How to Live-Stream Church for Free

Note: This approach uses Facebook, but a parishioner does not need a Facebook account to watch the live stream.

Level One: Stream Video via Facebook Live

What you’ll need:
- A smartphone or tablet with the Facebook app (or a laptop w/ Facebook open in browser)
- WiFi in the Sanctuary (or good data service and a BIG data plan)
- A public church Facebook page (not your personal Facebook page, not a church Facebook group) (You need to be an admin of this page)
- (Optional) A charger for your smartphone/tablet
- (Recommended) Someone to watch the video stream from inside the room, muted, to make sure it’s working at the beginning and to check in throughout the service.

What to do:
1. (In advance) Tell parishioners they can watch worship live via your church’s Facebook page. Make sure they all have the link. It will look something like this:

2. (In advance) Find the best location for a camera to capture the pulpit and altar.
   a. Note: the camera can be in either landscape or portrait mode.
   b. For us, this was a phone propped up on a column in front of the pulpit.
   c. For you, a small table or tripod might work.
3. **(15 minutes before the service)** Put your phone into Airplane mode/do not disturb
   a. Depending on your device, receiving a phone call/FaceTime/etc. will probably cause the video to stop recording.
   b. So put it on Airplane, but **make sure** WiFi is connected.

4. **(10 minutes before the service)** Go Live on Facebook on the phone/laptop.
   a. Open the Facebook app
   b. Navigate to the church’s Facebook page by typing its name into the search bar
   c. iPhone/iPad: Press “Live”
   d. Android: Press “Create a Post” then “Go Live”

5. At the end of the service, when you stop the stream, Facebook will give you the option of posting the video to your feed. It’s a neat idea!
Level Two: Embed Live Videos into Your Church Website

What you’ll need
- A laptop or desktop with Internet access
- Access to edit your church website

What to do
1. (In advance) Decide where you want to put the live videos
   a. In our case, I create a new Squarespace page at stanneslincoln.org/live
2. (In advance) Publicize that information to the congregation.
3. (20 minutes before the service) Follow all the steps in Level One to begin streaming.
4. (15 minutes before the service) Get the video URL
   a. On the computer (not a phone/tablet), open your church’s Facebook page.
   b. You should see the streaming video on your page.
   c. If not…panic! (Don’t panic. Wait a few seconds or refresh the browser.)
   d. Right-click on the video, and it should show a URL.
   e. Copy this URL. (Edit > Copy or Command-C on a Mac or Control-C on Windows.)

5. Convert to an iFrame
   a. Go to this page: https://developers.facebook.com/docs/plugins/embedded-video-player/
   b. Under “Embedded Video Player Configurator,” paste the video URL you just copied into “URL of video” (Edit > Paste or Command-V or Control-V)
   c. Scroll down and click “Get Code”
   d. Click “iFrame”
   e. Copy the scary-looking HTML code that begins <iframe... all the way through </iframe>
      i. If you just click on the text, the page will probably select everything you need; then you can copy it.
6. Plop the iFrame into your website
   a. **Squarespace**
      i. Open the page where you want to put the video
      ii. Edit page content
      iii. Create a “Code” block
      iv. Paste the iFrame code in
b. **Other platforms**
   
i. Hopefully, you’re able to embed arbitrary HTML code into your website and can insert the iFrame code where you want it
   
ii. If that sentence means nothing to you, consult whoever put your website together. Or send me an email at greg@stanneslincoln.org and we’ll set up a time to talk by phone.

7. **(Every week)** You will need to repeat steps #4-7 every week – I’m sorry to say as far as I can tell, the iFrame code is *not* reusable.