CHURCH GRAPHICS
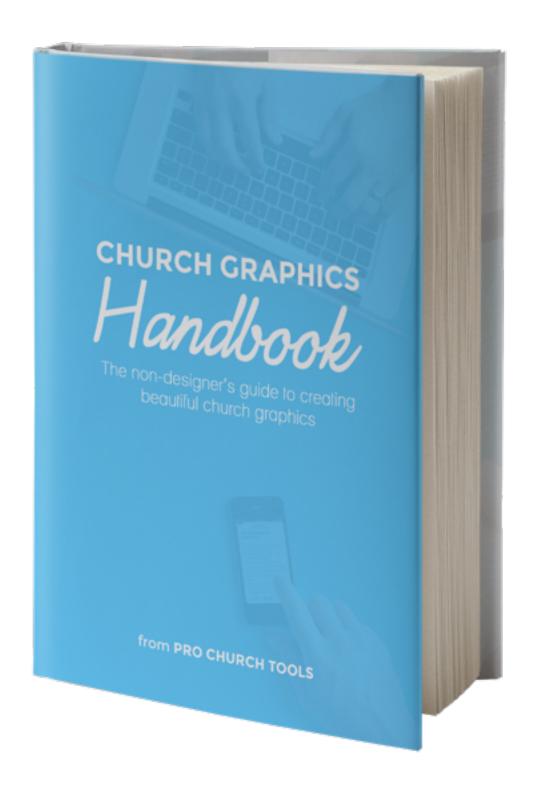## *Handbook*

The non-designer's guide to creating
beautiful church graphics

from **PRO CHURCH TOOLS**

i

The Church Graphics Handbook is available in three different packages. If at any point you feel the need to upgrade your existing package, simply email hello@prochurchtools.com and we'll get it set up for you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1

No.

Chapter 1

WHO IS THIS BOOK FOR?

Six years ago I was a senior in high school, attending a thriving youth group called *Impact*. Our logo was designed using *Impact* font. And that says it all about my youth pastor's graphic-design abilities. Because he named the youth group *Impact* he thought it would be cool to create the group's logo using the font of the same name (we'll get to why I disdain *Impact* font, as well as a comprehensive list of fonts you should never use, later in this book).

Because of his unfortunate use of bad fonts, this book is written for my former youth pastor. He's a lead pastor now, but that only means he's responsible for creating graphics that will be seen by more people. He's still not good at graphic design. Yet, in his ministry position he's expected to wear many hats, and one of those hats is *graphic designer.* Without help he's doomed to create ugly graphics forever. Without intervention he will use only fonts that coincidentally bear the same name of the ministry for which he's creating the graphic.

But this book isn't written just for my youth pastor. This book is also written for me -- **the person I was six years ago**. As a senior in high school, I spent a significant amount of time on social media, especially Facebook. I will never forget a particular Facebook friend named Tyler. He and I weren't close. We went to different youth groups, but we had met several times at district gatherings. Once at summer camp. Once at an annual youth

conference. That was enough acquaintance to merit being Facebook friends, and what makes my social connection with Tyler so memorable is the content he would post on Facebook. Tyler was a youth leader, in charge of creating his youth group's title graphics. Every week he would post beautiful graphics promoting meetings on Friday night, upcoming events, or simply a Bible verse. I was continually stunned by how professional they looked. I would think, *"He must be a Photoshop ninja"* or *"He must have some formal training."* Whenever I attempted to create graphics myself, they never looked nearly as good as Tyler's. **Frankly, they were sloppy and amateurish.** Without help I was doomed to continue creating graphics with plenty of enthusiasm and no artistry.

For this reason, the book is also written for me, six years ago. I had a vague understanding of what looked good and what didn't. But I had no idea how to actually achieve that look. I was intimidated by Photoshop and other design software, and I had no idea where to begin. Six years later I've built a company that creates thousands of graphics every year for churches across the globe. It took me six years to get to this place. I wish I'd had this handbook earlier because it would have enabled me to instantly create beautiful graphics for my youth group. And it would have saved hundreds of hours of struggles and failures.

Finally, and most importantly, **this book is for you.** Every week I get emails from church leaders and pastors expressing their frustration over graphic

creation. When I ask what their biggest frustration is, here are typical responses:

"Lack of knowledge or training." - **Daniel**

"Coming up with quick graphics that look good but don't require a lot of time to put together. Fresh stuff each week is hard when you want it to look good." - **Aaron**

"Not knowing how to use the design software. I may spend about 40 minutes trying to find the right how-to article/video, and who knows how long actually applying what they taught me in the article/video." - **Tiffanie**

"Finding good graphics to use that don't look terrible is a struggle." - **Brandon**

Do any of those frustrations resonate with you? Maybe you don't feel as though you have enough knowledge or training to create graphics that look good. Or maybe you feel intimidated by complex design software. Or maybe you just don't know where to find high-quality free fonts and stock photos.

This book is written for everyone who needs to design graphics but has no background or formal training in design. This book is written for

everyone with no time to study design principles and typography, but who wants their graphics to look better.

Most people can look at a poorly designed graphic and know they don't like it, but not know how to fix it. This book is written for everyone who wants to know how to fix it.

Inside these pages you'll find the training you need to begin creating beautiful church graphics. In the video tutorials you'll find step-by-step procedures for using design software. Finally, in the templates you'll have more than 400 ready-to-go graphics. All you need to do is change the text.

Creating beautiful graphics for your church doesn't have to be hard. That's a fact it took me six years to learn. I've taken everything I've learned in the past six years and packaged it into this **Church Graphics Handbook**. What took me six years won't even take you six hours.

This book is for you.

I didn't write it for experienced designers. I wrote this book for church leaders, staff, volunteers, and pastors - ***the non-designers.***

2 No.

Chapter 2

THE NON-DESIGNER'S OATH

On the morning of my wedding day, my groomsmen and I found ourselves in a precarious situation. Each of us was decked-out in formal wear, and all five of us stood in front of a mirror, clutching a long piece of green silk fabric. When my wife had suggested that we wear bow ties at the wedding, it seemed like a great idea. Bow ties were just becoming trendy again, and while I wanted to wear a classic black suit for the ceremony, I also wanted to have my own unique flare. A bow tie seemed like the perfect solution.

As the five of us stood cramped inside my parents' small bathroom, we were faced with a daunting realization: **not all bow ties come pre-tied.** When my wife suggested bow ties, I had imagined a pre-tied bow that I'd simply sling around my neck. Instead, there we were, only two hours before the

My groomsmen and I with our finished bow-ties. #swag

ceremony, four groomsmen and I with deer-in-the-headlights expressions, helplessly holding our green silk ties with no idea how to tie them.

The next hour was a frantic blur of YouTube tutorials and misshapen bow-tie attempts. Each bow tie we crafted seemed uglier than the last. They were limp, they were crooked, they were too big, too small, too uneven, and every other manner of disfigured. Yet, as you can see in the previous photo, the groomsmen and I are beaming. Our bow ties are shiny, even, and level.

The 80/20 Rule

I've said this before and I truly believe it - **you don't have to be a designer to create beautiful graphics.** You don't need any professional training. You don't need a good eye for design. You don't even need to be a Photoshop expert.

Usually when I say this, though, there are a couple of angry designers that will respond in a less than complimentary fashion. Here's a comment I once received:

"If you'd like to continue devaluing web and graphic designers by saying you can do it, allow me to offer you some ointment for the burns you'll get from creatives who actually know what they're doing."

That's something someone actually said to me. And I think it's important to clarify what I mean when I say that you don't have to be a designer to

create beautiful graphics.

In 1906, Italian economist Vilifredo Pareto observed that 80% of the peas in his garden were coming from just 20% of the actual pea pods. He also noted that in Italy 80% of the land was owned by just 20% of the population. His observations were eventually called the Pareto principle and are also commonly known as **the 80/20 rule.**

The 80/20 rule essentially states that roughly **80% of the results in any endeavor will come from only 20% of the input, material, or effort**. You can see this principle active in your church. It's very likely that most of the volunteer efforts in your church come from a small percentage of the overall congregation. This principle also applies to learning skills.

For example, if you want to learn Spanish, you could learn just 20% of the words in the Spanish language and be able to speak fluently in 80% of Spanish conversations. If you want to learn guitar, you could become a skilled and competent guitarist by focusing on just 20% of the scales, chords, and theory.

The 80/20 rule explains that you can reach 80% competency in any skill by focusing on only 20% of the skill's requirement. The key is to focus on the right 20%. If you want to learn guitar, for instance, finding the correct 20% to focus on would likely include scales, chords, and a little bit of theory.

You likely wouldn't reach 80% competency in guitar by focusing your efforts on gear. You could know all there is to know about pedal boards and American telecasters, but that wouldn't help you play the guitar any better. The key to leveraging the 80/20 rule is being able to identify the correct 20% to focus on. **This is often called an 80/20 analysis.**

The 80/20 rule was very evident the morning of my wedding day. As my groomsmen and I stood bewildered, trying to solve our bow-tie mystery, we needed to learn a new skill - *and we needed to learn it fast*. There were many things we didn't need to know about bow ties, however. Here's a list of bow tie knowledge that was irrelevant to us:

- The origin and history of the bow tie
- Silk bow ties vs. polyester vs. cotton
- The Bat Wing, The Thistle, and The Butterfly (types of bow ties)
- Bow tie costs & pricing
- Charvet, Duchamp and other bow tie designers

Here's a list of bow-tie knowledge that was very relevant to us:

- How do you tie a bow tie that doesn't look hideous?
- How do you do it in less than five minutes?

Once we were able to focus on what mattered most, we were able to quickly learn how to tie a bow tie. The funny thing is, if I had run into a bow-tie expert at my wedding, he may have scoffed at me and told me the knot was too loose, or it hung too far down on my collar. But to everyone else at the wedding, the bow tie looked great.

How to create beautiful graphics for your church

Truthfully, you don't have to be a graphic designer to create beautiful graphics for your church. I hope this excites you, because when I realized I could create stunning graphics despite not having a single hour of professional training, **I was ecstatic.**

Prior to this revelation, I had spent many hours and a considerable amount of money paying others to create graphics for me. Going back and forth with a designer is laborious. On the other hand, sometimes my pastor would want a graphic ready in a day *(or in an hour!)* and I'd struggle to get something made fast. When the time crunch was so great that I'd resort to creating something myself, I was never pleased with the outcome.

Does this sound like your situation at all?

Maybe you were put in charge of the graphics and branding at your church because you have a knack for good design, but you find software like Photoshop intimidating. Maybe you need to create graphics on short deadlines, but you find yourself struggling to create beautiful graphics quickly. Or maybe you just wish your church's graphics and branding were better, but have no idea where to begin.

It's taken me more than six years to feel comfortable using Photoshop. In that same amount of time I've learned what looks good and what doesn't. I've also learned how to create graphics quickly and not agonize over designs for hours. I've distilled all that information into this book so that, instead of years, it will take you only hours to learn the same skills. In the past year alone I've created thousands of graphics for churches all around the world. And while that may not be a goal of yours, I'm going to teach you how to create graphics with the same quality, beauty, and efficiency.

This book will teach you how to use software like Photoshop to create graphics. This book will teach you the essentials of graphic design. And this book will teach you the 20% of graphic design skills that will yield 80% of the results.

Will you be an expert graphic designer when you're finished with this handbook? **No.** Will you be able to create beautiful graphics for your church quickly and repeatedly? **Absolutely, yes.**

But before we get to all of that, there's something we need to do first. We need to take an oath.

Yes. An oath.

Introducing: The Non-Designer's Oath

Here's the thing: learning how to create beautiful graphics can be a long and painful process. At least, it was for me. I kept getting hung up on the silliest things. I would spend hours trying to understand why something didn't quite look right. I would try to enhance designs by adding too many elements. And - the very worst mistake you can make - I would attempt to be ultra-creative and reinvent the wheel, but in the end my design would just be a convoluted mess *(Hint: don't be a hero).*

The following oath will keep you from stumbling into the same pitfalls that I did. It's called **The Non-Designer's Oath.** I could have called it a list of rules or principles, but I didn't. I called it an oath because it's absolutely central to everything you will learn in this book. It's the backbone of everything I teach, and it's the foundation needed to create beautiful graphics every time. It will keep you on the straight and narrow, and it will put you on the fast-track to creating beautiful graphics.

