

GUIDELINES FOR PRODUCTION

This document is for **amateur/home videographers** who have volunteered to supply video for the planned Moravian DVD, and who do not have access to professional equipment.

PLEASE READ THIS GUIDELINE CAREFULLY AND COMPLETELY. Carefully following this guide will make it more likely that your video will be used in the final DVD.

RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT: DV Camcorder, inexpensive tripod.

We strongly urge the use of a **tripod** for videotaping. Even the most inexpensive tripod from Wal-Mart or Sears (\$30-\$35) will permit more stable, professional-looking video than a hand-held camera.

Most home DV camcorders can produce very nice images and sound if certain rules are followed. They can also produce very bad images (dark, overexposed, or out-of-focus) and poor sound (thin, tinny, distant, echoey) if these rules are ignored.

CAUSES OF MAJOR PROBLEMS FOR VIDEO: High contrast (subject in front of window or light source in picture), low lighting (taping in dimly lit room), ugly lighting (light from directly above, ugly shadows), over- or under-exposure.

CAUSES OF MAJOR PROBLEMS FOR AUDIO: Microphone too far from subject (thin, tinny), taping in room with hard walls (echo), too much background noise (loud conversation, traffic).

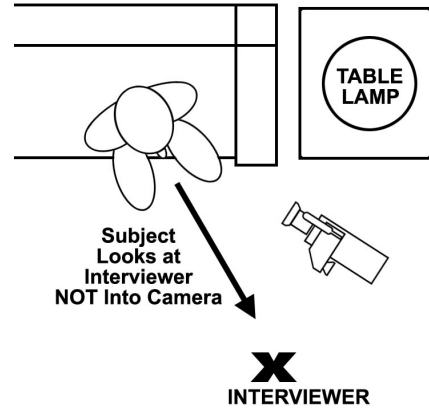
PLEASE PURCHASE A GOOD-QUALITY DV TAPE EXCLUSIVELY FOR USE ON THIS PROJECT. Do not tape on the end of a family video or church video you may wish to keep.

IF YOU HAVE OTHER FOOTAGE that you think we should consider (a church event, a visit to a mission field, etc.) please have a local professional video shop make a **CLONE** of your DV tape, and send us the clone, not the original!

FOR INTERVIEWS:

1. The face of the subject must be illuminated more than the room. The light must shine **into** the face rather than down from above so that we can see the subject's eyes and there are no harsh, ugly shadows on the face. In the absence of special video lights, we've outlined a couple of easy setups below that can be easily accomplished by anyone with no special equipment. **PLEASE FOLLOW ONE OF THEM TO THE LETTER!**
2. The microphone must be very near to the subject (no more than 4-5 feet) with little background noise in the room. Since for most home camcorders, the only microphone is the one in the camera, this means that the camera itself must be less than 5 feet from the subject. 3-4 feet is preferred. To do this, zoom **OUT** as far as possible and then frame the shot. **SEE GUIDELINES FOR FRAMING SHOTS BELOW.** Never interview someone from even a slight distance by zooming in. The microphone does not "zoom" and will be picking up noises closest to the camera more than the subject you are trying to interview.

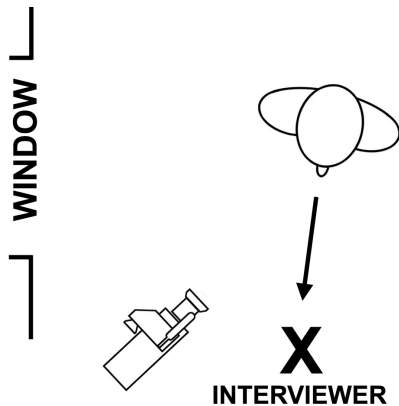
3. Please start each interview by asking the subject to identify themselves, spell their names, and identify the congregation they belong to. Remember that the editor will not know who these people are unless they are identified in the interview itself!
4. It is best to have one person operate the camera and another person ask the interview questions. The interviewer should stand about two feet to one side of the camera, so the subject is NOT looking directly into the camera. WE DO NOT WANT SUBJECTS LOOKING INTO THE CAMERA LIKE A NEWSCASTER, BUT OFF TO ONE SIDE CLEARLY TALKING TO A REAL PERSON WHO IS OFF CAMERA.



SETTING UP AN INDOORS INTERVIEW:

In a living room setting, you can position the subject on a sofa or chair next to a table lamp or reading lamp. Do not allow the lamp itself to appear in the picture, it will make the picture too contrasty. Position the camera near the lamp (rather than right in front of the subject) and shoot at an angle to the wall.

