

**Sherman Street Church**  
1000 Sherman Street SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506  
Photo and Video Policy

**Purpose**

At Sherman Street CRC we value the way in which photography and videography can help us flourish as a faith community. Photography and videography help us be more inclusive, highlighting the work of those who serve in less visible roles. They also allow us to better reach out to our community, communicating our mission as a church via our website and social media. Finally, and most importantly, they provide important ways for us to bear testimony, both now and to future generations, to the work God is doing in our life together as a body of believers.

The following policies are designed to help us foster and encourage the gifts of photography and videography that are outlined above. It is important to us that photography and videography are used in ways that bring us together, communicate our mission, and highlight God's work amongst us.

**Photo and Video Policy**

- A. At the beginning of the church ministry year the administrative assistant will place a photo/video release form in the mailbox of church attenders/members with minors in their households. The church office will then collect and keep track of who has signed a release form.
  
- B. Procedure for photographers/videographers:
  - 1. If you have been requested to take pictures or video at a church event, please notify the office (office@shermanstreetchurch.org) at least one week in advance of the event. The administrative assistant will then inform the ministry leadership involved that you will be present at their next meeting.
  - 2. If you are shooting an event with minors, the administrative assistant will provide you with a list of children who have signed release forms on file. If a minor is clearly identifiable in a shot but does not have a signed a release form, the shot cannot be used until a release form is obtained. If it is a group shot and minors are not clearly identifiable, a release is not needed.
  - 3. When taking photos or video, please make sure you do not present an interruption to the worship experience (applicable when shooting, for example, during a worship service, Children's Worship, etc.). You may shoot from the back of the sanctuary, without a flash, etc., but please make sure your actions are not disruptive.
  - 4. You should abide by any requests to not take photographs of particular individuals, whether that request is made in advance from the church office or if it is made at the time of the event.
  
- C. Our policy for using pictures or video:
  - 1. Unless permission has been granted, we will not post online a photo or a video with any full names or other identifying information (e.g., phone numbers, emails, addresses) except for church staff, officers and ministry leaders. This includes tagging photos on Facebook.
  - 2. We will only post photos or video for which we have a release on file for the minors featured in the photograph or video.
  - 3. We will only post photographs of minors *after* an event has occurred. For example, we may post a photo of a past youth event but will not post a child's photo with the date and time of a future youth event.
  - 4. We will not knowingly post anything that would be embarrassing, objectionable or hurtful to anyone in the photo.
  - 5. We will gladly remove any photo or video immediately upon request. If you see a photo or video that includes you or your child and would like it removed from our website or Facebook, please contact the church office (616-452-7037, office@shermanstreetchurch.org).

**A Note about Etiquette**

The Sherman Street Photo and Video Policy sets forth guidelines for images commissioned and used by the church. It makes no attempt to regulate the personal use of cameras during our events. However, we ask that everyone be mindful of privacy concerns when taking images—moving or still—and/or posting them to social media websites. We affirm the value of photography and videography and believe lives can be enriched by these technologies, but we encourage our community to be one of caring deference when concerns are raised. In addition to privacy, avoiding undue distraction is important, especially during worship. When appropriate, please be discreet when using cameras in and around the church.

# Sherman Street Church

1000 Sherman Street SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506  
Photo/Video Release Form

**Please put this form in the Administrative Assistant's mailbox or return to the office.**

**Opt In:** For children under 18 years of age, please complete the section below.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, Parent/Guardian of (you may list multiple names) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ hereby authorize and consent to the use of images of those listed above by Sherman Street Church for church purposes, including but not limited to: still photography, video, electronic and print publications and websites.

Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Printed name

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

**Opt Out:** We respect the fact that you may wish to NOT have photos or video of yourself, or children under 18 years of age, used for church purposes. If this is the case, please fill in the "Opt Out" section below.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, **object** to the use of images of those listed below by Sherman Street Church for church purposes, including but not limited to: still photography, video, electronic and print publications and websites.

Please list all household members included in the opt out:

Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Printed name

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_