When physicians committed themselves to practicing medicine, they used to take what's called *The Hippocratic Oath*. This oath committed doctors to uphold a number of professional and ethical standards, and to practice medicine honestly.

The Hippocratic Oath is one of the oldest documents in history and has guided the study of medicine for centuries. The oath you'll be taking below isn't nearly as historic or crucial to the health and well-being of humankind, but just as The Hippocratic Oath kept doctors accountable and responsible for their work, **The Non-Designer's Oath** will keep you accountable to yourself.

These are the seven rules that I never break. Learn them well. Refer back to them when necessary. And disregard them at your own peril.

The Non-Designer's Oath

1. I vow to keep things simple above all else

2. I vow to copy good examples from others

3. I vow not to be a hero (stay within your limits)

4. I vow to keep good spacing

5. I vow to line things up

6. I vow to be consistent

7. I vow not to use Papyrus

P.S. Numbers 4, 5, & 6 have their own chapter in the book dedicated to them. So if you're unsure at this point what "keep good spacing" means, that's alright, it's one of the first things you'll learn.

Ready to get started?

Let's begin.
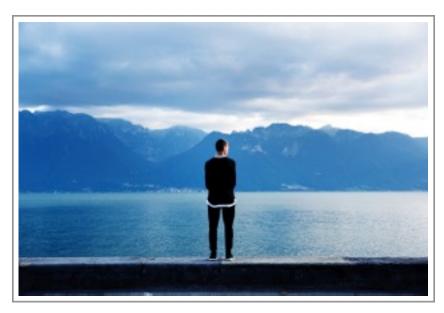
3

No.

Chapter 3

THE BASICS OF GRAPHIC DESIGN

It's time to learn the basics of graphic design. While the rest of the Church Graphics Handbook is very practical in its approach, this chapter is more like what you might learn in a classroom - **this is the theory of graphic design.** But don't be alarmed, this doesn't mean I'll be diving into abstract concepts that go over your head. In fact, this chapter is broken down into three manageable sections: *spacing, alignment, & repetition.* Is there more to design theory than three core concepts? Absolutely. But remember, we're taking the 80/20 approach. I've read my share of design books and felt overwhelmed by the sheer volume of information to digest. These three core concepts *(spacing, alignment, & repetition)* are the building blocks of design that you need to grasp. Don't worry about anything extra - just these three core principles. To make it even easier, I've included images along the way to illustrate what you'll be learning.

Spacing

If you look at enough church graphics, you'll quickly recognize what I like to call **Black Friday syndrome**. And if you've ever been out shopping on Black Friday, you'll know exactly what I'm talking about. Black Friday is a messy affair: thousands upon thousands of humans squeezed into a store, bumping shoulders with one another, trying to find any inch of free space. Maybe you've seen church graphics like this before? Graphics with several pages worth of text squeezed into a single image?
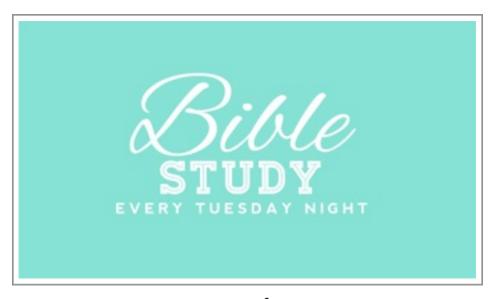
Negative space vs. positive space

I want to introduce you to an idea called **negative space**. Negative space is, quite simply, the space that surrounds an object in an image. Observe the two images below. In each photo, the focus is the man. Your eye is immediately drawn to the man on the ledge or the man in the desert. And yet, while the focal point of the image is the man, he only makes up a small portion of the photo. The majority of each photo is composited of other stuff. **This stuff is negative space.** Negative space is just as powerful and meaningful as the object of the graphic itself.
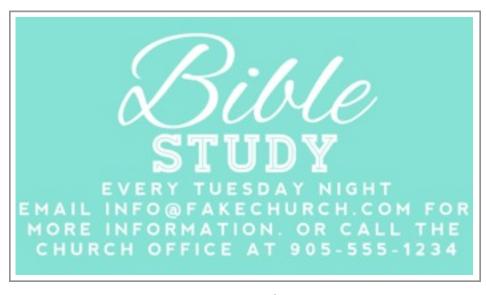
Next, take a look at the two examples below. This is a more practical church graphic example. The first example is one of the Church Graphics Handbook templates, unaltered.

Proper use of spacing

In the second example, I took that original template, enlarged the text and added some additional text as well. In this second example, a theoretical designer creating the graphic wanted to include more information than was necessary. They tried to cram as much text onto the canvas as possible and instead of a nicely spaced, balanced graphic, **it's a mess.**

Improper use of spacing

In this final example, you'll see how poor spacing (and poor use of negative space in particular) can make a beautiful graphic look amateurish.

In the first example, we have a graphic promoting a church's Twitter account. This is another Church Graphics Handbook template and, admittedly, there's a lot going on in this graphic. There's a background image, a colored overlay, four different lines of text, each in its own font, as well as a Twitter icon. Without proper spacing, this graphic would be a train wreck. In the first example you can see proper spacing in play. The text on the left is balanced nicely by the icon on the right, and there's still plenty of negative space around the edges and in the center of the graphic.

follow us on
TWITTER

@examplechurch
140 characters of creamy goodness

Proper use of spacing

In the second example, a theoretical designer wanted the text to be bigger - so they enlarged it. But now there is no negative space in the image, except for a small sliver on both the top and bottom. And while this graphic still has beautiful fonts, colors, and images, it's also bloated and stuffed. It's not easy to look at because there's no balance.

Where is your eye drawn when you look at this graphic? In the original graphic, your eye is drawn to the Twitter icon. You immediately recognize this graphic is about Twitter, and then your eyes move on to reading the text. But in the skewed example, everything is trying to be the main focus of the graphic at once. And when everything is the main focus, nothing is the main focus.

Improper use of spacing

The rule to live by when it comes to spacing is balance. You want to balance the negative spacing in the image with the positive spacing. When you skew this balance in either direction, your graphic isn't going to look good.

But wait, aren't rules meant to be broken?

Of course, some would say that rules are meant to be broken. In fact, let's re-examine the image of the bass guitar player in the desert from earlier in the chapter.

You'll notice that this is a prime example of unbalanced spacing. The negative space in this photo completely outweighs the positive space. **This is unbalanced!** And yet, despite the blatant rule-breaking on display in this photo, it still looks awesome. Truthfully, rules are meant to be broken - especially in creative pursuits. Sometimes unbalanced images looks great. But this notion will bring us back to The Non-Designer's Oath. The third stanza says, **"I vow not to be a hero (stay within your limits)."** Sure, the

unbalanced photo of the bass guitar player looks brilliant. But that photo was composited by a professional photographer who was purposefully trying to break the rules. The third stanza in The Non-Designer's Oath is there for a reason. You'll have moments when you feel like blatantly ignoring the rules of graphic design will make your graphic look unique and awesome - and I have those moments too! But that's why this part of The Non-Designer's Oath exists. It's probably more for me than it is for you. I have to consistently tell myself: **don't be a hero!** A well-balanced graphic will always look good. An unbalanced graphic can sometimes look good, but most often will not. If you're a non-designer like me, aim for balance every time.

Core Concepts Learnt

1. Balance the negative & positive space in a graphic
2. Always make sure there is ample negative space around the edges of a graphic
3. Avoid Black Friday syndrome - don't overstuff a graphic to the point it's about to explode

Alignment

The best way to grasp the concept of alignment is to envision an imaginary grid on a graphic. A well-aligned graphic wouldn't have elements in

random places. Instead, the elements would each align nicely to the contours of the grid.

Center alignment

The primary alignment you need to consider is center alignment. In the latest version of Photoshop, there's a new intuitive feature that automatically locks an element in alignment, and Photoshop will let you know an element is correctly aligned by briefly flashing a small, pink notation. But I like to set up guides/grids.
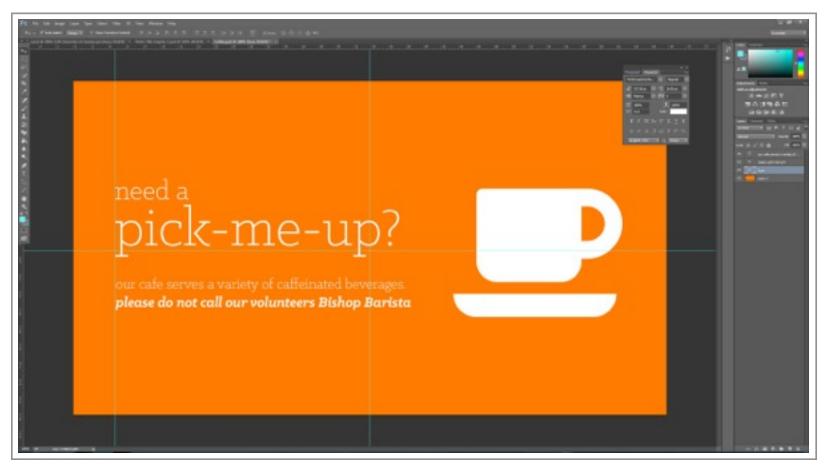
The image posted above is a screenshot of a Church Graphics Handbook template open inside Photoshop. You'll notice I've set up a very basic grid.

Center alignment using grids in Photoshop

These are the cyan-colored lines. The most important lines are the guides that run vertical and horizontal in the centre of the graphic. These guides intersect and create a central vertex. I use this guide to make sure that the group of text in the graphic is centered.

Internal alignment

Internal alignment using grids in Photoshop

Making sure the elements of your graphic are properly centered is of chief importance, but internal alignment is also necessary. In the screenshot above you'll see another template inside Photoshop. My center guides still exist, but I've also added an additional vertical guide on the left side of the

image. In this particular graphic template I have four separate lines of text, and these lines of text need to be aligned with each other. By adding this vertical guide, I have a reference point to make sure each line of text is in precise alignment.

The problem with improper alignment

Improper alignment isn't one of those errors that is blatantly obvious. It can, however, make a graphic look just a little bit *"off."* When you're looking at it you might not be sure exactly what is off, but it just won't seem right. This can be tremendously frustrating, especially if you've already done a great deal of work on the graphic. Make sure your alignment is right the first time, and you can rest easy when the graphic is finished.

Core Concepts Learnt

1. Make sure your graphics elements are centered by using guides/grids
   The newest version of Photoshop makes this tremendously easy
2. Make sure your graphics elements are aligned internally with one another

Repetition

The principle of repetition is extremely straightforward: *reuse the same elements in your designs.* This principle doesn't always come into play with a single design, but it's vitally important for your church's approach to design and branding as a whole.

The Church Graphics Handbook templates are broken into three different styles: flat, vintage, & retro (you'll learn how to create each of these styles from scratch in the final chapters). Each of these styles has at least 100 different templates in its catalog for you to choose from. But while each template in a particular style is different, they all conform to the principle of repetition. The same fonts, colors, overlays, masks, and spacing are used over and over again. This is how you build a solid church brand - repetition.

But shouldn't we be original and creative?

When you're creating graphics that look similar to one another, you might begin to think that they look too similar. It's easy to fall into the trap of believing that every graphic needs to be unique and original and stand-alone. **This couldn't be farther from the truth!** Yes, it is possible to re-create the same graphic so many different times that it becomes

overused and loses its impact. But I don't see this error in the church. The bigger error I consistently see is churches trying to reinvent the wheel and create unique graphics for every event and ministry they have. This is a flawed approach that is doomed to fail, for two reasons. Firstly, creating a unique graphic for every event and ministry makes it impossible to create a church brand, because branding requires repetition. Secondly, the biggest and brightest brands almost never start from scratch. I'm a big advocate of copying what works, and I don't see McDonalds or Apple recreating their designs and branding with every new commercial. Instead, I see subtle tweaks that introduce new burgers and new iPhones, but still fall under the same umbrella of core branding. Repetition isn't about doing the same thing over and over again and being boring. Repetition is about doing the same thing over and over again because it works.

