

Transcript of TikTok and Instagram Reels How-To Videos  
Available at <https://disorganizedreligion.fun/create> and on YouTube at <https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLwITatIKa4uNyyv7K307HMbHohyzclXq6&si=aP7qZfNUcE9chMXm>  
*Transcribed by Sarah Tevis Townes with support from otter.ai*

### **Video #1 - Find Your "Why"**

Are you thinking about doing ministry on Tik Tok?

Hi, I'm Pastor Sarah aka @disorganized.religion on TikTok and I have over 140,000 followers and over 5.2 million likes on Tik Tok. I've also helped build a progressive Christian movement on the platform with over 400 million combined views.

I know some of you are considering becoming content creators yourself, maybe on Tik Tok, maybe on another short form video platform, which is why I'm making these videos for you. This series will teach you some technical tricks, tips for creating content, increasing engagement, finding your niche editing videos, managing trolls and connecting your congregation with your Tik Tok audience.

But before we get to any of that, the first question you have to ask yourself is why? Why do you want to be a TikTok creator? Let's listen to how Karen sorts it out.

Karen: I'm finally doing it. I'm creating a TikTok

Sarah: Congratulations.

Karen: Can you give me some tips?

Sarah: Of course! Can you tell me more about why you want to do TikTok?

Karen: Well, I want to do promotions for events at the church and I think it'll bring in tons of members and money.

Sarah: Did you say members and money?

Karen: Yeah, isn't that why you're on there?

Sarah: If money and members for your local brick-and-mortar church are the reason you want to be on TikTok, It's not the platform for you.

Karen: Even with a massive following.

Sarah: Yeah, TikTok ministry may energize your local congregation which could lead to increase in membership indirectly. But it probably won't bring people to your doors. Maybe a few but not hundreds.

Karen: I don't get it. Why doesn't TikTok bring members to the church?

Sarah: Most of your followers won't be local, plus people who love short form videos on TikTok, and even people who are willing to engage with a digital community on Facebook or discord aren't necessarily going to enjoy an hour long service with hymns and preaching. Even if you have the most exceptional preaching and music with in person worship the way most of us do, it just doesn't appeal to everyone.

Karen: So why do you TikTok if it's not going to grow the church?

Sarah: Oh, it'll grow the church, just not the official membership of your local brick-and-mortar congregation. It'll expand your ministry and reach people you never thought possible. You'll find people who are not just hungry for the Word, they're starving for it. You'll connect with people who've never heard of Jesus and people who grew up and were traumatized by the church but are willing to give faith another shot. Being a Tiktok

creator has the potential to transform your life, your ministry and your understanding of the Body of Christ. But just like you wouldn't expect the youth in your youth group to fund your church's bottom line. It's not fair to expect the users on an app that caters primarily to young people to fund the operating expenses of your brick-and-mortar church.

Karen: Okay, but just to be clear, there's no way to monetize Tiktok?

Sarah: I'll talk about monetization in a future video. But I'm gonna be real with you. Even my friends who have millions of followers still have day jobs. If making money and gaining members for your local congregation is your primary reason to get on Tiktok, it is not the platform for you.

Karen: So why do you do TikTok?

Sarah: First and foremost, it is a great creative outlet. It's been good for my mental health. And it's fun. Plus, just like anytime I have the opportunity to teach, it hones my theology and my understanding of the Bible. I also like being part of a progressive Christian movement that is changing the conversation about what it means to be a Christian. I also love that it connects me to people from a wide variety of backgrounds. It's expanding my understanding of the Body of Christ. And that includes people from younger generations who have a lot of wisdom to offer me and my aging congregation.

Karen: So what I'm hearing is before I go creating a bunch of content, maybe I should think about why I'm creating that content?

Sarah: Absolutely. Before you consider all the technical stuff or what kind of content you create, consider: Does this match with your local church's mission and doesn't line up with your own call to ministry?

Karen: Anything else I should know?

Sarah: Be prepared to be transformed and be prepared for the spirit to take you places you never expected. And no, it's not going to be easy, and you're going to encounter resistance both from folks online and possibly from folks in your local church. If you're not ready for that. Don't jump in quite yet.

Karen: Got it.

Sarah: Stay tuned for more tips from [disorganized.religion](https://disorganized.religion)!

## **Video #2 - Lighting**

Hi, I'm Pastor Sarah aka @disorganized.religion on Tik Tok, where I have over 140,000 followers as of today, and I'm here to talk to you about how to create viral content on TikTok. Today we're going to talk about lighting. TikTok's newest update puts even more emphasis on what they call high-quality original content. To get that "high-quality" assessment from the moderators, you want bright colors and clear images. Good lighting can make all the difference!

So what about a ring light? Let's hear one of my TikTok characters "Dr. Pepper" work through it with me.

Dr. Pepper: I'm ready to make a TikTok

Sarah: Great.

Dr. Pepper: Do I need a ring light?

Sarah: It can make a difference.

Dr. Pepper: Can I see?

Sarah: Sure. This is you with the ring light (shows image). This is you without the ring light (shows image without ring light).

