

**BETHESDA CHAPEL**

# **Policy for Recording and Live-streaming of Church Services and Events**

December 2025

**Bethesda Chapel, Dinas Powys  
UK Registered Charity Number 1146153**

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## Aims and Purpose

Bethesda recognise the significant opportunities of making church services accessible to a broader audience, both within the conventional church community and beyond. However, there are aspects of church life that we feel need some additional consideration when church is taken beyond our physical walls. The purpose of this document covers:

- Ensuring we comply with licensing requirements.
- Ensuring that children or young people are safeguarded whilst a service or event is being live-streamed.
- Ensuring that no children can be identified as being present without the permission of their parents / guardians, or if there are legal reasons why their attendance cannot be identified.
- Ensuring that adults also have the choice whether to be seen on camera.
- Ensuring we are operating to the highest standards of best practice as an act of worship and service to God and the wider community.
- Ensuring we are compliant with data regulations in line with our GDPR policy.

## Definitions: Live-Streamed and Recorded Events

When we talk about a **live-streamed event**, (to include the term live-streaming), we are referring to any Bethesda occasion that broadcasts video and sound over the internet as it happens with a congregation present using platforms such as YouTube, Facebook Live or Zoom. These are all online platforms which enable a user to view an event, such as a church service, live as it is happening from wherever they happen to be. This will include, amongst other things, Family Service, Communion, Funerals and Marriages. Occasionally this could include events streamed from outside the building (e.g. the Remembrance Service from the Tywyn)

**Recorded** events include all occasions where video and audio are being produced by the church for future viewing, whether in private or public. In many cases, the recording made through the livestream is then available as a recording via the church website, Facebook, or YouTube pages. However, some events are recorded specifically as a memorial of an occasion for future reference (e.g. a funeral service) where the recordings will only be shared with individuals.

## Responsibilities

Overall responsibility to produce policies for recording and live-streaming of Bethesda events, and to ensure said policies are being implemented lies with the Trustees of Bethesda Chapel. In producing policies, consideration is needed to ensure licensing, safeguarding and GDPR issues are being covered. **The Trustees will discuss the spiritual**

needs of the Church with the Elders, and may assign individuals (not necessarily Trustees) to fulfil the legal obligations.

## Principles

### Licensing

It is Bethesda's Policy to comply with relevant copyright requirements (it is illegal to use copyrighted material without a license). Consequent to this, we will acquire appropriate licenses and ensure that we check whether words, music, and other materials we use are either (1) not in Copyright; or (2) covered by one or more of the licenses we possess.

The minimum licenses that we will hold are as follows:

1. A Church Copyright License covering Bethesda for the use of copyrighted material (covered under that license) including music and lyrics in hymn books and service sheets. This does not cover streaming of music or the use of DVD clips in recordings.

2. A Streaming License covering Bethesda for live streaming. This is to cover:

- live worship music performed as part of that stream.
- the right to show the words on screen.
- allows us to make recordings of the services available on our website indefinitely provided we keep renewing our streaming licence.

Note:

If we wish to use recorded music as part of the stream, additional rights come into play. Commercially available CDs or music recordings cannot be played unless specific permission is granted by the copyright holder. This is particularly important when producing videos using 'backing' music.

We will ensure that we comply with the disclosure requirements of our licenses – e.g. mentions in service descriptions (in the case of Family Service, these should be shown at the start of the live-stream)

If we are to use material that is under copyright and not covered by our licenses, then permission must be sought from the owner(s) of any other creative works to be included in the service.

Further notes:

- If reproducing bible verses, usually there will be copyright information in the front of the publication, and usually they will allow for a certain proportion to be reproduced.
- For any images etc, the same rules would apply as in normal circumstances. Never assume that you can take an image found on Google and use it in a church service or Bethesda publication.
- It is the responsibility of the individual requesting the use of the content to ensure that we have the relevant permissions (eg it is the preacher's responsibility to ensure images included in PowerPoint slides have the relevant permissions - **visiting preachers will need to be made aware of this by those booking them**)

## Safeguarding

Note: Relaying or recording sound only is unlikely to cause an issue as individuals will not normally be identifiable.

If the host (chair/preacher) is alone, with no congregation, there are no data or safeguarding problems.

If a congregation are attending as well, and the service is to be live streamed or recorded for others to participate in or watch later, there are a number of safeguarding and data protection issues to be taken into consideration. It will be hard to control who sees images streamed or recorded for broadcast and children and vulnerable adults must be protected.

The Trustees sets the following conditions for Bethesda to live stream or record a service.

1. Anyone attending must be able to sit in an area which is not visible in the recording streaming. We recognise that there may be members of the congregation who prefer to attend in privacy. For example, they may not wish their whereabouts to become known to an abuser.

