

Telling Your Story Through Photographs

DIOCESE OF VIRGINIA CHURCH VITALITY DAY

JUNE 1, 2019



What We Will Cover Today

1. You Can Do It!
2. The Goals of Church Photography
3. What Makes An Interesting Church Photo
4. How To Use Photos
5. Logistics
6. Technical Suggestions
7. Real-Life Inspiration

PART I

YOU CAN DO IT!

Church Isn't About Perfection

- Your photos don't need to be perfect, just **real**
- Look for authentic, **relational** moments
- Your **phone** camera is all you need



PART I - YOU CAN DO IT!

A “low-quality” phone
photo is worth a
thousand stock
images



Fr Ben leads an instructional Eucharist during the last session of Children's Communion Instruction (taken with an iPhone)

Make It A Team Effort

- Invite parishioners to send you photos
- Often, they are already taking photos of church events (especially if their kids are there!)



PART I - YOU CAN DO IT!

Part I - In Summary

1. **Real > Perfect**
2. **Phone Photos > Stock Photos**
3. **Everyone > Just You**

PART II

THE GOALS OF CHURCH PHOTOGRAPHY

An Invitation

- Photos have the ability to **invite** people to experience a church's life
- Images should **enrich** how people see "church"



An Invitation

- For parishioners, newcomers and seekers alike, photographs can be a way to illustrate the heart and soul of what makes your parish inviting



An Invitation

- The images you share should make parish life **accessible, inclusive, and personal**
- Show what it feels like to **be there**



A New Perspective

- Use images to show “church” with all its little **quirks**, **imperfections** and **humanity**
- Seek out and show the small, unguarded moments



Part II - In Summary

1. Photos should be **inviting** and make “church” **accessible**
2. Big, impersonal moments are made up of **small, intimate moments**

PART III

WHAT MAKES AN INTERESTING CHURCH PHOTO

People, Not Buildings

- The church is the **people**, not the building
- People don't join a church community because the steeple is cool or the altar flowers are pretty



People, Not Buildings

- Consider what makes your parish an **inviting** place
- Usually, it has something to do with people!
- Show parish **life**



**People,
Not Buildings**

SEEK



INSTEAD OF



PART III - WHAT MAKES AN INTERESTING CHURCH PHOTO

Doing, Not Being

- When possible, look for pictures of people **doing** something
- What was it like to **be there?**
- Posed group photos are not ideal



**Doing,
Not Being**

SEEK



INSTEAD OF



PART III - WHAT MAKES AN INTERESTING CHURCH PHOTO

Relationships, Not Isolation

- Look for **interactions** between people
- Show **community**
- Use images of individuals in broader context



**Relationships,
Not Isolation**

IF THIS

PAIR WITH THIS



PART III - WHAT MAKES AN INTERESTING CHURCH PHOTO

**Relationships,
Not Isolation**

IF THIS



PAIR WITH THIS



PART III - WHAT MAKES AN INTERESTING CHURCH PHOTO

Community, Not Just Clergy

- It's tempting to focus too much on speakers and/or clergy
- Avoid giving the impression that clergy = the parish



**Community,
Not Just Clergy**

SEEK



INSTEAD OF



PART III - WHAT MAKES AN INTERESTING CHURCH PHOTO

**Community,
Not Just Clergy**

SEEK



INSTEAD OF



PART III - WHAT MAKES AN INTERESTING CHURCH PHOTO

Personal, Not Removed

- Show the viewer what it **feels like to be a part of a moment**
- There's a place for big, wide overviews, but usually, **intimate** is more interesting



**Personal,
Not Removed**

SEEK



INSTEAD OF

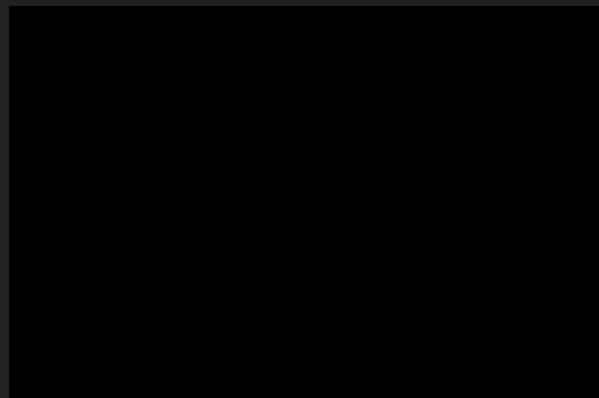


PART III - WHAT MAKES AN INTERESTING CHURCH PHOTO

**Personal,
Not Removed**

SEEK

INSTEAD OF



PART III - WHAT MAKES AN INTERESTING CHURCH PHOTO

Part III - In Summary

1. **People** > Buildings
2. **Doing** > Static
3. **Relationships** > Isolation
4. **Community** > Only Clergy
5. **Personal** > Removed