Dr. Pepper. It does seem to erase some of the dark circles under the eyes.

Sarah: indeed. And in low light locations, it can make all the difference.

Dr. Pepper: Now what if I don't want to spend 20 to 40 bucks on a ring light?

Sarah: Sunlight is the next best thing. So find a window and look into the light.

Dr. Pepper: Why not just film outdoors?

Sarah: The background noise can be super distracting. You can always film nature sounds later and add them in, if that's what you're going for.

Dr. Pepper: Thanks! I'll give it a try.

Sarah: Good luck!

Just a quick caveat. If you wear glasses, be careful because the ring light will get reflected in them. So mind your angles and experiment! See at what distance you like your video the best. And remember, most people are watching on their phones, so preview your video on your phone before you post it. You can also consider using a filter to lighten up the image if it looks too dark. I'll talk about filters more in another video. Good luck. Be sure to like and subscribe and stay tuned for more tips!

### **Video #3 - Find Your Audience**

Hi, I'm Pastor Sarah aka @disorganized.religion on TikTok, where I have over 140,000 followers and I'm here today to share one of my secrets for creating viral content on TikTok. Today we're going to talk about finding your people. If you are progressive clergy for example, use the Discover button and search the hashtag @progressiveclergy. That's an easy way to find other progressive clergy creating content on the platform.

Then, you definitely want to get connected with the #progressiveclergysquad on Facebook. If you can't find the group with a basic search, contact me. I'll help connect you.

If you want to make service dog content, get connected with other service dog creators. If you're a teacher, get connected with other teachers. Find your people!

To give you an idea of how much this can make a difference, when I first got on Tik Tok there we're about 12 clergy I could find that we're making progressive content. Now there are over 280 of us and our videos have over 400 million views. The little Facebook group we created has been an invaluable source of technical knowledge as well as emotional support and new friends.

And if there's not a organization of Tik Tok creators making the kind of stuff you want to create, create one. We just started a new group the other week for Neurodivergent creators who want to lift each other up and build a community. I've already seen it grow friendships as well as grow accounts. Cross promotion and collaboration is one of the top ways to grow your account.

Good luck! And be sure to like subscribe, and stay tuned for more tips.

#### Video #4 - What should you post?

Hi, I'm Pastor Sarah aka @disorganized.religion on TikTok where I have a successful ministry with over 140,000 followers, and I want to talk to you today about something a lot of new creators asked me ,which is how do I decide what kind of videos I want to make on Tiktok?

I'm going to give you some questions that might trigger some ideas.

First, what is something that you're passionate about?

[Example video:

Karen: Do we really need a rainbow flag on the church building?

Sarah: Yes!]

What's something that you could talk about for three hours without getting bored?

[Example video:

Today, we're gonna tell you another way to recognize a fake service dog.]

Second, do you have a hot take on a current event that you're not hearing anybody else talk about?

Example video:

[Please start wearing a mask when you get food in the drive-through. You're like two feet away from the people giving you food. Like if you're gonna infect somebody can I not be the person in charge of my chicken nuggets?]

Third, what are you inspired by right now?

Fourth, what is your dog or cat or parakeet doing that super cute right now? Maybe you should film it.

[Example video:

Do you want to form an alliance with me?

Absolutely I do.

Good. Good.]

If you're a clergy person like me, what's the scripture for Sunday? And what good news do you have to share about it with the world?

[Example video:

Belinda: You can keep going down that progressive Christian path Karen, but God's gonna judge you accordingly.

Karen: Sounds like I'm already being judged Belinda. Pastor?

Sarah: There was a judgey side to Jesus. He called people out for not caring for the poor and for abusing people who his society called "other." He also judged gate-keepy religious people...]

If those don't get you inspired and give you some ideas about what content to create, try this first. Watch more Tiktok! Get inspired and see what you like.

Second, try a duet. Tiktok has a feature where you can click this little share icon and select duet. Whatever you film on your screen will show up next to that content that you really like. It's a great way to get started and another great way to boost other people's videos. It's a good way to wade into the waters

Good luck! Be sure to like and subscribe and follow for more tips.

### **Video #5 - GET OVER YOURSELF**

Hi, I'm Pastor Sarah aka disorganized dot religion on TikTok and I'm here to share with you some of my tips for creating viral content.

Karen: Do you actually have viral content?

Sarah: I have over 140,000 followrs

Karen: Okay, I'm listening.

Sarah: This tip is for clergy in particular, but it really applies to everyone, and that tip is Get over yourself.

Karen: Excuse me?

Sarah: Get over yourself. I know it can be intimidating to start creating public content. But if you're a clergy person, you already are a public figure you do public speaking on a regular basis.

Karen: Don't some of them live stream and like have their sermons online already?

Sarah: A lot do.

Know if you're particularly worried about people criticizing you, there's a feature where you can turn off the comments on your video when you go to a publish a video their options turn off duets, turn off stitches. We'll talk about all of those in another video.