Repetition in action

Below is a collage I put together of six different retro templates from the Church Graphics Handbook. This is the principle of repetition in action.

You'll notice that each image is different and unique and yet, at the same time, they also look very similar. And that's because many of the same elements were used. The same types of photographs were used, the same fonts were used, and the same overlays were used. Repetition is the principle that becomes more powerful the more you use it. The more you create graphics that conform to a specific standard, the more your church brand and culture are enforced.

Core Concepts Learnt

1. Reusing the same elements in designs is one of the best ways to build your church's visual brand
2. Don't try to be unique and original with every design - this plan of attack will work against you in more ways than one
3. Repetition is a principle that becomes more powerful the more you use it

Conclusion

Each chapter of the Church Graphics Handbook builds on the chapters before it. At this stage you have The Non-Designer's Oath as your foundational framework, and you've grasped the core principles of graphic design. Right now you have the head knowledge to begin creating

beautiful church graphics, but you don't really have any weapons at your disposal. The next two chapters are dedicated to giving you the most epic toolbox you'll ever need. Fonts, color schemes, icons, stock photos, and everything else you'll use await in the next couple of chapters. **Let's do it!**

No. 4

THE BEST & WORST FONTS EVER

I've heard it said that **typography is 95% of design**. One of the reasons I'm mildly obsessed with typography is because choosing the right font is usually the most important stage of creating a graphic. Typography is the art and technique of arranging type. In our case, typography is all about fonts. Choose the wrong font and your graphic is almost guaranteed to look bad. This chapter outlines my favorite fonts of all time - **it's my Hall of Fame of typography**. But before we get to the list of the best fonts, we have to have the tough talk. We need to talk about the worst fonts.

Worst Fonts Ever

You're probably familiar with the 7 deadly sins. Well, these are the 7 deadly fonts. There are numerous reasons why each of these fonts is so egregious, but there is a single reason that encompasses them all - overuse. Sure, some of these fonts suffer from lazy design or poor kerning, but the main reason I suggest you **never, ever, ever, ever** use any of these fonts is simply because they're everywhere. And once you recognize them, you'll begin to see these fonts wherever you go.

This list is in no particular order, except I do save the worst for last. Papyrus is outstandingly bad and deserves to be in a category all its own.

- Times New Roman
- Helvetica

- Arial
- Comic Sans
- Brush Script
- Bleeding Cowboy
- Brush Script
- Papyrus

Just promise me you won't use these fonts, **okay?**

Best Fonts Ever

I once wrote a blog post called [The Ultimate List of 188 Free Church Fonts.](#) It took more than forty hours to write and publish, and has been one of the most popular posts I've ever written. With that being said, I won't direct you to that post on Pro Church Tools to find quality fonts. No, for the Church Graphics Handbook I've created something **much better.** Because, while *The Ultimate List of 188 Free Church Fonts* was extensive, therein lay the problem. It's very difficult to find the perfect font when you're scrolling through a seemingly never-ending list. The more choices available, the harder it is to choose.
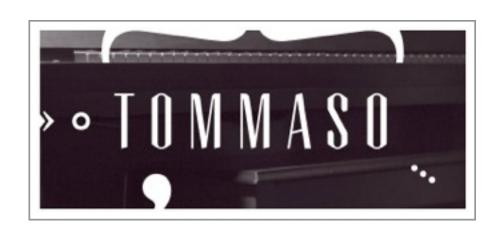
The following list consists of 45 fonts. They are separated into 4 different categories. These fonts are the best of the best. They're also all free. This is

the list of fonts I used to build every single one of the Church Graphics Handbook templates. **Every font you'll ever need is on this list.**

NOTE: Fonts from losttype.com don't appear to be free. Lost Type uses a pay-what-you-want pricing. I suggest you consider paying what you feel is reasonable, but of course, you can simply enter $0 and download the font for free that way.

Sans-Serif

- Tommaso
- Nevis (Bold)
- Bebas Neue
- Steelfish
- Franchise
- Duke
- Goodbye Lullaby
- Amatic
- MJ Letter 2
- Sullivan
- League Gothic
- Intro
- Governor

Serif

- Homestead
- Optimus Princeps
- Abraham Lincoln
- Klinic Slab
- Bitter
- Jura
- Geared

Scripts

- Wisdom Script
- Deftone Stylus
- Mission Script
- Freebooter Script
- Yellowtail
- Alex Brush
- Great Vibes
- Pacifico
- Cylburn
- Damion
- Grand Hotel

- Marketing Script
- Allura
- Daisy Script
- Lavanderia
- Freebooter
- Learning Curve Pro
- Engagement

Decorative

- Baron
- That's Font Folks!
- Dker Poster
- ArtBrush
- Edo
- Seaside Resort
- Freehand575

The Best, Most Useful Font You've Never Heard Of

There is a font that I left off this list, and the reason I left it off is two-fold. Firstly, this font doesn't fit any of the four categories above. Secondly, this

font needed a section all to its own for me to properly describe it to you. The font is aptly named [Font Awesome](). It doesn't consist of any letters or numbers; instead it is made up of almost 500 icons. Here's a quick look at some of the icons:

A list of just some of the available icons in Font Awesome

What's truly remarkable about this font is that each icon acts just like a vector. You can make the icon smaller or larger without losing quality. Font Awesome is always updating to newer versions that include more icons, and the best part is it's 100% free. Remember, though, there are almost 500 different icons available inside Font Awesome and, because of this, each icon has a multiple digit code. You can't simply press the letter 'A' and have an icon appear. You have to enter the correct code inside your design software for the right icon to render. This method is tedious and difficult, but there's an easy way to get around it. **Simply follow these steps:**

1. Visit the Font Awesome cheat sheet [here](#) - this cheat sheet lists every icon available.
2. Hover your cursor over the specific icon you want and highlight it
3. Press Command *(Ctrl)* + C to copy the highlighted icon
4. Inside your design software press Command *(Ctrl)* + V to paste the copied icon
5. Voila! Your icon of choice is now pasted into your design software and you can size it, manipulate it, and add effects to it as you see fit

Conclusion

I would agree with the statement that typography makes up 95% of design. But this makes choosing the right font all the more difficult. If you choose a bad font, your graphic is doomed from the start. I've carefully chosen each of the 45 fonts listed above, so you shouldn't run into this problem anymore. Each of the aforementioned fonts stands alone as a quality typeface, but they also work especially well together. Try combining a sans-serif with a script font. Or if you're feeling especially daring, use a decorative font. I think my favorite decorative font is the one called **That's Font Folks!** It's modeled after the Looney Tunes type in the opening and closing credits.

Of course, while finding the right font for your graphic is crucial, it's just the beginning. You'll also need to consider colors, stock

photos, icons, etc. **And that's what the next chapter is all about.**

(No.) 5

Chapter 5

WHERE TO GET THE GOOD STUFF

The second stanza in the Non-Designer's Oath reads, *"I vow to copy good examples from others."* I've said this before - **I'm not a true designer.** Sure, if I really worked at it I might be able to compose something from scratch, but it would drain me. I'm not an overflowing fountain of creativity. And because that's the case, I lean on the work of others more often than not.

The last chapter was dedicated entirely to fonts, so we won't cover those here. In this chapter you'll find resources to locate stock images, vectors, logos, photos, and color palettes.

The idea behind this chapter is that it becomes increasingly difficult to create beautiful graphics week after week and month after month - especially if you're a non-designer. The way I remedy this is by spring-boarding off the work of others. Maybe I'm not feeling super-creative today, but somebody is - and I can make their inspiration my own. Artistry is often shrouded in a cloak of exclusivity and snobbery, but I simply revert to the Non-Designer's Oath: *"I vow not to be a hero."* **Just get it done!**

Free Photos

When it comes to stock photography, I rarely pay for anything. In the last while, a myriad of sites have popped up that give away beautiful stock

images for free. If you purchased the Church Graphics Handbook Complete Package, you already have more than 1000 beautiful stock photos organized and ready to use. I encourage you to bookmark and register with the following sites and continue to update that database. However, if you didn't purchase the Complete Package, you're starting from scratch - and that's perfectly alright. I suggest you start your own database of stock photos today. Register with and follow the sites listed below and, when they release new images, simply save them in your database and organize them in folders as you go.

Unsplash.com

Unplash is the first site I visit when I need a photo. If you scroll through their archives you might find that some of their images look eerily familiar, and that's because I've used almost every one of their photos for a blog post or background on Pro Church Tools.

Unsplash.com

Every image on Unsplash is free, and 10 new images are released every 10 days. The photos are very high quality and are completely free to use in whatever manner you wish.

Picjumbo.com

Picjumbo releases one new photo every day. Much like Unsplash, these images are of the highest quality and resolution, and are free to be used as you see fit.

Picjumbo.com

DeathToTheStockPhoto.com

Death to the Stock Photo will send you a new pack of free photos every month directly to your email address. Each month's pack of photos is centered around a certain theme.

DeathToTheStockPhoto.com

46

Gratisography.com

Much like Unsplash and Picjumbo, Gratisography releases new photos periodically that are free for both personal and commercial use. The pictures are high quality, but rather quirky. Just visit the site and you'll see what I mean.

LittleVisuals.co

Little Visuals will send you 7 high-resolution images every 7 days. You can use them in whatever way you want and they're sent directly to your email inbox.

LittleVisuals.co

JayMantri.com

Jay Mantri releases 7 new photos every Thursday. You can do whatever you like with them.

JayMantri.com

FoodiesFeed.com

If stunning food photography is what you need, Foodie's Feed is the place to get it. I'm often surprised at how often I need a picture of food for a church graphic (maybe I shouldn't be - I did grow up Pentecostal). Foodie's Feed releases 5 new images every week.

Picography.co

Picography offers a database of free hi-resolution images. Alter, edit, or otherwise do what you want with them.

As you can see, there's no shortage of free, high-quality images on the internet. The trick is to be consistently updating your database and organizing your photos. Most of the sites listed above don't have a search feature, so you have to scroll through the archives if you're trying to find a specific image. I combat this limitation by downloading every image these sites release, then organizing them by subject in named folders. By doing this, when I need a specific image, I know exactly where to find it.

Paid Photos

Why would I ever pay for a stock photo when there are so many great sites offering free ones? Well, truthfully, sometimes you need a really specific photo. For instance, one time a church asked me for a photo of three popsicles - no more, no less. At the time, I had a great photo of two popsicles in my database, but alas, I couldn't use it.

True story.

If I do find myself needing a very specific photo that I can't find in my database, there are a few select sites I visit to find the photo I need. These sites offer a searchable database of thousands of photos, and best of all, they're quite inexpensive.

DollarPhotoClub.com

Because I use free images so often, I don't like to spend too much money on paid images. The Dollar Photo Club is right up my alley. They charge only $1 per image. You have to be a member to download images, but I didn't find gaining access very difficult.

Photodune.net

[PhotoDune](#) is another inexpensive option. The cost per image ranges from $1-$5 depending on the resolution you need. The database isn't as good as Dollar Photo Club, but you don't have to apply to be a member either. To pay for a PhotoDune image, you first must make a deposit - and the minimum deposit is $20. This can be a hassle, especially if you just need a single image.

Lightstock.com

If you're in need of faith-focused images of small groups, worship, communion, etc. [Lightstock](#) is the way to go. The best part about Lightstock is that it features brilliant images that are faith-focused, but aren't cheesy.

My encouragement to you is to use free photos as often as you can. The sites I listed above in the free section are great because they're supported by real artists and photographers. The photos don't have a stock photo look to them. Instead of being stereotypical, sterile commercial images, they look real and warm. Of course, they're also free! The only drawback is that most of the sites don't have a search feature. But if you build a custom

database on your own computer, you can avoid that problem 99% of the time.

