people are.
- We have been asked by Newcastle Diocese to become a centre of excellence for worship and media. Developing a dynamic, cinematic, handheld style in our broadcasts is one way in which we are pursuing excellence in the areas of worship and media.
- It is effective training for the future. We are using industry-standard equipment and software, which we are able to use to train up volunteers and send them out with increased experience, skills and expertise in the area of production.

Keeping people safe

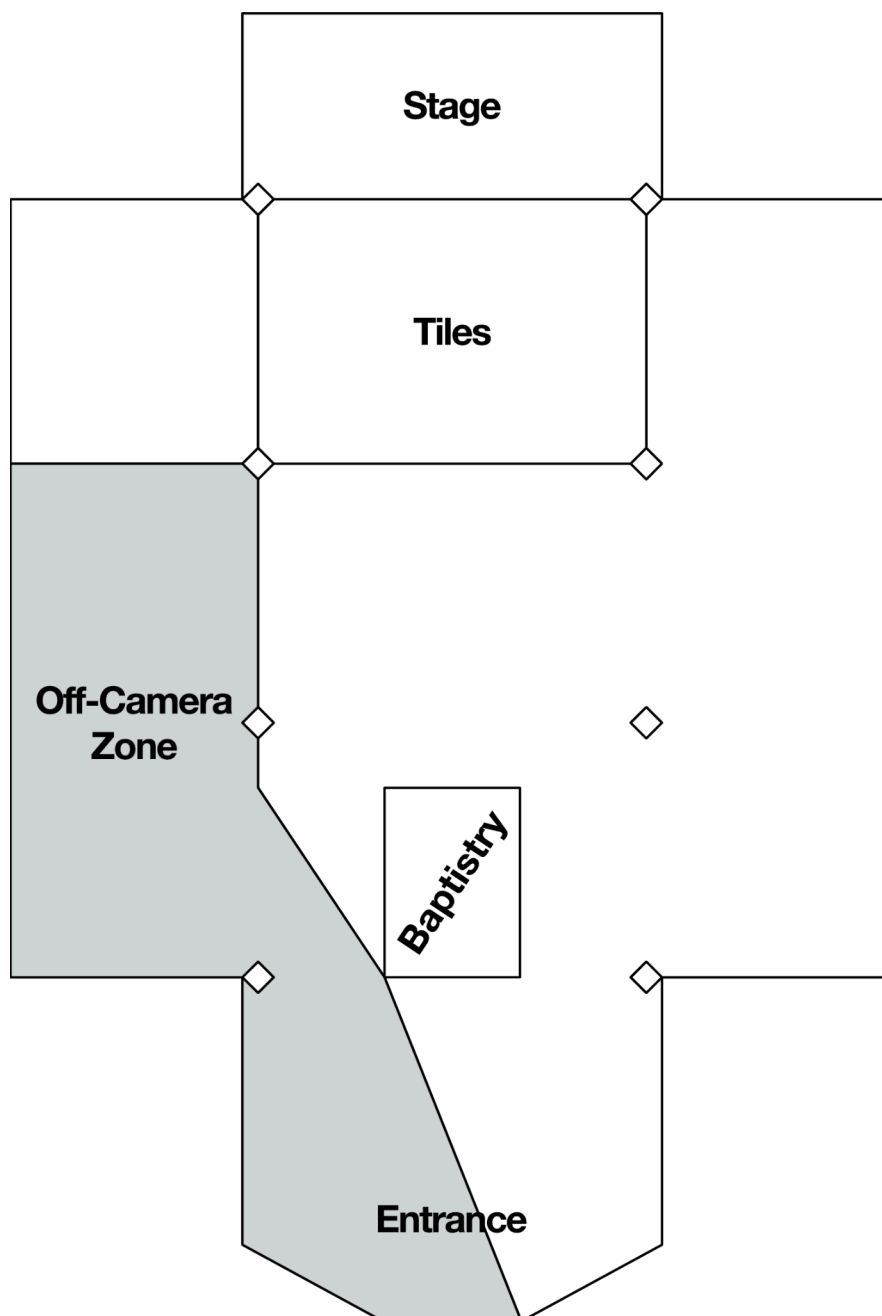
We highly value capturing what God is doing among us and communicating the good news of Jesus beyond the four walls of our church. However we also strive to make sure everyone is safe and comfortable in our church building, and therefore recognise not everyone can be, or would like to be, included in live broadcast content.

We only capture clear, close-up shots of those on-stage and involved in leading the service in some way. For those sat in the central and right-hand banks of seats, we



may include shots of the congregation, but only from behind or blurred out. Please note, if you are moving around the building in On-Camera areas (and particularly if you are facing the back of the church), we cannot guarantee your face will be excluded from the broadcast.

If you do not wish for your image to be captured at all on our livestream, please sit in the bank of seats under the north balcony – this is the left-hand side of the building as you look towards the stage. It is marked as ‘Off-Camera Zone’ in the diagram below. We have ensured there is a safe entry and exit route to this zone.





Our Camera Operators are trained in knowing which areas of the church can be captured in their shots, and what sort of shots are appropriate. Furthermore, our Video Directors are the ones deciding which shot is being broadcast at any given moment. Video Directors are also trained in knowing which areas and shots are appropriate, and will not display a live camera shot if it includes something or someone that is not appropriate.

We do not aim to capture childrens' faces in our camera shots. However if children are in On-Camera areas of the building, we cannot guarantee they will be excluded from our broadcast - particularly if they are on the tiled area at the front.

If the service you're attending includes Communion, you are invited and encouraged to come and receive the bread and wine with the rest of the church family. We will always ensure there is a Communion station that is completely off-camera at our livestreamed services.

Online platforms & digital storage

Our broadcasts are livestreamed to YouTube and Facebook, and they remain on those platforms thereafter. We may also clip sections of our broadcasts for use on social media and our website.

Furthermore, we record our broadcasts. The recording files are stored in a password protected St Thomas' Newcastle digital storage, only accessible by nominated members of the St Thomas' staff team.

Removal

Any individual who appears in a live broadcast (or whose child appears in a live broadcast) that has been posted online may request that the section of the broadcast including themselves be removed for any reason, even if prior permission has been granted, with a written note or email to the Creative Director (production@stthomas.church). Please specify the date of the broadcast and the timestamp of the section to be removed.

Changes



We may change the content of this policy without public notice. It is recommended to review this and other church policies periodically.