But turn those off and turn off comments and just have some fun. And remember, just like preaching just like any art, it's going to take some time to learn you, as a clergy person do have a head start as someone whose job probably includes engaging audiences. Even with a head start, I'll admit that some of my early videos are pretty cringy.

Karen: Oh my gosh, that is so cringy

Sarah: I have deleted some of the worst of them. But I'm still glad I made them. I'm really glad I put myself out there. It was a great learning experience. And the more content you create, the more you'll get a sense of what works, what you like and what your audience likes.

It may also be useful to know that on TikTok more than on any other social media platform I've used, people value authenticity over perfection.

Good luck. Be sure to like and subscribe and stay tuned for more tips.

### **Video #6 - Script Writing**

Hi, I'm Pastor Sarah aka disorganized.religion on Tik Tok, where I have over 140,000 followers, and I'm here today to share some of my best tips for creating viral content on the platform.

Karen: Okay, I have a question.

Sarah: Go for it. Karen.

Karen: Your videos have to take a ton of time, right? Like with all the costumes and the editing and all of that, how much time do you spend on every video?

Sarah: I actually spend the most time writing.

Karen: Writing!?

Sarah: Yeah, there are two things to balance when it comes to content creation: great storytelling on the one hand, which includes the arc of your video, visuals, music, all of that. And on the other hand, time. Unlike YouTube, where 2-hour videos can do wonders for an account, on Tiktok shorter videos tend to do better. 7 seconds is actually the magic number for viral content. If you watch my account, a lot of my videos are up to a minute long, annnd videos under 15 seconds tend to do better.

Karen: Doesn't TikTok like track how long everybody watches each video?

Sarah: Yes. And if people watch your video all the way to the end that figures into the algorithm and tells Tik Tok whether they should send your video to more people or not.

Karen: I thought comments and shares were more important.

Sarah: Right. So good storytelling is really valuable. building suspense, drawing people in, creating a conversation. All of that helps, but time also matters.

Karen: So where does the writing come in?

Sarah: Since good storytelling and time both matter, I suggest using a script, editing it down as much as you can, and using economy of language so that you have both the short time and the impact you want.

Karen: Don't you also cheat and speed up how fast you're talking?

Sarah: I do. We'll talk about that in another video where I talk about editing tips.

Good luck! Be sure to like and subscribe and stay tuned for more tips.

### **Video #7 - Tips for Going "Viral"**

Hi again. I'm @disorganized.religion on Tik Tok, aka pastor Sarah and I'm here to share with you some of my tips for creating viral content. Today we're going to talk about engagement.

Now if you're just doing TikTok for your own entertainment, don't worry about this. But if you want to have your video seen by as many people as possible, this might be the video for you.

On TikTok there's something called the "for you page" which sends you, the watcher, videos based on what TikTok thinks you like and dislike. It's a continuous stream of

content, and the more you like, share, comment or hold your finger down and select “not interested” on videos, the more TikTok learns what you like and what you don’t like. Over time, your For You Page will increasingly reflect your actual preferences.

So how does TikTok decide which videos to send to the For You Page? First, it decides if your content is suitable for all audiences. Definitely read the most current version of the community guidelines because they will tell you what content is unsuitable for the For You Page. And then, if you fall within what TikTok considers acceptable for everyone, TikTok will send every video you make to some people. And if those people like share or comment on your video, TikTok will then say “Oh, this video is engaging, we’ll send it out to more people.” So they’ll send it out to 50 people and if those folks engage 100, and so on.

This is where hashtags can really help you and I’ll talk about that in a future video. Likes play a very small role. How long people watch the video plays some part but the biggest things that predict whether a video goes viral or not, are how many people comment on it, and how many people share it.

I happen to have a “pro” account where TikTok shows me all the analytics on my video. You too can have a pro account—there’s just an option in your profile. It doesn’t cost you anything. And it’s worth it, because you can see the analytics. Let’s hear Grandpa and I discuss them.

Grandpa: A video of yours from 2020 showed up on my for you page.

Sarah: Was it about ignoring your dog until they calm down?

Grandpa: How did you know?

Sarah: It went viral, and TikTok still shows it to like 400 people a week.

Grandpa: I’m not sure why. It doesn’t seem like anyone liked it!

Sarah: Oh yeah, it’s my least liked video of all time!

Grandpa: Well, how does it have over a million views if people hated it?

Sarah: Because it was engaging! Everyone had an opinion about it, and they put that opinion in the comments. Most of those opinions were super negative, but TikTok doesn’t distinguish. All comments are logged as engagement. The other thing that sent that video viral was that over 4000 people shared it.

Grandpa: Oh, so if I want to support a creator’s content, maybe I shouldn’t just click that little heart, but I should also comment and share?

Sarah: Yes, and you don’t even have to share the content. Even if you just click on that little share arrow and you don’t share it anywhere or copy the link, Tik Tok logs that as a share, and tells the algorithm it’s an engaging video. And so it’ll send it to more people.

Grandpa: Well, thanks.

Sarah: You’re welcome.

So to sum it up, if you want your content to go viral, either A) get lucky or B) Make great content AND get lucky. Second, consider if your video is going to generate conversation. And since you’ve listened this far, I’m going to give you my super hack for creating viral content.

