

The Ultimate Christmas AV Checklist

Christmas is a season of joy, anticipation, and connection. Your church's audio and visual systems play a huge role in creating a meaningful experience for everyone who walks through your doors. Whether you're hosting candlelight services, special productions, or overflow crowds, here's the ultimate checklist to make sure your technology is ready.

1. Plan Early

Many equipment upgrades require several weeks for ordering, delivery, and setup. Starting early avoids potential frustrations and last-minute surprises. Especially since the 52 Creative team cannot guarantee installs and services to be completed before Christmas if it is not planned in advance. To make things easier for your whole team, you should:

- ☐ Start the conversation on any *potential* purchases as soon as you can. The best things are thought out.
- ☐ Schedule any major installation dates before November.
- ☐ Get all training and rehearsals wrapped up in early December.

2. Inspect Your Existing Systems

Before you add anything new, confirm that your current equipment is fully functional & compatible with your equipment improvement goals.

Audio

- ☐ Check every microphone (wireless and wired) for battery life, interference, and range issues.
- ☐ Inspect cables, snakes, and DI boxes for fraying, shorts, or hums.
- ☐ Test instrument inputs (keys, guitars, drums) for a clean signal.
- ☐ Listen to every speaker zone (including overflow, lobby, conference rooms) for clarity and proper EQ.
- ☐ Confirm in-ear monitors or stage monitors are routed properly and clean.
- ☐ Add labels to frequently used equipment to make communication and organization easy for volunteers.

Video

- ☐ Test all screens and displays (LED walls, TVs, projectors) for bulb life, resolution issues, dead pixels, or connectivity problems.
- ☐ Ensure video switchers and scalers are functioning and labeled clearly.
- ☐ Check camera inputs, lens cleanliness, and switcher feeds, color grades.
- ☐ Rehearse live stream setup if you stream your services—test audio sync, overlays, transitions, and internet speed.

Lighting

- ☐ Test all fixtures and moving heads for responsiveness.
- ☐ Re-program scenes or cues to reflect the tone of each part of the service (joyful, reverent, celebratory).
- ☐ Clean lenses and filters for brightness, clarity and mechanical reliability.
- ☐ Sync lighting transitions with key moments in the music or message.

3. Prep Your Audio Mix

Christmas music often has added complexity like strings, choirs, bells, etc. Make sure your system is tuned to handle it.

- ☐ Build custom EQ presets for Christmas songs. Pay attention to vocals sitting clearly above the music.
- ☐ Use proper microphone and micing techniques to ensure best quality sound and reduce feedback.
- ☐ Use subgrouping for vocals, instruments, and effects to balance easily.
- ☐ Walk the entire room and adjust your mix based on what people actually hear.
- ☐ Update your digital console scenes or snapshots specifically for Christmas.
- ☐ Confirm gain staging and input levels are consistent—especially if using guest musicians.

4. Prepare Visual Content

- ☐ Create and finalize graphics packages: welcome loops, lyric slides, countdowns, sermon slides, and backgrounds.
- ☐ Format all visual content for your display size and match resolutions to avoid blurry or stretched images.
- ☐ Coordinate with your worship and production team to finalize visual cues, camera transitions, and lighting looks.

- ☐ Schedule a graphics check day: test every slide and video on your live system, not just the ProPresenter preview.
- ☐ Prepare backups of all media on a USB drive or cloud storage.

5. Train Your Team

Your volunteers and staff are the heart of your production. Great gear means nothing without a confident crew.

- ☐ Consider hosting a “Christmas AV” boot camp or team dinner to walk your team through new changes, gear, and run-throughs... it doesn’t have to be unnecessarily long to be valuable.
- ☐ Assign backup roles for each key position (audio, lyrics, camera, lighting).
- ☐ Provide easy-to-follow documentation for volunteers (cue sheets, routing diagrams, channel lists).
- ☐ Encourage practice before the big service with rehearsal services and Sundays throughout all December.

6. Create Backup Plans (Seriously)

Even the best systems can hiccup. Reduce stress with contingency plans.

- ☐ Keep a set of fresh mics, cables, batteries, and an extra DI box on hand.
- ☐ Label power sources, outlets, and breakers clearly.
- ☐ Create printouts of slides and lyrics in case of computer failure.
- ☐ Assign a tech team member to be the “fixer” during services. Maybe it’s your producer or someone not running gear but ready to step in.

7. Finish Strong!

2 Weeks Out

- ☐ Finalize slides and song orders.
- ☐ Walk through every system with your full team.
- ☐ Perform a mock service with full run-through.

1 Week Out

- ☐ Replace all batteries, confirm backups are in place.

- ☐ Label everything—cables, ports, power, gear bags.
- ☐ Re-check livestream or recording setups.
- ☐ Confirm team schedules and contact info.

2–3 Days Before

- ☐ Clean and reset the stage.
- ☐ Do a full lights-sound-video run-through.
- ☐ Take a deep breath and lean in. The grace of God will fill in any gaps.
- ☐ Be ready to encourage your volunteers and remind them that JESUS IS ENOUGH.

Need Help?

If you'd like expert support, whether it's installing a new LED wall, optimizing your audio, or training your team, reach out now. Our schedule fills up fast in the lead-up to Christmas, and we'd love to help make your services extraordinary.

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