Vectors, Icons, & Logos

The Font Awesome font introduced in the last chapter will cover you most of the time when you need a vector, icon, or logo. The font contains almost 500 different icons, so whether you need a Facebook logo, soccer ball, or WiFi symbol, you can find it there. And because all the symbols are fonts, you can scale them to be as big or small as you want without worrying about losing quality.

But perhaps you need a specific icon. If that's the case, I suggest graphicriver.net. It features 300,000 graphic files including logos, icons, infographics, etc. It even has templates for posters, brochures - you name it! I use this resource exclusively when I need something specific.

Color Palettes

Color is one of the most influential elements in any design. However, picking the right colors is not an easy task (though it may seem easy). I'm not an expert in color theory, so I revert to the experts.

FlatUIColors.com

[Flat UI Colors](#) is a palette of 20 different colors. Simply click on the color you like, the color code will automatically copy to your clipboard, and you can then use that color in Photoshop, or whatever design program you like.
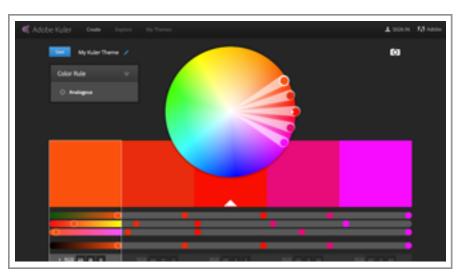

Flat UI Colors

FlatUIColorPicker.com

[Flat UI Color Picker](#) is a site very similar to FlatUIColors.com, but instead of 20 colors to choose from, it boasts 100! Again, simply find the color you like, copy the color code, and you can use that color code wherever you need it.

Adobe Kuler

[Adobe Kuler](#) is resource that helps you build your own color palette from scratch. It uses an intuitive

Adobe Kuler

algorithm to automatically match colors. All you have to do is choose the initial color you want to use. Below is a simple step-by-step tutorial on how to use Adobe Kuler.

Step 1: Choose your color rule from the Kuler list (i.e. Analogous, Monochromatic, Triad, etc.)

Step 2: Choose your starting color - you can enter a precise color code or simply click a color from the color wheel

Step 3: Kuler will automatically build a stunning palette of colors for you based on the rule you set, and the initial color you picked

Kuler is an amazing resource, and it's especially helpful when you're picking colors for your church's brand.

Remember, don't be a hero. Use the resources listed in these chapters. I've listed the best of the best so you can be sure you'll look like a hero without trying.

We've reached a pretty awesome moment in your training. You have the Non-Designer's Oath to guide you, you've grasped the basics of graphic design, and you have all the best colors, fonts, and images ready to use. You have at your fingertips the best possible toolkit; now we just need to put it all together.

The time has come.

It's time to open Photoshop.

No.

6

DEMYSTIFYING PHOTOSHOP

At this stage in your church graphics journey, you're at a point where you understand the basics of graphic design and you have the most epic toolbox of stock photos, fonts, and icons ready to go. But much of this knowledge is useless if you're unable to actually use it and begin creating graphics yourself. Finding your way around Photoshop is going to be the big final step in your church graphics journey.

Thankfully, by using the 80/20 principle discussed in the opening chapter, learning Photoshop doesn't have to be intimidating or time consuming. You can master the necessary skills of Photoshop in a short amount of time. And that core foundation of skills will enable you to perform the majority of functions and techniques inside the software.

Why Photoshop?

Adobe Photoshop was created in 1988 and has become the industry standard in graphics editing. It's a **gamechanger.** So much so, that "to photoshop" has become its own verb (ie. Just let me photoshop it and it'll look great).

When I was considering which design software to recommend and use for the templates in the Church Graphics Handbook, I was originally leaning

towards Keynote/Powerpoint. Many people already have these programs on their computers and they seemed simple and user friendly. Photoshop, on the other hand, has traditionally been a $1000 program. It's a professional program that perhaps only serious graphic designers use. And it wouldn't be fair of me to require every reader of this book to purchase additional software that costs upwards of $1000 just to be able to use the templates.

But Photoshop has changed dramatically in the last couple of years. Adobe introduced a new pricing model, and this new price has made Photoshop available to everyone. Instead of having to fork over $1000, Adobe has created what they call the **Creative Cloud**. The Creative Cloud is essentially a subscription service. Each month you pay a small recurring fee which gives you access to Adobe programs. This new pricing model has drastically reduced the prices of Adobe software, and what's even better, Photoshop just so happens to be the most inexpensive software of them all. Instead of paying $1000 for it, you can now get access to Photoshop for only $9.99/month.

Crazy.

Only $9.99/month

It costs only $9.99/month and it's fully functional (no limitations or

anything). It works on both Mac and PC. Moreover, it includes free updates, so you always have the latest edition of the software (in the old days you had to pay hundreds of dollars to upgrade to the newest edition), and there's even a free 30-day trial option if you want to test it out just to make sure. I simply can't stress enough how thankful I am that Adobe introduced this new pricing for Photoshop.

Like many students I had torrented Photoshop when I was in school for no other reason than I had no money. But when Adobe introduced this new price, I immediately signed up. Even a starving student like myself two years ago could afford $9.99/month (plus I was getting a stable version of the software with no risk of viruses). Even a brand new church plant can afford $9.99/month. Even a church of less than fifty people can afford $9.99/month. Here's the link to get Photoshop if you don't have it already.

What if I can't afford Photoshop?

Photoshop is available for both Mac and PC. **It costs only $9.99/month.** And in the next few pages I'm going to teach you everything you need to know about how to use it. But, with all that being said, I recognize that there may be someone reading this book somewhere with such a unique situation that Photoshop may not be right for them. I also don't want to force you, after purchasing this handbook, to purchase additional software

if you don't want to (that doesn't seem like the right thing to do). And while I believe that for 98% of us Photoshop is the perfect solution, for the remaining 2% there is another option. And it's 100% free.

Let me introduce you to GIMP.

GIMP is a freely distributed piece of graphics editing software, available on both Mac and PC. The GIMP interface was built to emulate Photoshop, meaning that GIMP looks like Photoshop, talks like Photoshop, and works like Photoshop. And while GIMP does have its limitations, those limitations don't really concern us and the tasks that we're trying to accomplish.

Every single template that comes with the Church Graphics Handbook, whether it's the single free template that comes with the book, or the 400+ templates that come with the The Complete Package, are saved in .PSD (Photoshop) format. And while I highly suggest you purchase Photoshop, you can forgo it if you choose. You will still be able to work with all the templates inside GIMP because GIMP is able to open fully layered Photoshop files.

A final note concerning Photoshop and GIMP before we jump into the Photoshop training: while GIMP was built to emulate Photoshop and the two programs share many similarities, there are differences. The training in this chapter is for Photoshop in particular. Most of the skills and techniques

will translate nicely to GIMP because many of the tools and windows are in the same place. But some of the keyboard shortcuts and other techniques don't completely translate because of GIMP's differences. This is another reason I highly suggest you purchase Photoshop instead of using GIMP, but, again, most of the training does translate, so if you've decided to use GIMP, this won't be a deal breaker for you.

Alright, let's get started with Photoshop

Okay. Now it's time to get into the fun stuff. Obviously, before we begin using Photoshop, you'll have to download and install it, if you haven't already. Here's the link to do so.

Photoshop installs differently than an ordinary piece of software. You first need to install Adobe Creative Cloud on your computer. Once that's installed, you enter your login credentials and can install Photoshop from inside Creative Cloud. This ensures that you have proper permission to use Photoshop (this is instead of entering ridiculously long activation keys like in the old days), and it also gives you instant access to future updates, which is convenient.

The following series of Photoshop training is going to center around, what I like to call **Big Skills**. Instead of spending hours navigating through the

intricacies of Photoshop and its many tools and capabilities, we're going to focus the majority of our efforts on a core set of Big Skills. These Big Skills will enable you to produce a beautiful church graphic in minutes and you'll feel like a veteran Photoshop designer in no time (this is the 80/20 principle in action).

The following isn't a comprehensive tour through Photoshop. You may notice that I glaze over certain elements, and when I do that it's very purposeful. An overload of information in a program you're unfamiliar with will be extremely unhelpful. That's why I've broken down this series of training into five Big Skills. If you can grasp these five Big Skills, you'll have all you need to create beautiful graphics for your church.

NOTE: If you purchased a Church Graphics Handbook package that comes with video tutorials, you may benefit more from watching the videos than from reading through the following sections. With video tutorials you get the benefit of watching me use Photoshop instead of just viewing screenshots, and the videos allow me to go into greater depth with each Big Skill. Finally, there are bonus tutorials that cover Photoshop techniques that aren't covered in the book itself.

Big Skill #1 - Layers

Every Church Graphics Handbook package includes a template called **Tutorial-Template.** This is the template we're going to use to learn every Big Skill we need to master in Photoshop. At this point, I highly suggest you open Photoshop on your computer, open the Tutorial-Template inside Photoshop (or GIMP), and follow along as we work our way through each Big Skill. Hands-on learning will be more helpful to you than just reading this chapter.
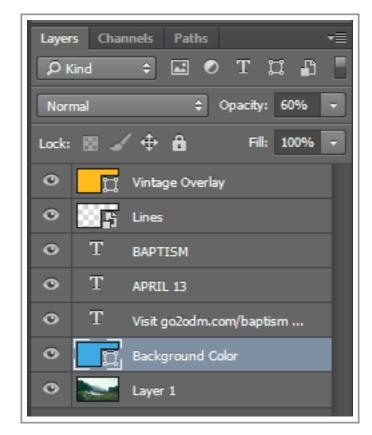

Tutorial Template

The first Big Skill we need to use in Photoshop is layers. If you look to the right hand side of your Photoshop window you'll see the Layers window.

NOTE: *If you're not seeing the Layers window, you're likely configured in a different Workspace. Don't worry if you don't know what that means, it's easy to fix. Just go to Window in the navigation menu at the top of your screen, navigate to Workspace, and then click Reset Essentials. Now you should be in the right Workspace.*

Layers Window

Photoshop is a layers-based software. This means when you're creating a graphic, you start with a base layer (maybe it's a background color or a photograph) and then add layers on top to build your graphic. **Every layer has its own job.** You could add a color layer, text layer, graphics layer, texture layer, etc.

In our Tutorial-Template file we have seven different layers. To gain a greater understanding of how layers work, I recommend that you click on the visibility icon for each layer (the visibility icon is an image of an eye). When you click on the eye, the layer will turn off and become invisible. When you click that same spot

Visibility Icon

again, the layer will turn on and become visible again. **Go ahead and turn off every layer.** Once you've turned off every layer, you'll have a blank canvas that looks like the image below. Great!

Blank canvas

I'm going to walk you through each of the layers in this graphic. As I begin discussing a layer, feel free to turn it on inside the Layers window. This will give you a great understanding of layers, and you can see how I built this graphic from the ground up.

Start by turning on the layer titled Layer 1.

Layer 1 is our base layer. It's a stock photograph that I downloaded from Unsplash.com and it's the base for our entire graphic.

Layer 2 is called Background Color and is a simple color blue that is set to overlay the image.

Layers 3, 4, & 5 are text layers. When you turn these layers on you'll see three lines of text appear.

Layer 6 is called Lines. This is a graphic layer.

Layer 7 is called Vintage Overlay. This is another color layer. It's set to a mustard yellow color and it gives the graphic a vintage feel.

Hopefully, at this point you've begun to grasp our first **Big Skill - Layers**. When you're building a graphic inside Photoshop, the graphic is built entirely on layers. You begin with a blank canvas and add layer after layer until your graphic is complete. The reason Photoshop uses layers is so that you can apply different effects to each individual layer. Instead of applying an effect globally (to the entire image), you can apply certain effects to specific layers only. This gives you greater control over the image and, of course, gives you the power to create some really cool effects (we'll learn about those later).