PART IV

HOW TO USE PHOTOS


Social Media

- Concentrate on **Facebook** and **Instagram**
- Link your Instagram to your Facebook - makes it easier to share to both



Social Media

- When possible, relate photos to **ongoing** ministries or events
- Use an engaging photo(s) to **invite** your audience to see more
- If a parishioner couldn't make it to a particular service or special event, photos can help them feel **included**

 **Saint James' Episcopal Church, Warrenton** is with Ben Maas. Published by Coy Ferrell [?] · May 20 at 6:56 PM · 🌐

We had so much fun and learned so much during the four weeks of Children's Communion Instruction!

Last Sunday, Fr Ben led a special Eucharist in the children's chapel for the kids who participated, and the bread they made last week was used as the host in the main service upstairs.

There is no Sunday school this Sunday, but on June 2nd we start our summer format. Each Sunday we will discuss one of the 13 virtues taught at Saint James' Episcopal School, read a bible story that demonstrates that virtue and reinforce those virtues by practicing them on the playground, in the hallways, in our church and our community.



 **Saint James' Episcopal Church, Warrenton** Published by Coy Ferrell [?] · May 5 at 10:20 PM · 🌐

👶 Children are a really important part of our community every single week, and today we got to celebrate all their contributions with a special children's service!

🙏 Thank you to all of the kids and adults who made this morning so uplifted, and thanks to Amber K for the photos!

📖 Fr Ben's Sermon -> <http://bit.ly/frbenchildrensermon0519>



 **Saint James' Episcopal Church, Warrenton** Published by Coy Ferrell [?] · April 19 · 🌐

📖 Watch Fr Ben's homily and read the Scriptures for Good Friday at <http://bit.ly/sjecgoodfriday19>

📖 Learn about The Great Vigil of Easter and Easter Sunday at <http://bit.ly/sjeholyweek2019>





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Saint James' Episcopal Church, Warren...

saintjameswarrenton 🌟🎄 There are video recordings of each Christmas Eve service along with many more photos on our Facebook page and website ➡️

[#warrentonva](#) [#fauquier](#) [#fauquiercounty](#)
[#lovewarrenton](#) [#episcopal](#)
[#episcopalchurch](#) [#christmaseve](#)



73 likes

DECEMBER 28, 2018

[Log in](#) to like or comment.



Website

- As much as possible, illustrate each ministry with photos of that **ministry in action**
- Show your audience what it's like to **participate**
- Sometimes you will need to be **deliberate** about collecting photos of a certain ministry
- Try to represent the **full spectrum** of parish life



MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

The middle school youth group at Saint James' is open to anyone in grades 6th-8th who wants to make connections, have fun and learn more about what Saint James', Episcopal Church and Christianity is all about, whether or not they attend Saint James' church and/or school.

2017 KICKOFF AT VERDUN ADVENTURE BOUND





BREAKFAST SANDWICH MINISTRY

"...I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me..."

Matthew 25:35

"The neat part about Warrenton is that it's a real community," says Bob Meceda, who

McDonalds, so he knows a thing or two about cracking eggs. For the past seven years, Greg has spent his time in the Saint James' kitchen most months on the third Saturday, prepping breakfast sandwiches for local residents who might not otherwise have a healthy meal on a Saturday morning.



Print

- If at all possible, use original photos (that is, not stock photos!) for brochures, posters, etc.
- It doesn't have to be perfect, just **real**
- Choose photos that emphasize community, not individuals

Learn



**“Give them an inquiring and
discerning heart”**

SAINTJAMESWARRENTON.ORG/LEARN

Give



**Gratitude in action
Time • Talent • Treasure**

SAINTJAMESWARRENTON.ORG/GIVE



Come and See

Saint James' Episcopal Church

73 Culpeper Street Warrenton
540-347-4342

welcome@saintjameswarrenton.org
saintjameswarrenton.org/welcome

4x6 prints



Part IV - In Summary

1. Much of daily life is on the internet now, whether we like it or not
2. Through images, you can make your church a part of the **daily life of parishioners** and the community

PART V

LOGISTICS

Logistics: Start with Clergy

- Have an **open and ongoing conversation** with your clergy about what is appropriate and what isn't, especially during worship services
 - For instance, at Saint James', photos of the Eucharist itself are off-limits
 - The layout of the church building and your parish's demographics will affect how, when and where you can take photographs, especially during worship

