



St Mark's Church

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Photography Policy

Sharing photos and videos of parishioners and events at St Mark's Church is a privilege, and we intend to respect and honour it. In this digital age, the church takes many pictures of baptisms, choir performances and concerts, worship services, mission trips, special presentations, Sunday School, Sunday club, fellowship activities and community outreach projects. We use these pictures to record, to promote, and to celebrate our church ministries. Pictures are used on bulletin boards, in slide shows and PowerPoint presentations, in printed publications, and on our church website and social media.

- Printed publications include church newsletters, brochures, invitations, books, newspapers, magazines, etc.
- Online sharing includes church newsletters (online version), website, Facebook page and groups, Twitter, Google+ page and YouTube channel.

To do our best to ensure the safety of our community while still demonstrating that the church is the people, and promoting a spirit of warmth, family, fellowship, and community, the St.Marks Vicar, staff and PCC have developed this Photo Policy to cover any photos or videos of parishioners or event attendees to be used on the St. Mark's website and other electronic, digital or print publications.

This policy is applicable only to activities organised by the church. All external groups using the church building, grounds and facilities are expected to follow their own organisation's Photography Policy.

General group or crowd photographs:

Photos and videos are almost always of people in public spaces, and/or at public events. We will do our best not to post anything that would be embarrassing, objectionable or hurtful to anyone in a photo or video.

St. Marks reserves the right to take photographs, audio, or video recordings at worship services or any other church-related activities in which individuals are not prominently featured and no identifying information is presented, and to use any of these photos or recordings for fellowship or promotional purposes in media such as, but not limited to, brochures and flyers, the church website, and online photo galleries, without seeking or requiring the consent of each person represented. In addition to any event or gathering taking place on church property, church-related activities also include gatherings at other locations such as parks, sporting events, mission sites, etc.

Any individual who objects to potentially being photographed as part of a St. Marks' activity should notify a member of the clergy, an usher or event coordinator, or the photographer, who will respond at the soonest possible opportunity.

Any individual who sees himself/herself or a family member in a group photo online and would like it removed may follow the photo removal procedure given below.

Adult individual or small group photographs:

When adult individuals or a small group of individuals are photographed, whether posed or candid, each person will be asked for verbal consent before any use of the photographs is made. Verbal consent will be deemed sufficient to use an adult individual or small group photo that contains no identifying information. Written consent will be obtained for any photos that contain identifying information, (for example adults receiving awards or recognition such as on becoming a lay Reader).

Consent continues with no time limit. However, the majority of images are used for about five years. They are then moved into the image archive for possible future use.

Photographing minors:

1. When children under the age of 18 are photographed (except as part of a general group or crowd photo as outlined above), the consent of at least one guardian will be obtained before their photo will be used in any way. (See Consent for use of Photographs and Video)
2. In addition, the following guidelines will be followed:
 - Identifying information (first or last name, family members, email addresses, school names, etc.) of anyone under 18 years of age may be included in or associated with any photographs or videos displayed, posted or published only when there has been written consent from a guardian.
 - All registration forms for events, activities, or programs, such as youth groups etc. will contain a reference to this policy, a permission request to allow the participant to be photographed in accordance with the policy, and a clear method to allow the signing parent or guardian to “opt-out” of inclusion in any photographs, audio, or video recordings. Note that opting-out via an activity sign-up form will apply only to that activity, not as a “blanket” request (see “Opting-out” below).
 - For annual programs, a new photography release form will be requested every year.
3. **Opting-out** Parents/guardians who do not wish for their child’s photo, audio recording, or video to be potentially posted online or otherwise displayed, regardless of the context, should send a written note or email to the church office or children and families worker, and St. Mark’s will make every effort to exclude the indicated minor from any individual or small group photography. Please note that children may still be included in general group or crowd photos without identifying information; **however, you may always request that any photo be removed from display.**
4. Photographs of minors must be of past events, rather than including photos with a future location. For example, posting a photo of a past youth event is permissible. Posting a child’s photo with the date and time of a future youth event is not permissible.
5. If there is no signed photo release for a minor who is included in a group shot (i.e. Uniform groups), the individual publishing the picture on the website, in a newsletter or other media will obscure the image of that minor prior to publishing or displaying the photo.

Designated Photographer, Camera, Storage and Sharing:

1. St Marks will avoid using any personal equipment to take photos and recordings of children and aim to use only cameras or devices belonging to the church.
2. Photographs and video used for church purposes will be stored by those designated by the PCC for the purpose for which they are intended, and only by those with up-to-date DBS checks by St. Mark's church.
3. St Marks will guide church users to store photographs and video on a secure device, protected by a secure password login or encryption.
4. All designated photographers will know of any under-18s and Vulnerable Adults who cannot be included in a group shot, and will avoid doing so.
5. The designated webmaster will quality assure the publication of photos, either printed (church newsletters, brochures, etc.) or online (online version of church newsletter, website, Facebook page and groups, Twitter, Google+ page and YouTube channel).

Photo or Video Removal Policy:

Anyone who discovers that photographs of himself or herself or family members have been included in St. Mark's publications or on the website that they do not wish to remain there should contact the church office by phone or email to request the photograph's removal.

St. Marks will make every effort to exclude the indicated minor from any individual or small group photography, or if this is not possible to remove the photo from display.

Copyright Policy:

1. Unless otherwise indicated, photographs and videos published by St. Mark's Church are the property of St. Mark's Church and may not be used for any purpose (including but not limited to: downloading, printing, distributing, linking) without permission from St. Mark's Church.

Administrative Guidelines:

1. A copy of this Photo Policy will be included on the church website and a copy maintained in the church office.
2. Notice of the availability of the St. Mark's Photo Policy will be publicised in the bulletin, on the website and at least once a year in newsletters created by St. Mark's or its ministries (e.g. Annual Parochial Church meeting).
3. All appropriate staff, commission, committee, and ministry leaders will be required to adhere to the photo policy, and review annually to ensure that the policy is adhered to and followed as the ministry transitions with new members and leaders.

4. In any case, where someone declines, asks or does not provide permission for a photo to be published, St. Mark's will comply as soon as possible to refrain from taking the photo or delete or remove the photograph.
5. To collect and update a list of people who have given specific consent for the use of photographs and/or videos (**See 'Photo Consent Form'**), including for under 18s, Vulnerable Adults and for those who have informed the church that they do not want to be photographed under any circumstances.
6. Internal use of photographs or videos by staff, commissions or ministry leaders for editorial or historical purposes are exempted from this policy.
7. Event organisers, including for weddings, baptisms, funerals and community events, will receive a copy of the '**Visitor Guidance - Photography**'.

Change notice:

St. Mark's may change the content of this policy without notice, and it is recommended to review this and other church policies periodically. Current copies of this policy may be obtained at the church office and on the church website.