This will sound ridiculous, but it works. The easiest way to go viral with a TikTok video is to tell people they can't do something, but make it something that like 95% of people can actually do. And then everyone will comment in the comments that they can actually do said thing. I had a video blow up to hundreds of 1000s of views overnight because I told people in the opening line that I had blocked the word Timothy in my comments, which I did, but over 500 people that day tried to type "Timothy" into the comments, and even though the comments were blocked, and by the way, you can actually view blocked comments later if you want to go and review them. But even though the comments were blocked, TikTok still logged that as engagement. Then there were another 500 to 1000 people who commented misspellings of the word Timothy. There was also some legitimately great dialogue in the comments about women in ministry, and the video got shared a lot, which helped.

My best advice is just go make content that you love, have fun, and probably there are gonna be some other people that love it too. And then if you want your account to grow, try to generate some conversation.

Good luck. Be sure to like and subscribe and stay tuned for more tips!

### **Video #8 - Using a Green Screen**

Hi, I'm Pastor Sarah aka @disorganized.religion on TikTok, where I have a big following. I'm here today to share one of my tips for creating viral content. Today, we're going to talk about green screens.

Karen: I've always wondered how you make those work. My first question is, Do I really need a green screen?

Sarah: No.

Karen: So why go to all the trouble? Why not just film in front of the window and save yourself the hassle,

Sarah: it's all about lighting. This video is filmed using a green screen image you see behind me is the sanctuary in my church, but it's added in later. I'm actually in a classroom right now that looks like this.

Here I am in the actual sanctuary. And you can see that either you can see me or you can see the mountains behind me, you can't see both at the same time. The sound in here is also really echoey when there are no people in the sanctuary. So that's another reason I film in a separate room in front of the green screen.

Karen: Could you theoretically put anything behind you?

Sarah: Totally. I did a sermon about baptism during the pandemic, and I was able to make it look like I was preaching from the shores of the Jordan River and show people what that looks like. You can also use videos in the background. So I can actually put this video, for example, in front of a moving picture. You can also use this to have a conversation with yourself, if you want to be complicated about it. Here. I'll show you - you can actually have a dialogue with yourself, if you figure out the timing.

[Video example



Sarah: Do you take the Bible literally?

Other Sarah: Which Bible the Bible? The one with 66 books or 73 or 79?]

Sarah: But you don't need that for dialogue. Just cut back and forth. It's so much easier! You can also use it to show charts and images.

Karen As long as they're free, right?

Sarah: Yes, make sure you use royalty-free images. Wikimedia Commons is a good place to find them. I also use Pixabay a lot. Since TikTok also prefers beautiful scenery or mansions, (places that make you look like you're rich?), using those images can create an illusion that also boosts your views.

Karen: So how do you make the green screen into a picture behind you?

Sarah: TikTok has a green screen option itself, however, I find that it is not very good. And you can always tell that someone's in front of a green screen. This is me using the app and a green screen. So I usually use iMovie. I tossed the image into iMovie and then I move my video up above it. Click this little menu and select "green screen." I may need to crop the photo background or the image a little bit.

Once you find an image that works, my trick is I use the same image in almost every video, because I know it works and fewer variables means less time!

Karen: Can I just use any green piece of fabric? Like how do I decide what green screen to get?

Sarah: Some green screens are made out of vinyl, others are made out of cotton cloth, I actually started out using a giant green cloak. And that actually worked okay for a while. Just make sure you don't wear anything green turquoise, blueish green, teal, any kind of green in your video, because anything green will disappear in the final cut, which is actually kind of fun. And you can play with that in creative ways.

Karen: Are there advantages to vinyl versus like cotton cloth?

Sarah: Totally. A cloth is not reflective. If you look at this, this is a challenge for me when I film. That's a reflection off the ring light. The downside is that most cloth screens that you'll get are super wrinkly, and they're also extremely thin. So if you do get cloth for a green screen, I recommend first of all, iron it and second of all, if you're able to, make it double layered or back it with some sort of a darker color.

Now vinyl doesn't wrinkle a lot. And for longer term use I find it extremely durable. I've been using the same green screen for two years, and it's done great. It is however a little bit more expensive.

They also make green screens now that attach to your computer chair and they even have green screen colored paint. So you could paint an entire wall and have that be the background of your videos.

Karen: Isn't yours like hung up at a church or something?

Sarah: It is. It's attached to a long tube at the bottom, and I just roll it up and put it on those cabinets behind me when it's not used.

If you are going to use a green screen a lot, I would recommend finding a consistent place to put it at first I had this setup on frame and I moved it around and set it up and I had to deal with sound and lighting issues every time. So find a consistent place where you can have consistent lighting. **The fewer variables you have to adjust each session, the better!**

Karen: Thanks.

Sarah: You're welcome. And if you enjoyed this content and found it helpful, be sure to like and subscribe so that more people can see this content and stay tuned for more tips!