Notes:

- It is our policy to only show the congregation “en-masse” and not to focus on an individual or small group, unless that individual /group has given us explicit permission. In this context, members of the Worship Group will be treated in the same manner – i.e. any plan to focus in on an individual member will only occur if explicit permission has been given (note: this does not ‘override’ the implied permission to broadcast given by agreeing to host the service, et al.)
- To designate a part of the area used by the congregation as a “dead zone” where no filming will take place. Visitors will be made aware of these areas by the welcome team, a slide to this effect will be added to the introductory PowerPoint, and there will be posters reminding people that the services are recorded and where they should sit if they do not wish to be filmed. Stickers will be attached to the pews, **and the host will remind the congregation at the start of each service.**
- Whilst the children’s and youth groups are in the service, the “dead zone’ will be extended to cover all areas to ensure no vulnerable children can be caught on camera.
- The technicians operating the live-stream will obscure the screens with notices before the service gets underway to ensure nobody accidentally ends up on camera as they are moving to their seats.
- On occasion, we may have non-standard filming arrangements: e.g. for an in-service Baptism. It will be our policy to review our “no film” location for that service and to make sure the revised area is suitably publicised.

2. Adults (other than the vulnerable) leading the service – including the worship group (en masse) – are considered to have deemed to give permission to be filmed by agreeing to take on the role. Anyone who is uncomfortable being filmed should make their concerns known so we can make suitable arrangements (including direction of cameras; seating arrangements; and obscuring the screen so individuals are unrecognisable). It will be our policy that those visiting Bethesda to take part in the service are advised at the time of invite that the service is to be live streamed – and if this becomes our intention after the invitation is accepted, they are appropriately advised.

3. Written permission (this to include electronic submission by Google form or email) is required before Vulnerable Adults and Children can be filmed in the congregation or involved in leading a live streamed service.

Permission for Children is to be obtained as follows:

- Children under the age of 13: consent to be gained from their parents or carers via Google forms.

- Children aged between 13 and 16: consent should be gained from both parents/carers and the children themselves. (Again, this can be fulfilled using Google forms)

- Children aged 17: consent should be gained from the children themselves.

4. Where a service is live streamed on Zoom the church should ensure that there is an identified Zoom host who will be monitoring the livestream and the “chat box” throughout the service. They will also be responsible for ensuring that the following guidelines are adhered to:

All attendees should:

- Ensure that their camera is on at all times.
- Ensure that their username is their full real/known name, i.e. not a technical/computer name, nickname/joke name, or just their Christian name.
- Any unknown people should be asked for more information about their attendance online.
- Whilst we wish to maintain a welcoming ethos in all churches, whether people are attending in person or online, anyone who refuses to comply with the above requests, or fails to satisfy the Zoom host of their bona fide interest should be removed from the Zoom meeting.
- The Zoom host should regularly remind those online that if they have concerns, they can share them with the host and they will pass on safeguarding concerns to the Designated Person for Safeguarding.

Note: Whilst the desire is to live-stream the whole of the Communion service on Zoom, only the sermon will be recorded. It is felt that to live-stream the open worship would lead to people being uncomfortable in sharing and reduce participation.

## Data Protection

By law, data must be protected, and this includes images of attending members of the congregation. It would be disproportionate to obtain consent from everyone in the congregation for their personal data to be used in the live streaming of services

Assuming the above directions regarding informing the congregation have been followed (i.e. notices are clearly visible at the entrance, on the walls, and on the welcome screen that live-streaming/recording is taking place and advising people where they can sit and not be on camera), written consent is not needed.

The host will do their best to advise people of the use of cameras and possible data protection and data protection implications.

Hosts will be reminded of the need to use wisdom in sharing personal information with the church. **It should not be assumed that people are comfortable with congregants' birthdays, illnesses, family names, jobs, etc, being shared online, and where possible they should check with individuals before the service or share only information that is vague in nature.**

Live Streams and recordings will be retained after broadcast for later viewing by those unable to watch at the time. However, this intention is not to be indefinite. Sermons given in the Communion service will be hidden from view on our 'unlisted' You Tube channel for up to 5 years. Services live-streamed on our Facebook Page will be removed after 2 years and added to the Members Only area of the church website.

## ADOPTION OF POLICY:

This policy was agreed by the Trustees of Bethesda Chapel and will be reviewed annually

Signed by:

Position:

Signed by:

Position

Signed by:

Position:

Signed by:

Position

Date:

A copy of this policy will also be lodged on our web site [www.bethesdachapel.com](http://www.bethesdachapel.com)

<b>Circulation for info to :</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Elders</b>	
<b>Deacons</b>	
<b>Youth Leaders</b>	
<b>Tech Team Leads</b>	