



## Video Recording Guidelines

### Content

- The content is based upon the purpose of your video. All videos should be in alignment with your ministry's mission/vision/values. It does not have to be overt, but it is a background consideration: Does anything in your video step outside of your stated values? If so, modify or remove it.
- Try to use language to match Unity's affirming, positive theology. Be welcoming, encouraging, clear, and concise. Have fun!

### Time Considerations

- Do a little research into the platform(s) where your video will be used. Some platforms have specific guidelines; for example, a video that will be posted to Instagram has to be less than 60 seconds long. A few platforms require vertical video orientation, though horizontal is best for most uses.
- As a general rule, shorter videos work better for social media, 60 seconds or less, though there are always successful exceptions! At most, the average attention span for online videos is only about 2-3 minutes, so it's best to keep them as short as possible.

### You on Camera

- Imagine your perfect audience sitting right in front of you so you connect with the people watching—and infuse humor, tone, and inflection accordingly.
- Smile often and be sure to look **through** the camera when addressing the audience.
- Be authentic, passionate, curious, and conversational in tone.

### Sound Check

Eliminate any background noise and potential disruptions:

- Close windows and doors; turn off any fans or air conditioners; remove ticking clocks.
- Place a note on your door that says, "Video in Progress—Do Not Disturb."
- Turn off all notifications on your computer (for example, emails, alarms, messaging).

- Turn off your smartphone or place it in “Do not disturb” mode so it does not vibrate and show notifications that may distract you and your audience during the interview.
- Make sure your microphone, if attached to your clothing, is not rubbing against clothing, hair, or jewelry. Some jewelry can be very loud near the microphone.

#### Microphone recommendations:

- It is highly recommended to use a USB mic rather than the built-in mic. Common choices are Blue Yeti, Samson Go Mic, and Rode PodMic. Be sure the mic is out of view of the camera and on its own stand or clip (do not attempt to hold it). Generally, even a cheaper mic is better than the built-in mic.

#### Camera Check

- **Camera Orientation:** Use the correct orientation for the project (horizontal or portrait). When in doubt, use horizontal.
- **Camera Position:** Place the camera so that you are looking slightly down or at eye level. This gives a sense of credibility. Avoid appearing that you are looking up at the camera.
- **Lighting:** Have lighting in front of you so that your audience can clearly see your face. Daylight from a window in front of you or slightly to your right or left is great. Avoid having a window or bright light behind you or coming from the side. You may need to add lights if you appear too dark or have shadows.
- If wearing glasses, you can place lights higher in elevation to reduce reflection and glare on glasses.
- **Background:** Observe the area behind you that shows in the video. Choose a clean background that isn’t too busy as it can be a distraction. A blank or minimally decorated wall without any clutter is ideal.
- If you wear glasses: Lower the background light on your computer to reduce any reflection in your glasses.

#### Your Appearance

The focus should be on you and what you are saying during the video. Follow the tips below to make sure viewers keep their eyes on you:

- Your clothing and jewelry should be simple. Avoid loud patterns and multi-colored shirts/blouses and/or distracting jewelry. Avoid wearing shirts with logos or print on the front of sleeves.
- Use water or hairspray to minimize flyaway hairs. They are distracting to viewers.
- Cameras tend to wash us out, so add a little extra eye makeup, blush, and light-colored lip gloss, if you wear makeup.

## **During the Recording**

Focus on sharing high-quality content using a script or notes. Rehearse! Make adjustments if there are words that trip you up. Have your lighting, camera, audio, and other elements set up in advance.

To make the editing process easier, be sure to do the following:

- Get comfortable and check your position and lighting for consistency from your rehearsal.
- Once you hit the record button, pause and smile gently at the camera for five seconds before you speak.
- Avoid taking an audible breath before you begin speaking. If you do, hold it gently for a beat before you speak.
- Pro tip: Begin with your lips parted to avoid a smacking sound as you start to talk.
- Another common habit is to blink immediately as you start talking. Avoid this by consciously looking through the lens at your audience. This one is worth practicing as it is often an unconscious habit to blink just before or as you begin talking, especially if you are reciting memorized lines or if you are nervous.
- When recording on your computer, try to not use Zoom. The quality of video and audio will not be as good. Instead, use built in recording software on your computer such as Quicktime or Photobooth.

## **Ending the Recording**

- After you've spoken your last word, smile and pause for five seconds before reaching to stop the recording.
- If you end with "namaste" or a head bow, hand on the heart, or any other gesture, be sure to practice what you will say as you gesture, the timing of it, and when you will close your eyes. Think of it as a bit of choreography so that it looks natural.

## **Edit After Recording**

After recording your video, you may choose to make some edits. iMovie on the iPhone is one example of simple editing software. Simple edits can be made such as trimming off the beginning or end of your recording.

## **Transferring Your Video**

Your video file will likely be too large to send via email. A free file transfer service such as WeTransfer can help you deliver your recording. Simply add your file and email destination address to send your video.