### **Video #9 - Captions and Accessibility**

Hi, I'm Pastor Sarah aka @disorganized.religion on TikTok, where I have over 140,000 followers as of today, and I'm here to share one of my secrets to creating viral content on TikTok. Today we're going to talk about captions.

NO QUESTION. You should caption your videos 100% of the time!

In addition to making them accessible to folks who are deaf or hard of hearing, you also make them accessible to people who want to watch them with their sound turned off. When I'm watching TikToks in a room with other people and I don't have my earphones, for example, I watch with the sound off. If a video doesn't have captions, I'm just gonna scroll on by.

Lucky for you, TikTok now has captions built in! (On Instagram - click the "add sticker" button and add a caption sticker - it will also create automatic captions for you).

On TikTok, all you have to do is click this little button on the side when you're creating a video and TikTok will generate captions for you. You can then edit them for spelling and punctuation if you want. If you want to use an outside program, I recommend Mixed Captions. There are several other free ones. So this is an easy yes, caption your videos!

Good luck, be sure to like and subscribe and stay tuned for more tips.

### **Video #10 - Saving Time with Series**

I'm Pastor Sarah aka @disorganized.religion on TikTok where I have over 140,000 followers, and I'm here to share some of my tips for creating viral content on the platform.

Today, I'm going to talk about one of my secrets to creating a lot of content in a short amount of time, and that is creating a series.

So for example, today I'm filming five videos all at once—same robe, same fancy hair, same lack of makeup. But if you film a series, you only have to do that setup once, even if it's a simple setup, (for me, it's a ring light and walking into the room with a green screen and putting on a robe). But even that takes time, right? And I have a full-time job as a pastor, I have a lot of other stuff I need to do. So I do that setup once and then film five videos.

One of the fun things about series is if you film stuff that's all related. So for example, I did a whole thing about Texas banning books and about books of the Bible that Texas might ban if they actually read them. And the first video was very successful, and it generated interest and so people were excited to come back for part two.

Series work phenomenally well for educational videos. I would not recommend doing a series for current events. The reason is, with a series I might film them all at once and even edit them all at once, but I post once a week. With current events, by the time five weeks is done, everything is changed and so your content won't be as relevant anymore. But if you're going to do a series where the information is not going to change a whole lot in the next five weeks, I highly recommend filming several videos at once. It's a great shortcut to creating more content in less time.

Good luck, be sure to like and then subscribe to our channel so more people can see this content. share it with other clergy, other folks who are new to TikTok and don't hesitate to reach out to me. I'm again @disorganized.religion on TikTok, and I'll see you again soon with more tips.

### **Video #11 - How Often Should You Post?**

Hi, I'm Pastor Sarah aka @disorganized.religion on Tik Tok, where I have over 150,000 followers. Today I'm gonna give you one of my tips for creating viral content on the platform and that is take a break!

Some creators will tell you you have to post every day in order to be successful on the platform. That is simply not true. When you're building an audience, sure, regular content creation is great. At the beginning you're doing a lot of experimentation with different styles, lighting, filters, techniques, and you're learning who your audience is and how best to engage with them. But even when you're brand new to the platform and trying to build an audience, you're unlikely to create great content if you're burnt out or uninspired. You're also not going to have the energy to engage kindly in the comments or muster the patience to support the audience you gain from those views if you're exhausted.

I've personally taken breaks as long as a month and this summer, I'll be on sabbatical so I'll be away from Tik Tok for three months.

[TikTok video

Karen: Did I hear right that Ministers get three EXTRA months off every five years?

Sarah: Some of us do. We call it a sabbatical.

Karen: So you like just leave for three months?

Sarah: And work on our spiritual renewal, rest, education and growth.]

And I'm not worried my audience will disappear. In fact, followers respect and appreciate that I'm modeling self care. Your fans need you to be healthy and whole, and they will be okay without you. Think about all the famous singers who disappeared for decades even only to come back with hit songs. And while those singers were away, their fans were fine, and yours will be too. And you'll be thrilled when you come back.

Remember that if you take a break from creating content, you can still participate on the app promoting other people's videos by sharing them and reposting them (although a complete break from TikTok is also something I'd recommend!). TikTok will continue sending people your videos while you're away. For example, this video that I did back in

2020 is trending today. So a break is also a chance for your fans to see some of your less viral content that may still be amazing but that got lost between other popular posts of yours.

So with that, I'm going to follow my own advice. And I'm going to take the time I need to rest and recharge on this sabbatical. So happy creating and when you decide to take a break, enjoy your time off.

### **Video #12 - Going Viral and Keeping Your Job**

Hi, I'm Pastor Sarah aka @disorganized.religion on Tiktok. I'm also the local church pastor at church of the Good Shepherd United Church of Christ in Albuquerque, New Mexico. And I want to talk to you today about how to be a successful TikTok creator while also being an engaged local church pastor. So this video is specifically for clergy. If you're not clergy, go back to the playlist, find other videos that are relevant to all people but this is for clergy in particular.

So how can you engage your congregation while also building this Tiktok community? I would say the majority of folks in my congregation do see TikTok as an extension of my pulpit. And it's an opportunity for evangelism. It's an outreach ministry of the church, but it took us some time to get there.

