

The Small Church Story Kit

Film something real this month with a phone and one volunteer.

Seven in ten U.S. congregations have 100 people or fewer, and most are trying to run a megachurch content plan with none of the staff. This is the plan that actually fits. No crew, no big budget.

Before you film anything: the one-sentence test

One person, one change. Write it in a single sentence below.

If you cannot say it out loud in under a minute, you are not ready to film it.

This film is about _____

The 5 questions that get real answers

- "Take me back to the moment it got hard. What was that day like?"
- "What did you tell yourself back then that turned out not to be true?"
- "When did you first notice something changing?"
- "What would you say to someone sitting where you sat a year ago?"
- "What happens next for you?"

Sit down for twenty minutes. Ask about the hard part first. Never send questions ahead of time, because rehearsed answers are dead answers. Let silence sit. The good part usually comes after it.

The 5 shots (about 10 minutes of filming)

- **Their hands.** While they talk, or doing the thing they do. Covers every edit cut you will need.
- **The room where it happened.** Empty is fine. Place makes a story feel true.
- **A wide shot of your church.** From across the street. Ordinary is the point.
- **People arriving.** Backs, doors, handshakes. No faces needed if permission is unclear.
- **One detail that means something.** A worn Bible, a name tag, a casserole dish. Ask them what object matters.

Gear, Placement, and the Year Plan

Two things worth money. Five places to use every film.

The entire gear conversation

Audio. A basic clip-on microphone costs less than a nice dinner and does more for perceived quality than any camera upgrade. People forgive soft footage. Nobody forgives bad sound.

Light. Film near a window with the person facing it. Free. Biggest visual upgrade available.

Everything else is a want. A newer phone shoots better than the cameras most films were made on ten years ago.

Use every film 5 times, not once

- ☐ Sunday service
- ☐ Email to your list
- ☐ Social, cut to the strongest 45 seconds
- ☐ Your giving page
- ☐ Your welcome or visit page

Most churches make one film and use it once. That is where the value gets left on the table.

Your four stories for the year

One per quarter, tied to something already on your calendar. Four is achievable. Forty is a fantasy.

Q1

Q2

Q3

Q4

The advantage you actually have

You know the names. You know whose marriage almost ended and whose son came home.

People will say true things because it is you asking. You can decide Tuesday and film Thursday.

Production value makes someone stop scrolling. Story makes them stay and act. You are rich

in the one that matters

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