Big Skill #2 - Text

There's a reason that I spent an entire chapter of this book talking about fonts. Using fonts is the easiest way to completely transform an image. Let me say it again, I'm not a great artist but I love using the artistic skills of others to create beautiful graphics. The fonts listed in chapter four are absolutely stunning. They're meticulously crafted and beautifully designed (they're also free!). And when you use a beautiful font, the quality of your graphic is instantly improved. Using different fonts isn't the only thing you can do with text inside Photoshop though. You can transform your text using the **Character window**, and that's what this Big Skill is all about. If the Character window isn't visible inside your Photoshop interface (and it likely isn't), simply click on the Window tab in the navigation menu at the top, then click on Character in the drop down menu.

Character window

There are many ways to manipulate and transform text inside Photoshop, and the Character window is where that all happens. Below you'll see a brief overview of the most important text tools inside the Character window.

***NOTE:** If you notice a tool inside the Character window that I didn't explain, it means I never use it, and I didn't want to complicate this training process by including every little thing.*

Choose your font

The primary task inside the Character window is to choose and change your font. Simply select from the drop down menu.
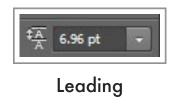
Choose your font

Font Size

A self-explanatory tool that you'll be using frequently.
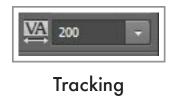
Font size

Leading

Leading is the term used to describe the distance between the baselines of successive lines of type. Basically, it's the vertical distance between your lines of text (also known as line height).

Leading

Tracking

The tracking tool is one of my favorite text tools to

Tracking

use in the Character window. The tracking tool (also known as kerning) adjusts the distance between each character in a font. This is one of the best ways to transform a boring word or line of text into something interesting. If you look at the word Baptism in the Tutorial-Template, you can see an example of tracking. I adjusted the tracking from 0 to 70 pts so that the word stretched to fill more space. Below you'll see a couple of motion pictures that used kerning to make their movie titles more dramatic.
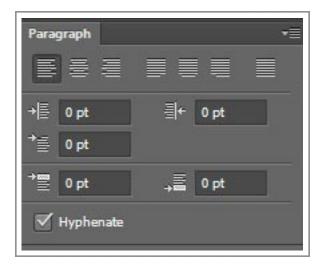
Alignment

The alignment tool is actually found inside the Paragraph window, (not the Character window), but they're usually linked together; meaning, if you turn on the Character window, Photoshop will automatically turn on the Paragraph window also. Of course, if you can't find the Paragraph window, just turn it on using the Window tab in the navigation menu at the top of your screen.

Alignment found inside the
Paragraph window

The alignment tool is a tool you've likely been using in Microsoft Word or Pages since you were a child. Aligning text to the center of a page is a crucial skill when you're crafting an eye-popping title page for an English paper. **It's also helpful inside Photoshop.**

Keeping text centered is usually the best way to align your words. But aligning to the left is a great way to mix things up from time to time. I'd avoid aligning your words to the right unless you're writing in Hebrew.

Manipulating and transforming text is one of my preferred ways to change a graphic. If you start with a great font, you'll be on the right track.

Subsequently, using your Character window you'll be able to size, lead, track, and align to your heart's content.

Big Skill #3 - Blending & Adjustments

If you look closely at the Tutorial-Template file inside Photoshop, you'll see a couple of color layers. The first color layer is called **Background Color** and is colored blue. Normally, a layer like this would completely fill the canvas and cover everything else up - all you would see is blue. But instead, I've used blending to add a nice overlay effect. Instead of covering up the entire image with a sea of blue, I've overlayed the layer and blended it nicely with the photo layer underneath.

Blending, much like the text tool, is a simple skill - *very easy to learn* - but has tremendous power to completely transform your images. Similar to the text tool, there are many ways to manipulate and transform your image using blending, and below is a brief overview of my favorites.

Opacity

The simplest way to use blending is to adjust the opacity of a layer. If you click on the layer titled Background Color in the Tutorial-Template and check to see what level of opacity it's set on,

Opacity slider

you'll find it's set to 60%. If you change that level to 100%, the blue layer will completely overtake the background image. By keeping the level of opacity at 60%, the translucency of the color layer blends nicely with the im-

100% opacity [LEFT] vs. 60% opacity [RIGHT]

age layer.

Overlay

Immediately to the left of the opacity box, you'll see a box with a drop down menu that is set to Normal. This drop down menu is where you can select from a multitude of different blending modes.

Overlay

Adjusting the opacity and making layers more/less translucent is the simplest way to blend layers together within Photoshop. The additional blend modes in the drop down menu perform the same function, but they

use different mathematical equations. I don't want to over-complicate things. All you need to know is that by choosing from different blend modes, you can blend layers together but get slightly different effects with each type of blend mode. The first blend mode we're going to learn is called **Overlay.**
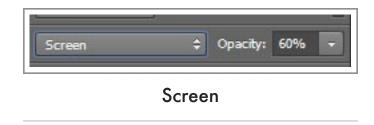

Normal [LEFT] vs. Overlay [RIGHT]

The overlay blend mode is all about contrast. When you change the blend mode to overlay, your image will become brighter in the highlights and darker in the shadows. That just means the image's contrast will increase. The lighter parts get lighter and the darker parts get darker.

Screen

While the overlay mode makes brighter areas brighter, and darker areas darker, the screen blend mode focuses only on

Screen

brightening an image. By blending a layer using screen mode you'll see the general brightness of your image increase.

Normal [LEFT] vs. -Screen [RIGHT]

Multiply

The multiply blend mode is essentially the opposite of screen mode. While screen increases the general brightness of an image, multiply mode will darken your images.

Choosing Multiply from drop down blend menu
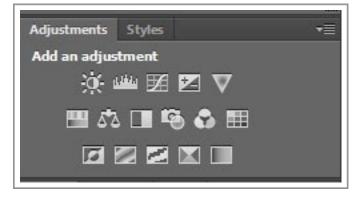

Normal [LEFT] vs. Multiply [RIGHT]

Blend modes are great tools for layering your graphic. I only briefly touched on four types of blends, but there are more than twenty-five different options inside Photoshop. Don't worry too much about understanding all the blend modes though. The four most important are the four discussed above. And the key to blend modes is experimentation. Opacity is the simplest to use. It's what I use the most and suggest you do too - **especially when you're just starting out**. But as you become more comfortable using Photoshop, refer back to this handbook and experiment with the other, different types of blend modes.

Adjustments

Immediately above the Layers window is the Adjustments window. Inside this window are a handful of helpful tools to further manipulate and transform your graphic.

Adjustments window

NOTE: Like any other change made to your graphic, it's important to recall that Photoshop is a layers-based program. If you want to adjust the contrast of your graphic, or make it black and white, consider which layer you have selected when you apply the adjustment. If you have the bottom layer of your graphic selected and add an adjustment to it, only the bottom layer will be affected. To apply an adjustment globally (over the entire

graphic), apply the adjustment to the top layer. By doing this, not only will the top layer be affected, but every layer beneath it will also be affected.

NOTE II: When an adjustment is added to your graphic, the adjustment appears as a brand new layer. Once this adjustment is created (ie. Brightness change), it acts like a layer and can be moved, blended, etc.

Brightness/Contrast

Adjusting the brightness/contrast of a graphic is straightforward. Adjusting the brightness of your graphic is self-explanatory, but if you're unfamiliar with the term Contrast, here's what it means: Contrast measures the gap between the light areas of your graphic and the dark areas. If you increase the contrast of your graphic, the light areas will become lighter, and the dark areas will become darker - the gap will increase. If you decrease the contrast of your graphic, the inverse will occur.

Brightness/Contrast window

Both the Brightness and Contrast adjustments are performed by adjusting the slider. Slide up if you want to increase the effect, slide down if you want to decrease the effect.

Hue/Saturation

Adding an adjustment to your graphic using the Hue slider can make radical changes. Changing the hue of your graphic completely alters the color.

Adjusting the Saturation of a graphic will make your colors more or less vibrant. If you slide the Saturation slider all the way down to –100, your graphic will lose all color and you'll be left with a black and white image.

Hue/Saturation window

Just like with blend modes, there are a myriad of adjustments you can make to your image using the Adjustments panel. My current panel shows sixteen different types of adjustments to choose from. Truthfully, I don't know what half of them do. And that's the beauty of using the 80/20 principle to learn Photoshop. You don't need to understand every intricacy. In fact, you don't need to know most of the intricacies. If you can just grasp these five Big Skills, you'll have all the knowledge you need to begin creating beautiful

graphics for your church.

Big Skill #4 - Tools

Up to this point, we've only been examining the right side of our Photoshop dashboard, but as you've likely noticed, there's an entire left side that we haven't touched yet! This fourth Big Skill is dedicated to this left side -- known as the **Tools window.**

Much like both the blending modes and the adjustments, there is no shortage of tools on the Tools window. Don't concern yourself with learning every tool. Focus on the tools discussed below.

Move Tool

The Move Tool **(keyboard shortcut: V)** is the default tool. This tool acts just like an ordinary cursor does. When the Move Tool is

Move tool

activated you can drag text and images - basically, you can move stuff. This tool is self-explanatory, but it's important to note, if you find yourself frustrated because you can't move something, it's likely because the Move Tool isn't activated. Your cursor will behave according to the tool that is activated. For example, if the Text Tool is

Tools window

activated, you won't be able to move anything. Every time you click the cursor on your image, you'll be starting a new line of text or making changes to an existing line. It's worth repeating, **your cursor will behave according to the tool that is activated.** You'll be using the Move Tool more than any other tool, so if you find yourself frustrated because you can't move something, it's likely because the Move Tool isn't activated. To change this, click the letter V on your keyboard (that's the keyboard short-cut for the Move Tool), or navigate to the Tools window and click on the Move Tool.

Rectangular Marquee Tool

The Rectangular Marquee Tool is a selection tool. I use this tool primarily for selecting an image so that I can copy and paste it onto another composition. For instance, in the Tutorial-Template, Layer 1 is a background image. To place this image into the Tutorial-Template, I had to open the image in Photoshop and then use the Rectangular Marquee Tool to copy and paste the image into the Tutorial-Template

Rectangular marquee tool

composition. As noted in its name, the Rectangular Marquee Tool is rectangular-shaped. How you drag the tool will determine the height and width of the rectangle - it's entirely up to you. If you want to select a perfect square, hold down Shift on your keyboard while you drag, which will lock the Rectangular Marquee Tool into a perfect square selection.

Crop Tool

You may be familiar with the Crop Tool because it's a common tool found in many applications (ie. Instagram). By activating the Crop Tool you can permanently adjust the width/height of your composition.

Crop tool

Paint Bucket Tool

If you've ever used Microsoft Paint, you'll know all about the Paint Bucket Tool. The Paint Bucket Tool will fill a layer in your composition a certain color. For instance, if you wanted to change the Background Color in the Tutorial-Template from blue, you could select the Background Color template, and then use the Paint Bucket Tool to fill that layer with a new color.

Paint bucket tool

Text Tool

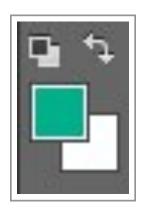We've already gone into depth about how to use the Character window to transform the text in your graphic. But before you can do any of that, you'll need to activate the Text Tool **(keyboard shortcut: T)**. Simply do this by clicking on the Text

Text tool

Tool in the Tools window, or by hitting T on your keyboard. Once the tool is activated you can click your cursor on any pre-existing text in your composition. Alternatively, you can also double click on the letter T, located on any text layer in your Layers window - this will activate the Text Tool also. If you don't have any existing text in your composition, activating the Text Tool and clicking your cursor anywhere on your graphic will start a new line of text.
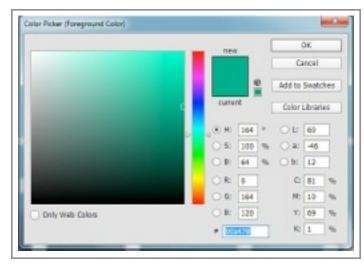
Color Picker Tool

The final tool to familiarize yourself with is the Color Picker Tool. The Color Picker Tool will allow you to pick colors - **shocking, hey?** Once open, you can click and drag to select a color from the palette itself, or you can manually enter a 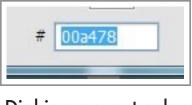hex code at the bottom of the window (this is what I like to do). A hex code is a series of six letters and numbers that allow you to choose a precise shade of color. For instance, the Pro Church Tools brand blue is *#00a0f0*. That's a very precise selection of blue. Your church brand may have its own hex codes. You can use the Color Picker Tool to dial in the exact color you need.