TikTok is not something everyone in your congregation is going to understand or appreciate. In fact, one of the things I talked a lot about early on is the expectation that I don't expect people to watch my TikToks who are in the church. A lot of folks do, because I post them to other places, but my congregation knows that TikTok is not intended for all of them. I sometimes share my videos again, slowed down, in church, and certainly my TikTok videos inform my sermons. You'll notice a lot of TikTok videos actually follow the lectionary because they're one of the ways that I hone in on the points that I'm preaching on on Sunday. But whatever you use TikTok for it's important that you have a conversation with your congregation about what that ministry means and what their part is in it.

So here are my top 10 tips for getting your congregation on board with your ministry. Tip #1: For all of your analog folks, write a newsletter article, write something in the paper bulletin, explaining what TikTok is and how it gels with your ministry and with the mission of the church and probably do that more than once.

#2 - Consider showing a video of yours, especially if it's educational, or if it's on a biblical topic in church. Now, I would recommend slowing it down a little bit, if you sped it up to begin with. Take out any background music, because for older folks in your congregation, it's harder to hear if there's background music in it. So don't use background music, but show them an example of the kind of content that you're sharing with the world.

#3 - Share positive comments that you get on your TikToks with members of your church so that they know that you're making an impact.

#4 - Invite members of your church to make a TikTok with you. Or once you have a big following, come to one of your live streams and participate in reacting to the people who are in your Tiktok audience.

#5 - Preach a sermon about evangelism and talk about TikTok as a modern way of sharing the good news with a new audience.

#6 - As excited as you get about TikTok, keep doing your job. Keep caring about the members of your local church and don't just talk to them about TikTok. Talk about their lives the way you do as a local church pastor, even though you're really excited about it. Just remember that not everyone in your church is going to be as excited about it as you are.

#7 - Form a Bible study or group that meets online on Zoom, for example, and invite people from your TikTok audience and from your local church. I helped start a read the Bible in a year group and it's been really neat to watch my local church members interact with the online folks that I met on TikTok.

#8 - If you have other social media platforms where you have church members interacting, share some of your TikTok videos there. Make those posts public so that they can then share them with their friends.

#9 - Consider talking to your regional leadership and certainly your local church leadership about how your TikTok ministry fits into the wider ministry of the church.

#10 - Use electronic newsletters, social media, even text messages if you text with members of your church to share other creators' TikTok videos and share videos that are educational and that are uplifting and that will expose your congregation to TikTok as a healthy platform for dialogue and education.

Good luck. Be sure to like and subscribe here on YouTube and follow me for more tips.

### **Video #13 - What to Wear**

Hi, I'm Pastor Sarah aka @disorganized.religion on Tiktok, where I have a successful ministry and today, I'm going to give you a tip for creating viral content. And this, again, is for clergy in particular. So if you're not clergy, go check out the playlist and look for other tips. This one is specifically for you, clergy. And today's tip is about how to dress on Tiktok.

I've studied the analytics a lot, and the videos that do better—people are wearing clergy garb. And my recommendation is to wear a stole—a bright color is better. It doesn't have to be liturgically appropriate. So for example, green (ordinary time), you can't actually wear on Tiktok at least if you use a green screen like I do, because it disappears. So I wear red for Pentecost and also the United Church of Christ. A lot of people ask about my comma. Some people wear like the transgender flag colors. Other people wear colorful cassocks. Other people wear a Roman collar. I don't actually wear a robe and stole in

church every Sunday. I always wear a robe and stole on TikTok when I'm speaking as a pastor. Sometimes I wear a Roman collar, although I've gotten away from that.

TikTok loves bright colors, and they love clerical garb! Wearing recognizable symbols of your ordination is even more important. If you are an LGBTQIA person or you're not a man, representation matters. It will shock you how many people on TikTok have never met a non-male clergy person or an LGBTQIA clergy person. Your presence on the app in clergy garb alone will have an impact on people.

And if you're a cis straight man, when you wear your clerical garb on TikTok and you preach a progressive message—a pro-woman, pro-Black Lives Matter, pro-LGBTQIA message—that can mess with people in some beautiful ways as well. Think about what you wear when you do public ministry. So when you go to a political action or a protest, if you would wear a stole there, wear one on TikTok. Good luck everyone! Be sure to like and subscribe to this YouTube channel so that this content can get to more people. And stay tuned for more tips.

### [Video #14 - Using Hashtags](#)

Hi, I'm Pastor Sarah aka @disorganized.religion on Tik Tok, where I have over 5.3 million likes and I'm here to share one of my secrets to creating viral content on TikTok. Today we're going to talk about hashtags.

Karen: Do hashtags actually matter?

Sarah: SO much.

Karen: Are those the words with a pound sign I see in the comments?

Sarah: Yep.

Karen: So like, you use #ProgressiveChristian and #ProgressiveClergy a lot. Why not #LiberalChristian or #LGBTQ-FriendlyChristian?

