

K MISCELLANEOUS 1 Copyright & local congregations

The law pertaining to copyright does apply to churches. As far as reproducing words on service sheets, slides for projection, handouts and even odd bits of paper. It also applies to music. It is all too easy to photocopy sheet music or a hymn or song and hand it out. What does not seem to be realised is that it is illegal, and by doing so you are depriving a composer or arranger of income. It is also worth knowing that the fines for reproducing music (and indeed words) can be prohibitive – and please don't think you won't be found out – that has been a misconception. There has been several instances of churches falling foul of the law.

In the past few years many music publishers have printed the legend "it is illegal to photocopy music" on music and often this is found on each page. It is there for a purpose and should not be ignored. Remember that both words and music are considered to fall within the copyright law until the author, composer or arranger have been dead for 70 years. You may not realise that if you wish to make an arrangement of any work still within the 70 year rule you should obtain permission from the copyright holder (the author, composer or their agent).

Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI) operate various licensing schemes for local churches. In addition to the Words Licence there is also a Music Reproduction Licence (MRL) which is worth considering if you regularly reproduce music for choirs, singing or music groups or indeed, for any other use. It may not cover everything you want to use but it will help to keep your church to stay within the law particularly when the most use is for modern hymns and songs.

For items not included in their lists you will need to contact (in writing) the copyright holder, often via the publisher, and pay any fee that is requested. You are advised to obtain a CC Licence if you are doing any of the following:

- Projecting hymn and worship song words on to a screen
- Creating your own song words database on computer
- Creating your own service sheets that contain hymn and worship song words and/or music
- Photocopying hymn and worship song words and/or music from popular authorised hymn books
- Audio/video recording music from your services for those unable to attend.

Visit the Christian Copyright Licensing International (Europe) web site www.ccli.co.uk there is a downloadable leaflet which explains copyright very clearly and also a list of all of the copyright holders, publishers, and publications that are covered by the various licences.