Logistics: Parish Community

- Communicate to the parish about how important it is for the world to see what your church's life looks like
- Encourage parishioners to contribute their own ideas and photos
- Your photography strategy should be **inclusive and transparent**

Logistics: Family Ministries

- Photographs of children are especially sensitive
- There should be a **general and ongoing conversation** among those taking pictures, parents, family-ministries leaders and clergy about what is appropriate.
- Open communication is absolutely essential

Logistics: Family Ministries

- Include a **photo-release clause** in registration forms for youth groups, Sunday school, VBS, etc. Parents can opt-in or opt-out on behalf of their children.
- Coordinate with clergy and family about **baptism photos** - often these are a great opportunity to celebrate the life of the church through photos.
- Again, all this should be inclusive - **youth** can be a valuable resource for taking photos. Enlist them to help!

Part V - In Summary

1. **Communicate** regularly with church leaders and the parish as a whole
2. The process should be **inclusive**
3. Especially with children, be considerate of **privacy**
4. Get **written permission** from parents

PART VI

TECHNICAL SUGGESTIONS

Cameras: General Guidelines

- The best camera is the one you have with you (usually your phone)



Cameras:

General Guidelines

- If you/your parish has a budget for a camera, there are good options for under \$500 especially if you buy used
- KEH and B&H Photo have good used selections of cameras and lens that are tested before sale
- Avoid point-and-shoot cameras (the ones with the pop-out lenses) because they break easily.

Cameras: Suggestions



OLYMPUS OM-D EM-10



FUJIFILM X-A5



SONY ALPHA A5100

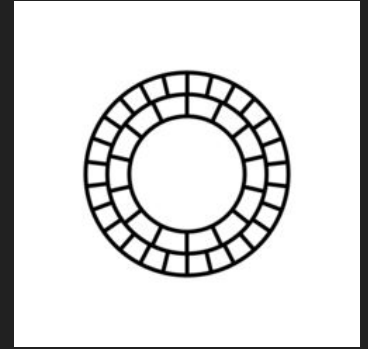


NIKON D7000

Free Editing Software: Mobile



SNAPSEED



VSCO



**ADOBE PHOTOSHOP
EXPRESS**

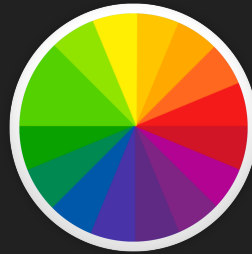
Free Editing Software: Desktop/Web



PIXLR



GIMP



FOTOR

Archiving Photos: Cloud Storage

- There should be a **shared digital archive** for all your parish's photos that all relevant parties can access
- Use **cloud storage**!
- If you store photos only on a computer or phone:
 - the people who need to use them can't access them
 - as soon as your computer dies, so do the photos

Cloud Storage: Options Overview

- **Google Drive With Personal Account**
 - 15 GB free with personal account
- **Google Drive With G Suite Business Account**
 - Unlimited storage, \$12/month per user, also includes email etc
- **Google Photos**
 - unlimited storage, but lower-quality uploads and annoying file interface
- **Dropbox Business**
 - 3 TB storage, \$38/month includes three users



?
⚙️
⋮
G Suite

New

- My Drive
- Shared with me
- Recent
- Starred
- Trash

Storage
189 GB used

My Drive > PHOTOS

Name ↑	Owner	Last modified	File size
2019_04_22 Easter Sunday	me	Apr 28, 2019 me	—
2019_04_28 Rose Baptism	me	Apr 28, 2019 me	—
2019_05_05 Children's Service	me	May 9, 2019 me	—
2019_05_12 Children's Communion Instruc...	me	May 21, 2019 me	—
2019_05_12 Hughes Baptism	me	May 13, 2019 me	—
2019_05_12 Mother's Day	me	May 13, 2019 me	—
2019_05_18 Tennis	me	May 21, 2019 me	—
2019_05_19 2nd Service	me	May 21, 2019 me	—
2019_05_19 Bluegrass Mass	me	May 21, 2019 me	—
2019_05_19 Children's Communion Instruc...	me	May 21, 2019 me	—
2019_05_19 Dunham and Sikorski Baptisms	me	May 21, 2019 me	—

Screenshot of the Saint James' Warrenton photo archive in Google Drive

PART VII

REAL-LIFE INSPIRATION

Saint James' Warrenton, VA

- [Website](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [Facebook](#)

Saint Paul's Atlanta, GA

- [Website](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [Facebook](#)

Saint John's Roanoke, VA

- [Instagram](#)
- [Facebook](#)

**Now go make photos of
the church in action!**

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