Sarah: The trick is to use the same hashtag other people making content like yours are making. And the progressive clergy group actually organized and created that hashtag and agreed we'd all use it for any progressive faith-related content.

Karen: So how does that help exactly?

Sarah: Well, if someone sees another video with #ProgressiveChristian and likes it, TikTok will send them more content with that hashtag.

Karen: Oh, so your success on a video will actually have a ripple effect and boost other videos with the same hashtag?

Sarah: Exactly. It also tells the algorithm what kind of content you're excited about. TikTok will then put you in a bucket with other people who like what you like.

Karen: So how do I know which hashtags to use?

Sarah: Ideally, organize with other creators to use a hashtag that promotes all of you. If that's not possible, look at what hashtags other creators like you are using. TikTok also lists trending hashtags that you might want to check out.

Karen: What about using the hashtag FYP or #ForYourPage?

Sarah: If you use any hashtags, TikTok will send your videos to people who've liked videos with that hashtag before. FYP stands for the For You Page, which is something everyone

has. So including #FYP means it could go to anyone, not necessarily people who are going to like your niche content.

Karen: Got it. And then they won't like and comment and share, and Tik Tok won't push it to more people.

Sarah: Exactly.

Karen: Should I use the same hashtags every time?

Sarah: The algorithm certainly likes it when you do. That being said, I do sometimes try out new hashtags just to see if I can get my content to a new audience. It usually backfires. And my video views suffer.

Karen: You confuse the algorithm?

Sarah: Yeah, but I'm okay with that. I started off making videos about service dogs and I still make videos about my dog sometimes, and I post to them for me and the 300 people TikTok sends them to.

Karen: You have like 145,000 followers and only 300 people see your video?

Sarah: Yeah, but 300 people see my dog videos! And they're probably exactly the people who want to see videos of my dogs.

Karen: Okay, fair. Thanks.

Sarah: Good luck everyone. Be sure to like and subscribe and stay tuned for more tips!

### Video #15 - Dialog and Characters

Hi, I'm Pastor Sarah aka @disorganized.religion on Tik Tok, where I have over 140,000 followers as of today, and I'm here to share one of my secrets to creating viral content on TikTok. Today we're going to talk about dialogue and characters.

Karen: Is this where I come in?

Sarah: Yeah! Dialogue is a device can increase your views and help you respond to modern day issues without being preachy.

Karen: What do you mean preachy?

Sarah: I mean, monologues can sound like lectures, and most people don't want a lecture on TikTo. Dialogue can be so much more fun and engaging!

Karen: Don't all those costumes get expensive though?

Sarah: Most of the unique clothing you see in my videos comes from the church costume closet. I did spend \$20 on a Karen wig, but you don't even need that. Some folks just put on a hat or a different shirt.

Karen: Are there any pitfalls?

Sarah: Absolutely. Be careful not to stereotype folks or play characters that aren't a part of your heritage.

Grandpa: Any other advantages to dialogue?

Sarah: Well, sometimes you can say things...

Grandpa: that may be controversial if you said them while dressed in your pastor robe?

Sarah: Totally.

Grandpa: Like when I asked why don't you baptize dogs? Or how I said the King James Bible is the Bible of unicorns and ass?

Sarah: Indeed.

Karen: But aren't all of these characters you?

Sarah: They're all played by me, but they don't represent my views per se.

Karen: I feel like you're talking about me.

Sarah: I will admit, Karen, that using your character, in particular, is a shortcut to telling Gen Z folks which opinion or action in the sketch is problematic, which opinion aligns with upper-class entitled racist, passive-aggressive...

Karen: We get it! And listen, I've grown.

Sarah: Oh, totally. If you develop characters over time, they can have a story arc and even some redemption. And folks may end up following you to watch their story unfold.

Steve: Do characters always stick to the script?

Sarah: They start there, but I would invite you to try some improv or ad-libbing at the end of your dialogue. Sometimes I say things in character that surprise me, things I never would have come up with otherwise. And those one-liners can end up being a super hilarious part of your video.

Karen: Any other tips?

Sarah: Don't always make yourself the hero in the sketch, especially if you're clergy. It's important that you demonstrate being wrong some of the time. You admitting that you're wrong and learning from your characters is great modeling and it reminds folks that this person that they look up to also makes mistakes.

Grandpa: Also, don't be afraid to be ridiculous.

Sarah: Good luck, everyone. Be sure to like and subscribe and stay tuned for more tips.

### **Video #16 - Using Teleprompters**

Hi, I'm Pastor Sarah aka @disorganized.religion on TikTok, where I have a super successful account and I'm here to share with you one of my secrets to creating viral content on TikTok (and Instagram!). Today I'm going to talk about engagement with the camera and the use of a teleprompter.

I rarely see videos do well where people are reading off a page. So whatever you do, look right into that lens. I will say that making a video with dialogue makes this a lot easier. I only have to remember one line at a time, deliver it to the camera, and then the video cuts to another character. So I don't usually use a teleprompter for my TikTok videos. But I am using one for this video.