Color picker tool

Dial in an exact color using a hex code
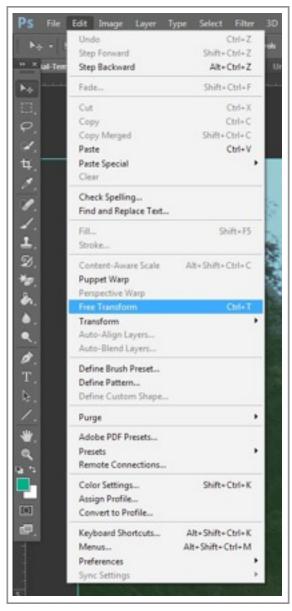

Color picker window

Big Skill #5 - Transform

The fifth and final Big Skill is the easiest to learn, but might just be the most useful skill at the same time. **Transforming a part of your graphic is something that you'll be doing very frequently**. Maybe you need to expand your background image, or rotate a piece of text. All this can be accomplished using the Transform function inside Photoshop.

The Transform mode is somewhat hidden inside the Photoshop dashboard. It's found under Edit in the navigation menu, and I like to use the Free Transform option.

Because the Transform function is inconveniently hidden in the navigation menu, I suggest you learn the keyboard shortcut. The keyboard shortcut for Transform is **Ctrl + T** (or Cmd + T if you're on a Mac). *If you're going to learn any keyboard shortcut, this is the one to learn because you'll be using the Transform function often.*

Select Free Transform from the navigation menu

Once you've activated the Transform function on a layer, you'll notice that your graphic now

has toggle handles on its corners and sides. I only ever use the **corner toggles** when I'm in Transform mode, so feel free to disregard the toggles on the sides of the images. Once you see those toggles, you'll know you're in Transform mode.

How to scale a layer

The most common transformation you'll need to perform when working on a graphic is to Scale. This simply means making a layer bigger or smaller. Maybe you need to increase the size of your headline, or decrease the size of your background image - *that's scaling.*

To make a layer in your graphic bigger or smaller, simply follow these steps:

1. Select the layer you want to work on
2. Activate Transform mode by using the keyboard shortcut Ctrl + T
3. While holding shift on your keyboard, grab a corner toggle with your cursor, and then drag to scale
4. Double click the center of your graphic to apply the transformation

NOTE: *It's absolutely essential that you hold the Shift key on your*

*keyboard while you scale your graphic. This ensures that the layer you're scaling gets scaled **proportionately**. If you don't hold Shift while scaling you'll disproportionately adjust the size. This means that you'll be distorting and stretching your layer - very bad! Always hold Shift when scaling.*

Proportionate scaling [LEFT] vs. disproportionate scaling [RIGHT]

How to rotate a layer

There are two main functions when working in Transform mode. Scaling a layer is the first, and rotating a layer is the second.

To rotate a layer in your graphic, follow these steps:

1. Select the layer you want to work on
2. Activate Transform mode by using the keyboard shortcut **Ctrl + T**
3. Grab a corner toggle with your cursor, and then drag to rotate

4. Double click the center of your graphic to apply the transformation

NOTE: *If you want to rotate a layer a perfect 90 degrees, or perfect 45 degrees, hold the Shift key while rotating. By doing this, you'll lock the rotation of the layer into 15-degree increments.*
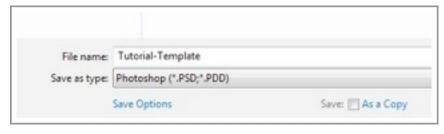
Saving your graphic in Photoshop

Once your graphic is complete, it's time to export it. To do this, click File in your navigation menu and then click *Save As...*

There are many different file types you can save your graphic as, but these are the three main types.

1. .PSD
2. .JPEG
3. .PNG

Saving your graphic as a .PSD

The .PSD file type is the native Photoshop format. When you save your graphic as a .PSD, you're

| File name: | Tutorial-Template |
| Save as type: | Photoshop (*.PSD;*.PDD) |

Save Options   Save: ☐ As a Copy

Saving your graphic as a .PSD file

saving a Photoshop file. This means that all the layers you've created will be preserved, and you'll be able to come back later and make changes to your graphic if necessary. It's always smart to save your graphic as a .PSD file because you never know when you'll need to make changes. However, this file type isn't meant for digital delivery; that's what the next two types of file types are for.
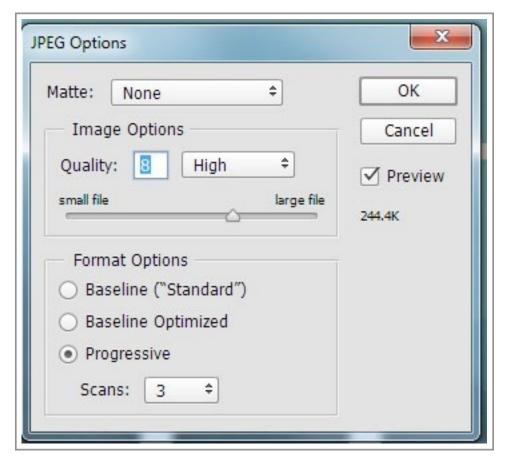
Saving your graphic as a .JPEG

Saving graphics as .JPEGs is a great file type to use. While I always save my graphics as .PSDs

Save your graphic as a .JPEG file

first (so I can make changes to the graphic later if necessary) that file type is not meant for digital delivery to social media, websites, ProPresenter, etc. Saving your graphic as a .JPEG will keep the file size small, yet keep the image quality high.

These are the settings I suggest you use when exporting your graphic as a .JPEG file.
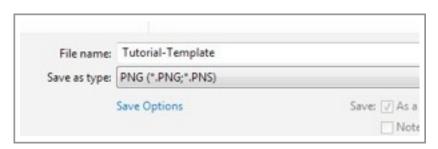
Use these settings when saving your graphic as a .JPEG

Saving your graphic as a .PNG

While saving graphics as a .JPEG file is a great method, there are certain situations when saving a graphic as a .PNG is the right choice. The .PNG format offers a higher quality image than .JPEG, so if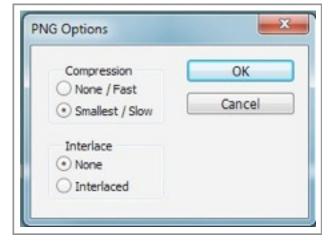 your graphic has a lot of text (or you just want the absolute best possible quality), saving as a .PNG is the best choice.

Save your graphic as a .PNG file

Saving as a .PNG is also helpful when you have a transparent background in your graphic. For example, the homepage for this book is http://churchgraphicshandbook.com. One of the first things you'll see when you visit the site is a graphic of the book. This specific graphic has a transparent background so it blends nicely with the image behind it. This wouldn't be possible if I had saved the image as a .JPEG. If you need to preserve a transparent background, you'll need to save as a .PNG.

A final note to consider when saving your graphics as .PNGs, is that due to the higher quality of the file format, you should expect bigger file sizes. This is something to consider when you're putting these graphics on your church's website. Too many bloated graphics on a server can potentially result in slower load times for your website. Don't worry though! There is a way around this. If you visit http://tinypng.com, you can upload your .PNGs to their converter. It's absolutely free and only takes a couple of seconds. By doing this you can drastically decrease the size of your .PNG files, and be able to retain background transparency simultaneously.

These are the settings I suggest you use when exporting your graphic using a .PNG file.

Use these settings when saving your graphic as a .PNG

Just one more little thing

Before we wrap up this chapter, there's just one more little thing that you need to know. At some point, you're going to make a mistake inside Photoshop. And you'll want to correct it. The keyboard shortcut for Undo inside Photoshop is **Ctrl + Z** (Cmd + Z on a Mac). I depend on this shortcut every time I use Photoshop. It's very easy to accidentally move a layer to a place you didn't want it, or scale a piece of text too large. It's important to be able to step back and immediately undo the mistake. Memorize this shortcut **(Ctrl + Z)**, because you'll be using it a lot.

You made it!

Congratulations! You've reached the end of this crash course on Photoshop. I say congratulations because this chapter wasn't short or light by any means. It was chock-full of training tips, many of which may be unfamiliar to you.

Keep in mind, this book is called the Church Graphics Handbook for a reason. It isn't a gripping thriller that you read from beginning to end in one sitting, nor is it a compelling piece of non-fiction that inspires you to improve your life. **It's a handbook.** That means that you can and should refer back to it when necessary. When you forget the keyboard shortcut to transform a layer, just refer back to this chapter and it's right there for you.

When you need the perfect font for a new graphic, just consult Chapter 4 and you'll find it. Also, don't feel discouraged if you haven't completely grasped every tool and technique in this chapter. Unless you're the dude from the movie Limitless, you won't be able to acquire new skills that quickly. Many of us are able to learn by reading, but most, if not all, of us don't fully grasp a new skill until we actually do it ourselves. I've seen this again and again when working with people in Photoshop. I can show them a specific technique and they cognitively grasp it, but until they sit down in front of the monitor and actually perform the technique themselves, it doesn't truly sink in. **And that's what the final three chapters of this handbook are for.**

I'm going to walk you through how to create different types of graphics step-by-step in Photoshop. Of course, if you have the Complete Package with all 400+ templates, feel free to start creating graphics immediately! But if you want to learn how to build graphics step-by-step, the next three chapters are for you. We're going to use all the knowledge we've learned thus far and actually put it to use. The Non-Designer's Oath is going to be our compass to make sure we're on the right track. We're going to consult our lists of resources to find the right fonts, photos, and color palettes. And we're going to use the five Big Skills we learned in Photoshop to create beautiful graphics for our churches in just minutes.

Ready for the fun stuff?

No.

7

THE FLAT GRAPHIC FORMULA

Finally! The part we've been waiting for.

The next three chapters of the Church Graphics Handbook will walk you through three beautiful graphics formulas. I call them formulas because they are almost mathematically precise. You begin by gathering the necessary elements, you arrange the elements as dictated by the formula, and voila! A beautiful graphic every time. These formulas are virtually impossible to mess up.

NOTE: If you purchased The Complete Package, all you need to do is open up one of the 400+ pre-made templates and you're already good to go!

The Formula

The first graphic formula we're going to work through is **The Flat Graphic Formula**. We're beginning with this particular formula because it's the easiest type of graphic to create. There are only two layers needed in each graphic.

The first step is to create a blank canvas in Photoshop. I suggest you create a graphic with dimensions of 1920 x 1080px. This is a full 1080p HD image. The aspect ratio is 16:9 which means that it's a widescreen image and will

fit well on most projectors. While this is the most popular dimension of church graphics, perhaps you need something different for what you're creating. Maybe you're creating an image for Instagram and it needs to be a square shape set to 640 x 640px.

16:9/Widescreen [LEFT] vs. 1:1/Instagram [RIGHT]

Step 1

Create a blank canvas in Photoshop by completing the following steps:

1. Under the File tab on the navigation menu, click 'New'
2. Set the width of the canvas to '1920 pixels'
3. Set the height of the canvas to '1080 pixels' and click 'OK'

Now we have a blank canvas and we're ready to start creating!

Step 1

Step 2

The first layer we're going to add to our graphic is a color. Of course, it's your choice what color to work with, but I suggest picking a color from either http://www.flatuicolorpicker.com or http://flatuicolors.com. Once you have the hex code of the color ready to go (if you're unsure of how to do that, revert back to chapter 5), open the Color Picker Tool by clicking on the colored box.

