

# 10 photography tips



*for showcasing your congregation and ministry efforts*

**By Katelyn Maten • The Alabama Baptist**

**1. Know the order of service.**

Familiarize yourself with what is happening during the church service before you start taking photos, so you know where to be and when. Knowing the order of service can help you not miss important details.

**2. Be observant.**

As famous photographer Elliot Erwitt once said, “Photography is an art of observation. It has little to do with the things you see and everything to do with the way you see them.” Look for worshipful moments and details that other people may overlook such as someone raising their hands in worship, a reaction after someone has been baptized, a group of people talking to each other before service, or someone holding a communion cup.

**3. Photograph discreetly during the worship service.**

While getting good pictures is important, it is also important not to be a distraction during the church service. Try to find ways to be discreet while taking pictures — put your camera in “silent shutter” mode, wear nondescript clothing, wear shoes that don’t make noises when you walk, etc.

**4. Look for good lighting.**

Oftentimes the biggest struggle in a church will be lighting. This can make or break your photographs, so look for areas in your church with good lighting. Find angles that best highlight a person where the lighting complements them.

**5. Shoot with different angles.**

Make sure to look for different angles of shots, such as closeups, portraits and detail shots. Always capture a wide shot of the room during the service, but do not stop there. Get closeups of hands raised, people engaged in worship, and more.

**6. Take portrait and landscape shots.**

Many people shoot only landscape, but don’t forget to

turn your camera sideways and get some portraits as well. Landscape is typically used for Facebook, while portraits are used for Instagram stories and reels.

**7. Highlight people serving who often get overlooked.**

Make sure to take pictures of people who aren’t frequently front and center — the tech team, the person serving in the nursery, greeters, and people praying together before a service.

**8. Look for ways to add foreground.**

Foreground in photography is defined as the image closest to the viewer, or the space between the camera and the subject. Adding elements and details that are not the main subject, can enhance your photography. Look for things you can add in your pictures to add more details or frame a main subject. (This can be other people in the foreground who are not your main subject.)

**9. Continue learning about photography.**

Study photography techniques and think of ways they can apply to your church. Watch angles (look for leading lines, rule of thirds, and other photography techniques). Learn how to shoot in raw and in manual mode. You can use a cheat sheet that helps to lay out the setting for different environments, but when in doubt, shoot in automatic.

**10. Expand and adapt.**

Keep practicing and seek advice from more experienced photographers. Look for ways to be creative. Try editing your photos by using a software such as Lightroom.

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**Note for photographing children**

*For events that involve taking pictures of children, it is important to get permission from a child’s parents. Simply work with your church to create permission slips which can be signed by parents or have them talk to your church’s photographer (providing verbal permission to the photographer).*