If you have a long script...if you want to make sure that you say exactly the words that you wrote, you can download a teleprompter app like Prompt Smart Pro. You can upload a text file and it will move the text along as you read and record you on the camera. It's not perfect and the recording quality is a little lower than when I just deliver the lines directly to the camera. And sometimes the app misses a line but it's still a great tool to have in your arsenal. Come on over to TikTok and let me know how it goes! And be sure to like and subscribe to my YouTube page and stay tuned for more tips!

### **Video #17 - Responding to Comments**

Hi, I'm Pastor Sarah aka @disorganized.religion on Tik Tok, where I have a really big and successful account. And I'm here today to share one of my secrets to creating viral content on the platform. Today we're going to talk about responding to comments.

First of all, there's no way if you have a video go viral, that you'll be able to respond to all the comments. That being said, especially when you're just starting out, responding to



comments, creating engagement, and getting to know people can really help grow your account! See who's commenting on your post, go check out their content, see what you have in common. Ask people questions, engage with your audience.

You can also send direct messages to people and you can set that up in your account whether you want to be able to direct message with everyone or just people who follow you back and people that you follow. I would not recommend using direct messages often, especially if you're a clergyperson, You have to be careful! A lot of people on this platform are minors. You do not want to talk to a minor in direct messages ever, Ever, EVER. Don't do that!

[Video from TikTok about Youth and Direct Messages]

Karen: There has to be a better way to keep kids safe...

Sarah: There is. One of the simplest things is to enforce the never one-on-one rule.

Karen: The what?

Sarah: The never one-on-one rule. No person under 18 can be with anyone 18 and up alone ever. Oh and married people count as the same person. It's a legal thing.

Karen: What about a kid with their own parents?

Sarah: Parents or guardians with their own children is the one exception.

Karen: But like does it have to be so strict?

Sarah: Yes. And the whole community—parents, volunteers, staff, youth, everybody has to know about it and stick to it. Think about it. Predators aren't going to target kids in an organization where they can't be alone with kids. It protects you too. You can't get falsely accused if you're never alone with a kid.

Karen: What about online private chats?

Sarah: Definitely not.

Karen: How are you going to communicate with teenagers without using text?

Sarah: Chats count as private space, as being alone. So don't do private chats with minors.

Karen: But how do you communicate with teenagers if you can't text with them chats?

Sarah: It's fine as long as it's not one on one. I use group chats a lot.

Karen: Oh, so like a group chat for the whole youth group?

Sarah: Sure, or with a young person's parent or with another trusted adult. The other day somebody asked a question on Instagram, but I couldn't tell from their profile if they were an adult, so I asked if I could invite another clergy woman to the chat. The young person consented and tada, I wasn't alone with a minor. Signal, Instagram, Facebook, and Whatsapp all do group chats. TikTok does on some phones in some regions, but not mine. So if minors want to talk there, I encourage them to talk to me in the public comments on a video or I direct them to other social media where we can do a group chat.

Karen: This seems like a lot of work.

Sarah: It's really not. And it gets easier when your whole organization is on board. Once you start making exceptions that falls apart. But when people do commit to it, it works.

You can also grow your account by commenting on other people's videos, because when you comment, they might realize that you have something in common and then they'll go check out your content and you may gain new followers just by commenting on other videos.

Stay tuned because I'm going to talk about how to deal with negative comments in a video to come!

### [Video #18 - Dealing with Trolls](#)

Hi, I'm Pastor Sarah aka @disorganized.religion on TikTok, where I have a big following and I'm here to share one of my secrets to success as a creator. Today we're going to talk about trolls.

Trolls are people who get into your comments and say deliberately hurtful or incendiary things in order to get an emotional reaction. They may also “duet” or “stitch” your video and attack you directly or say rude things.

You can deal with trolls in a few ways. First and best solution: report them if they violate Community Guidelines, which include any kind of harassment, then block their account so they can't see any of your content again, and then delete their comments. Don't get sucked in! Just report, block, delete, move on. If things get really bad, you can actually turn off comments on a video altogether. In addition, you can add blocked words and your settings which keeps the same repetitive negative comments off of your videos. You can also approve block comments later if you want to go through them. Scroll to the bottom of your comments, and if there are deleted comments, it'll say, you know, do you want to approve blocked comments and it'll show you what they are.

Now, I'd be remiss if I didn't say there can be an upside to trolls. Sometimes a troll will post something that generates conversation. Be careful! It can get out of hand very quickly, especially if you start having followers that want to defend you. Things can get really nasty really fast. So again, best option: report, block, delete, move on.

Another option, which is one I don't encourage, is to play the I'm-smarter-than-you game and respond to nasty comments with wit. Trolling trolls is a proven way to generate engagement on your post. The downside—you become a troll in the process, which is probably a giant waste of your time and possibly may throw off your moral compass a little bit.

Also remember that a majority of Tik Tok users are children. They're minors. Frustrating a child with mind games doesn't feel like the best use of anyone's time. So report block, delete and move on!

Good luck everyone!

<song from the Little Troll Prince: “Do you think God can love a troll? A troll?! God loves everybody in the whole world! Everybody means trolls too! God loves all he made...even little trolls!>