Now that the Color Picker window is open, enter the color hex code at the bottom of the window and click 'OK.' Next, activate the Paint Bucket Tool from the Tools window on the left side of your Photoshop window by

clicking on the icon of the paint bucket. Once you've activated the tool, simply click in the center of your blank canvas. **Boom!** Your canvas is now fully colored.

Quick Steps

1. Choose a color and copy the hex code.
2. Open the Color Picker Tool and paste the hex code into the high lighted box.
3. Use the Paint Bucket Tool to fully color your canvas.

Step 2

Step 3

Creating a flat graphic is ridiculously easy. You're already halfway done! The final step is to add your text. Any font listed in the font chapter will work great for any graphic you create, but here are some of my favorites specifically for flat graphics.

My Favorite Fonts to Use for Flat Graphics

- Klinic Slab (in any weight)
- Duke Fill
- Baron Neue Black
- Wisdom Script
- Pacifico
- Homestead Regular
- Nevis Bold

At this point, it would be a wise decision to set up guides to ensure that your text is centered. Setting up guides is simple. Just complete the following steps:

1. Under the 'View' tab in the navigation menu, select 'New Guide'

2. First set up a vertical guide, drag it from the edge of your graphic to the centre - you'll know it's centered because it will automatically snap to the center when you are close

3. Repeat with a horizontal guide

Now that our guides are set up, **it's time to add some text!** Activate the Text Tool by selecting it from the Tools bar on the left side of your Photoshop window. Once you've activated the Text Tool, simply click with your cursor anywhere on the canvas to begin typing. Once you've finished typing, select the Move Tool from the Tools bar and move your text into the correct position. Of course, if you want to enlarge your text, adjust the kerning, or further manipulate it in any way, that can all be done by using the Character Window as discussed in the last chapter. If the Character Window isn't currently open, you can activate it by selecting 'Character' within the Window tab on the navigation bar.

Of course, don't simply create a single line of text. Add another! And another if you choose! Below is my finished graphic. The headline is written in Pacifico font, and the byline in Nevis Bold.

And there you have it! A beautiful flat graphic ready to go.

Quick Steps

1. Use the Text Tool to add your first line of text to the graphic
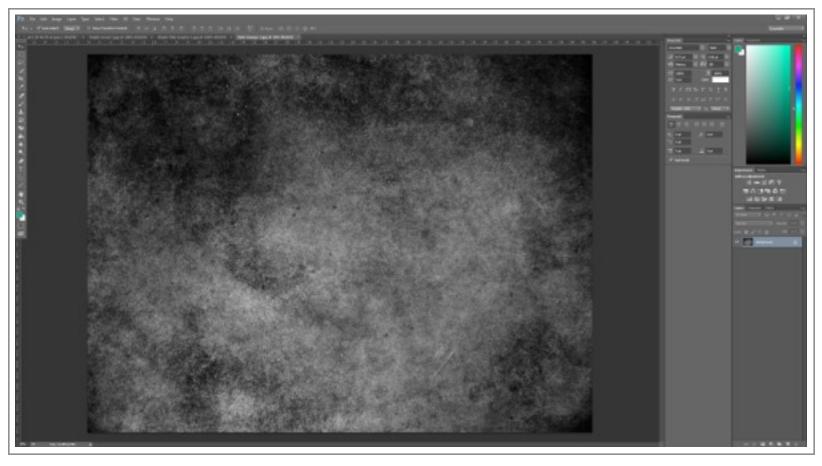2. Repeat
3. Adjust text using the Character Window

Step 3 - Voila!

Bonus Step

Just to be clear, I love flat design. I think it's clean, modern, and fresh. However, sometimes flat design can feel a bit bland. The design concept, being very simple, can occasionally feel as if it's lacking **character** or **personality.** When that is the case, I use this bonus step to upgrade a flat image from dull to vibrant.

To perform this bonus step, you'll first need a handful of dark, grunge textures. There is no shortage of free textures online, but many of them are low quality. There's a folder in your Church Graphics Handbook package called **Resources**. And inside that folder is another called **Flat Graphics Textures**. These ten textures are all you will need right now, but if you want to get more high-quality textures in the future, I suggest using graphicriver.net. It will only cost you a couple of dollars and the site provides high-quality images. The key to finding textures that work for this step is to find grunge textures that are dark. If they aren't dark (almost black) they won't work.

Once you've located the textures from the link above, choose your favorite, and open it inside Photoshop.

Bonus Step: Open your texture of choice inside Photoshop

Use the Rectangular Marquee tool from the Tools window and drag a box around the entire texture - then hit **Ctrl + C** (Cmd + C on Mac) to copy the texture. Navigate back to the flat graphic you created and hit **Ctrl + V** to paste the texture onto your image. You'll notice a new layer has been created, which is the grunge texture. Drag that layer to the bottom, immediately underneath your color layer. At this point, the texture should have disappeared. It's being covered up the colored layer, but that's okay! We're going to blend those two layers together and create a very cool effect.

Select your colored layer, and from the blend drop down menu, select **'Screen.'** The moment you do this you'll notice the color layer and the grunge texture blend together to create a brand new look. What makes this new effect work so well is the melding of the clean, fresh look of a flat graphic with the grunge, dirty look of the texture. They're the antithesis of one another, but when they come together, it's a beautiful thing.

The final graphic with the added bonus look!

Quick Steps

1. Open a dark, grunge texture inside Photoshop
2. Copy the grunge texture onto your flat graphic and move the new layer underneath the color layer
3. Change the blend mode on the color layer from Normal to Screen

Using this bonus step will give you an unlimited amount of combinations for flat graphics. You can choose from any number of colors to begin with, but now you can blend those colors with grunge textures to create a truly unlimited combination of different looks. Keep experimenting and finding different textures that work (one of my favorite grunge textures is crumpled

paper). Just make sure the textures you're using are as dark as the one used above and you'll be safe!

Conclusion & Inspiration

The Flat Graphic Formula is the simplest of the three graphic formulas you will learn. But that doesn't mean it isn't equally as effective in creating powerful graphics. Especially when combined with a grunge texture, flat graphics can really stand out and communicate well. Below are flat graphics I've created for your inspiration. Each of these graphics uses only fonts that are listed in this book. And each graphic was made using the exact process above.
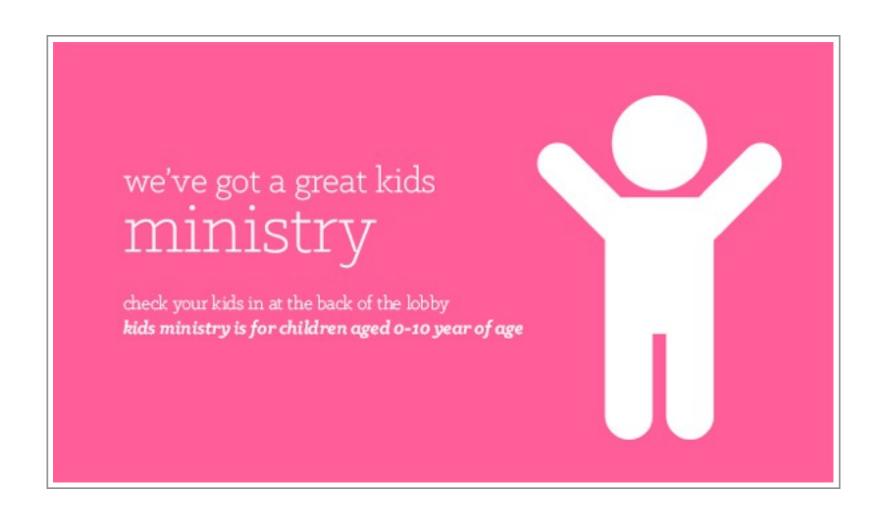
Class 101
MEMBERSHIP
June 8 at 4:30 pm
CHILDCARE IS PROVIDED // SIGN UP ON BACK OF CONNECTION CARD
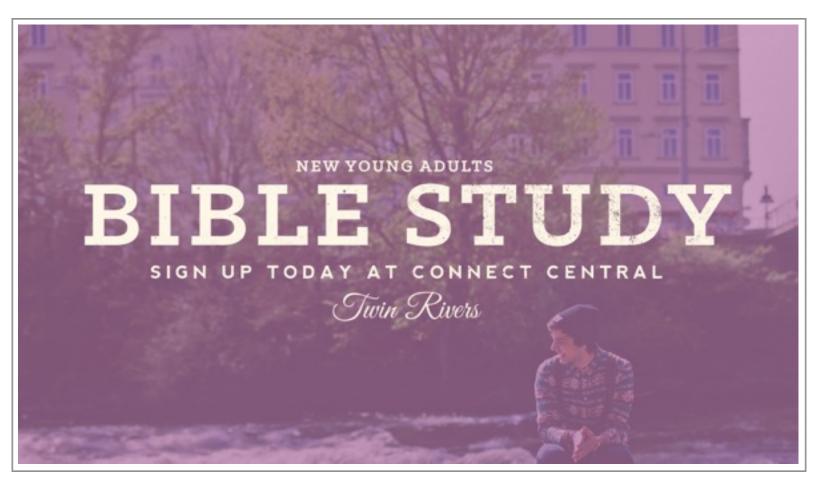

BAPTISM
APRIL 13
Visit go2odm.com/baptism to register

we've got a great kids
ministry

check your kids in at the back of the lobby
kids ministry is for children aged 0-10 year of age

CHURCH FAMILY
A Place to Belong
LIKE, REALLY BELONG
Connecting Point Church

No.

8

THE VINTAGE GRAPHIC FORMULA

In the previous chapter, the **Flat Graphic Formula** took the elementary concepts you've learned throughout the Church Graphics Handbook and put them into practice. And while the Flat Graphic Formula is simple, it's powerful at the same time. But with the **Vintage Graphic Formula**, we're going to take our skills up a notch.

NOTE: If we've already covered a certain Photoshop skill in the previous formula and we need to repeat it in this formula, I won't go into deep detail again, I'll simply write the instructions.

This is what we're going to be making.

We're going to create this from scratch using the Vintage Graphic Formula

Step 1

Create a 1920 x 1080px canvas inside Photoshop.

Step 2

The first layer in the Vintage Graphic Formula is a photograph. If you have The Complete Package, the photograph used in the graphic above is found in the People folder, and is titled Young-Man-Bridge.jpg. If you don't have The Complete Package, you can download the same photo at this link: http://unsplash.com/post/83340645519/download-by-ermin-celikovic. Once you have the photo, open it inside Photoshop. The Open feature is found underneath the File tab in the navigation menu.

Step 2

Now that you have the photograph inside Photoshop, it's time to copy the image using the Rectangular Marquee Tool, and paste it onto our blank Vintage Graphic canvas. Activate the Rectangular Marquee Tool and drag the tool around the edges of the photograph. Once complete, copy the photo using the shortcut **Ctrl + C**. Switch windows to the blank Vintage Graphic canvas, and press **Ctrl + V** to paste the photo onto the blank canvas.

Because the photo and the Vintage Graphic canvas are different sizes, you may need to resize the photo to fit properly within the Vintage Graphic canvas. Activate the Transform function within Photoshop by pressing **Ctrl + T**. This process is described in detail in the Demystifying Photoshop chapter if you need a refresher.
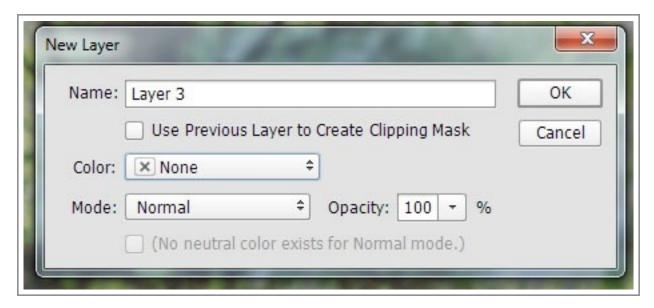
Quick Steps

1. Open a photo inside Photoshop
2. Copy and paste the photo onto your blank canvas
3. Scale and move image until it fits nicely on the canvas

Step 3

The third step in the Vintage Graphic Formula is adding a colored overlay to our photo. Generally, I avoid placing text directly on a photograph. For

this to work, you need a dark photograph so that the text is clearly visible. These types of photos aren't easy to find, and this automatically eliminates the majority of available photos. **The solution to this problem is using a colored overlay.** When a colored overlay is added to a photo, it's easy to add text on top. With this formula, we can use any photo, and any color we choose, and still have eye-popping, readable text every time.

