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Top Ten Tips for Avoiding Copyright Infringement

1. Remember that copyright infringement is 100% preventable.
2. Owning a copy of the work doesn't give you the right to copy a work!
3. Purchase the appropriate blanket license or licenses for your church's music licensing needs and follow the terms of those licenses.
4. Be cautious and attentive to licensing concerns when considering use of videos.
5. Contact authors or publishers to obtain licenses to use poetry, speeches, or other literature in your worship services and other events, whether in-person or live-streamed.
6. Do not post photographs that you find on the internet on your church's website. Use photographs that are owned by the church.
7. Keeping infringing materials off your website and social media platforms is one of the best ways to reduce your risk of infringement.
8. Hyperlinking on websites and in emails and using the share functions on social media are ways to share the works of others without copyright infringement. Don't copy and paste!
9. Attribution is necessary when using the works of others, but not enough to avoid infringement. Get a license.
10. Do not ignore a takedown notice or you might waive important rights.

Remember that compensation for use of a creative work is a justice issue.



Excerpted from *Copyrights Compliance: What Churches Need to Know*, by Heather Kimmel, General Counsel, United Church of Christ

Members In Discernment / Community Of Practice

In the old days, we used to take people "In Care" if they were responding a call to authorized ministry in the United Church of Christ. Over the years language changes and the church isn't excluded from those changes. Now, instead of taking people "In Care", we say they are "Members In Discernment". I was serving on the Lancaster Association Committee On Ministry when this happened. At first I was a little perplexed but then it started to grow on me.

I have come to appreciate the language of Members In Discernment because it honors a journey and the discernment aspect of someone who is perhaps feeling a call to ordained ministry but perhaps not yet ready to claim that fully. It also means that we are to accompany people on their journey and serve as guides, accountability partners and mentors along the way. A Member In Discernment or MID, is connected not only to the theological education path they have chosen, but to the Association Committee On Ministry, JMAT, and the local church where the person is a member.

Recently, we realized that MIDs can be in different stages along the path toward ordination and still learn from each other. We also realized they need support and guidance that is beyond what an individual mentor can provide. So, we have established a Community Of Practice for MIDs. It is our hope that this group will meet monthly with two facilitators and other MIDs.

Rev. Selina Hamilton and Rev. Rebecca Hoover have agreed to facilitate this gathering. They have already begun that process and will welcome individuals as they are affirmed as MIDs by their local congregation and Association Committee On Ministry. This time will help them receive spiritual and emotional support as well as guidance through all the steps of the process leading to ordination if that is indeed what the individual is being called to do.

If you recognize someone in your faith community who has gifts for ministry and a sense of call to explore that path, please have a conversation with them. Sometimes it takes someone seeing something in us that we have not honored in ourselves. Maybe being a Member In Discernment will help a person either honor a call to authorized ministry or it will help them discern another path. Either way, everything we do in our vocational lives is for and for the glory of God.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact :

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