Near a large window, you can position the subject 4-5 feet from the window and the camera near the window. Do not allow any part of the window – or any other window in the room – to appear in the shot! It will make the picture too contrasty. Close drapes on other windows if necessary.



SETTING UP AN OUTDOOR INTERVIEW:

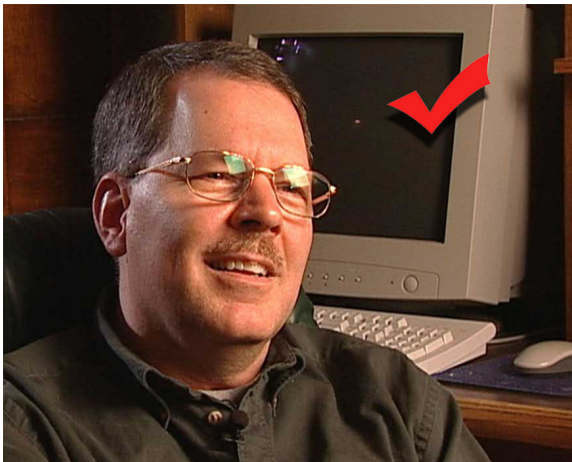
An overcast day is not pretty in person but allows for nice video footage. You can tape outside almost anywhere on an overcast day – next to your church sign, with the church in the background, etc.

On the other hand, bright sunny days are nice in person but are terrible for video. Especially midday, the sun casts harsh ugly shadows on the face, asking people to look into the sun makes them squint, white shirts become overexposed. If you must tape outdoors on a sunny day, please tape in a shadowed areas such as a porch. Do not try to include exterior features like a church sign or building in the background on a sunny day, it is simply too difficult to equalize the exposure.

INTERVIEWING PERSONS OF COLOR: People with dark skin tones pose particular problems for videotaping. The best scenario above for lighting a person of color is either inside by a window or outside in a shaded area. Please ask the subject not to wear white clothing for the interview, which can create a contrast problem.

FRAMING THE SHOT

1. The camera should be positioned at the subject's eye level or slightly above. Never position the camera below the subject's eye level looking up. "Jowl shots" as they are known to pros, usually give a very unflattering angle for most people.
2. The camera should be only a few feet from the subject. Zoom OUT all the way, and physically move the camera in closer to the subject to frame the picture. Do not compose the picture by zooming in on the subject!
3. The interviewer should be on the **same level as the subject**. If the subject is sitting, have the interviewer sit in a similar height chair. If the subject is standing, have the interviewer stand as well. Do not make the subject look up at the interviewer.



Have subject looking "into" the shot (LEFT), not "out" of the shot (RIGHT)

There are basic rules for the composition of close-ups of faces. The best choice for the non-professional is to choose a "head-and-shoulders" shot that has a tiny bit of room above the subject's head. DO NOT HAVE THE SUBJECT LOOK DIRECTLY INTO THE CAMERA. Whichever direction the subject is looking, whether to the right of the camera or left of the camera, allow a little extra room on that side so that the subject seems to be looking *into* the shot instead of *out* of the shot.

TAPING CHURCH SERVICES OR EVENTS

Generally, we will want to see the FACES of the congregation, not the backs of their heads. Arrange special permission from the Board of Elders to videotape a service with the camera positioned toward the front of the sanctuary rather than the rear. *The congregation should be informed that videotaping will take place.* It is generally respectful to have a designated area that will be off camera so the camera-shy can sit there (THINK: What if there is someone in the Witness Protection Program? Probably not, but it could happen!)

Taping in sanctuaries often is an exposure problem because of light from windows and low general illumination. Closeups of a group of five or six people where there is no window in the background of the picture will probably look better than wider shots where a window creates glare.

Taping informal church events such as fellowship gatherings or parties is less critical. Simply use a hand-held camera and get a variety of shots, again avoiding having windows behind people whenever possible.

SUBMITTING YOUR VIDEO

Please send your ORIGINAL COPY of interviews and video shot specifically for this project to us. Tapes will NOT be returned. Please do NOT send us originals of unreplaceable family videos. Instead, have a local video shot make a DV clone (or copy) and send us the copy. Make sure to indicate on such tapes where the material of interest is on the tape; in other words, if you have footage of a wonderful event at your church that is 35 minutes into the tape, please include a note specifying that so we do not have to watch a half hour of children's birthdays and opening Christmas presents to find the church-related material!

SEND TO:

Rev John Jackman
Inspirata Films
PO Box 1042
Lewisville, NC 27023