Adding a colored overlay is very simple. The first step is to create a new layer. Under the Layer tab in the navigation menu, select New, and Layer. Make sure the settings look like the screenshot below, and press OK.
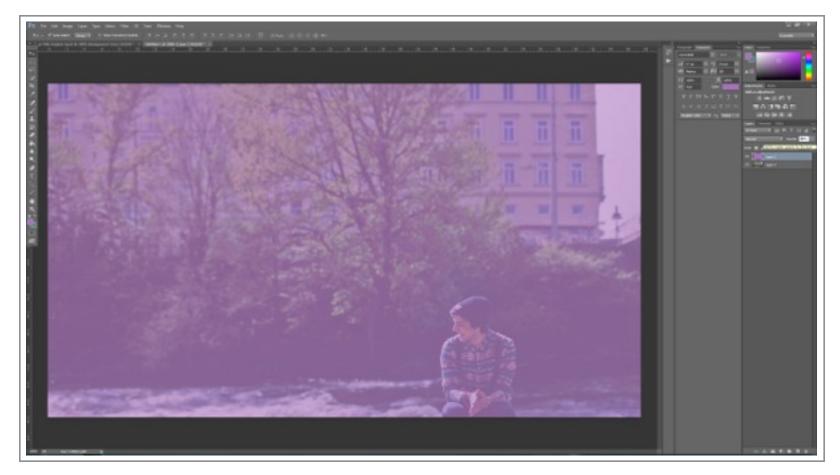

Use these settings for your new Layers

Now it's time to add a color fill to this layer. Using the Paint Bucket Tool, color this layer purple. The hex code is: #9b59b6. Once you've colored your layer, you'll see an opaque purple canvas. But, of course, we don't want an opaque purple canvas. We need to blend the two existing layers

together. The way to do this is to adjust the purple layer's opacity. Inside the Opacity box, type in 60%.

You should now have a beautiful background that is ready to receive text.

Step 3

Quick Steps

1. Add a new layer to the graphic
2. Fill in the new layer with a color using the Color Picker Tool and the Paint Bucket Tool
3. Adjust the Opacity of the colored layer to 60% so it blends well with the photo layer underneath

Step 4

Now it's time to add text to our graphic. The Vintage Graphic Formula is considerably more difficult than the Flat Graphic Formula. If this is your first time creating a graphic using this formula, I suggest emulating my example exactly. These are the fonts I used for each line:

Line 1: Klinic Slab Bold (New Young Adults)
Line 2: Klinic Slab Bold (Bible Study)
Line 3: Nevis Bold (Sign Up Today at Connect Central)
Line 4: Great Vibes Regular (Twin Rivers)

Of course, there are many other fonts that look great with Vintage Graphics. These are some of my other favorites:

- Nevis Bold
- Yellowtail Regular
- Baron Neue Black
- Duke Fill
- Wisdom Script
- Bebas
- Jura Bold
- Jura Italic
- Mision Script
- Optimus Princeps Semi Bold
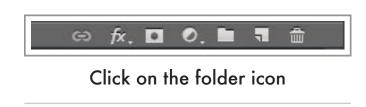
- That's Font Folks!
- Dker Poster

After you've added the text, your graphic should look like this:

Step 4

Truthfully, this is a good-looking graphic. And you may not feel compelled to add anything to it. But I want to take this graphic to the next level. I want to take it from good to great.

Step 5

At the bottom of the layers window is a menu bar. On that menu bar is a folder icon. Click that folder icon and you'll create a new folder inside your window of layers.

Click on the folder icon

Create a new folder and title it **Text**. Next, drag each of your existing text layers into the newly created Text folder. It's important to only drag in the text layers - leave the other layers where they are. **We're going to apply a vintage effect to the text only.**

Grunge-Texture-1.jpg

Inside every Church Graphics Handbook package is a folder called Resources. Inside that folder is another folder called **Vintage Graphic Textures**. And inside that folder is a JPEG image titled **Grunge-Texture–1.jpg**. Open that image inside Photoshop.

Using the Rectangular Marquee Tool, copy the entire grunge texture using the **Ctrl + C** keyboard shortcut. We won't be pasting this texture anywhere just yet though, so hang tight.

Once you've copied the grunge texture, navigate back to your Vintage Graphic canvas. Select the Text folder you created, and at the bottom of the layers window, on the same navigation menu you used to create the Text folder, click on the **Add Layer Mask** button.

Add Layer Mask
button

Once you've clicked that button, you'll notice a white square has been added next to the title of your Text folder.
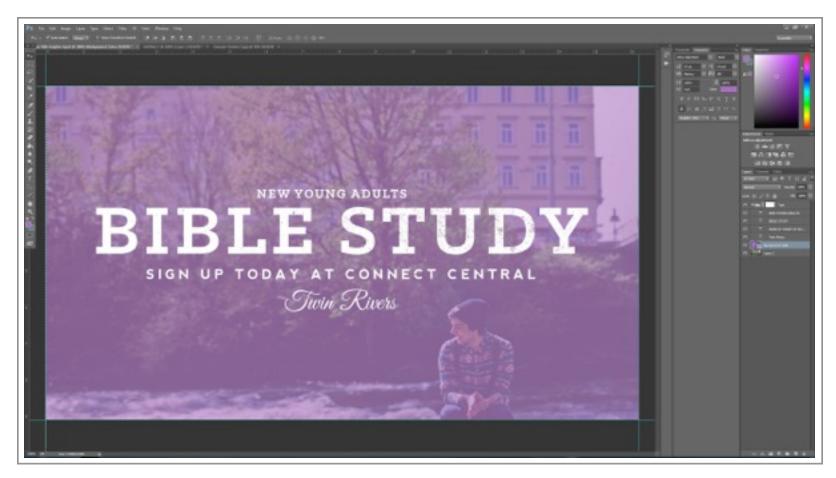

White square next to Text folder

While holding the Alt key (Option key on Mac), use your cursor to **click on the center of that white square**. A new white canvas will open. Now it's time to use the previously copied texture and paste it onto this canvas - press **Ctrl + V**. Once you've pasted the texture, click on any other layer other than the Text folder to switch back to your Vintage Graphic.

If completed correctly, you'll see a subtle change to your graphic's text. Instead of plain white text, your text will now have a subtle grunge texture applied to it. This texture has only been applied to the Text folder - nothing else.

Here's what our graphic should look like so far.

Step 5

Quick Steps

1. Create a new layer folder called Text and drag all text layers into it
2. Open Grunge-Texture–1 inside Photoshop and copy the entire image

3. Add a mask to the newly created Text folder
4. While holding the Alt (Option) key, click on the folder mask and paste the copied texture onto the white canvas

Step 6

Our Vintage Graphic is finally beginning to look a little bit vintage, but there's one final step to complete before it's done.

Add a new layer to the graphic. Underneath the Layer tab on the navigation menu, click New, and Layer. Then, using the Color Picker Tool, enter the hex code *#fcb017*. Use the Paint Bucket Tool to color this layer the aforementioned color - a mustardy yellow. Finally, set the new layer's opacity to 10% by typing the percentage into the Opacity window, ensuring the yellow colored layer is selected while you do so.

This mustardy yellow layer you just created works on any color. It warms up the entire image, and it gives the graphic a worn-out, vintage feel to it. And that's it! **You're done.** This is what your final graphic should look like.

Step 6 - Voila!

Quick Steps

1. Create a new layer
2. Using the Color Picker Tool and the Paint Bucket Tool, color the layer a mustardy yellow with the hex code #fcb017
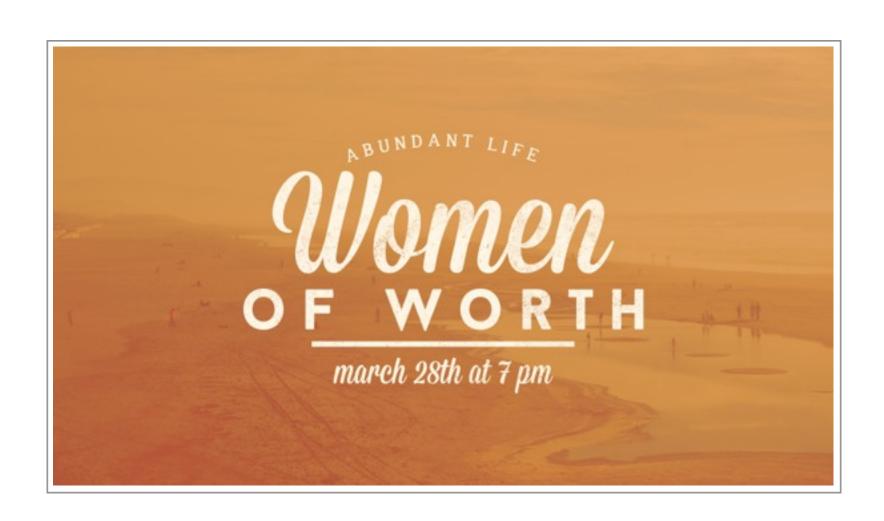3. Set the yellow layer's opacity to 10%

Conclusion & Inspiration

The beauty of the Vintage Graphic Formula is its flexibility. You can use any photo, any color, and any high quality font - your options are truly

unlimited. The key is to always add the grunge texture mask onto the text, and the final mustard yellow overlay. These two steps make subtle changes, but they transform the entire feel of the graphic. They also ensure that regardless of the font, photo, or colors you use, your Vintage Graphics will always have the same personality - and that's how you build a church brand.

Below are other vintage graphics I've created for your inspiration. You'll notice that some of these graphics have icons on them. These aren't vectors or stock icons, they're simply the Font Awesome typeface in action. Use that font to your advantage when you need an icon - it truly is awesome. To create each of these graphics, I followed the exact formula detailed in this chapter, and I only used fonts from chapter 4.

join our video
MINISTRY

we're in need of camera operators
talk to pastor josh to get involved

ABUNDANT LIFE
Women
OF WORTH
march 28th at 7 pm

ALLIANCE COMMUNITY FELLOWSHIP
START SERVING
VISIT THE CONNECT TABLE
visitacf.com

No.

9

Chapter 9

THE RETRO GRAPHIC FORMULA

Here we are. We've reached the final graphic formula. The **Retro Graphic Formula** creates graphics that look worn out and old school. Unlike the Vintage Graphic, the Retro Graphic doesn't use a lot of color. It embodies the feel of an older, black-and-white era. Each graphic starts with a photograph and text, but the image is then processed to make it look ultra-retro. If I had to pick my favorite of the three graphic formulas, this just might be it.

This is what we're going to be creating.

We're going to create this from scratch using the Retro Graphic Formula

Step 1

Create a canvas inside Photoshop of 1920 x 1080px.

Step 2

The first layer in the Retro Graphic Formula is a photograph. The photo I used in this graphic - *if you have The Complete Package* - is found in the Food & Drink folder and is called Wine-Glasses. If you don't have The Complete Package, you can still download the image for free from this link: http://picjumbo.com/two-drinks-in-caffe/

Open this photo inside Photoshop and using the Rectangular Marquee Tool, copy and paste the image onto your blank canvas.
Scale as necessary. This is what your graphic should look like thus far.

Step 2

Quick Steps

1. Open a photo inside Photoshop
2. Copy and paste the photo onto your blank canvas
3. Scale and move image until it fits nicely on the canvas

Step 3

Similar to the Vintage Graphic Formula, it's time to blend another layer with the photo to make it more receptive to text. Instead of adding a colored overlay though, with the Retro Graphic Formula we're going to use a retro texture to make this photo look worn out and old school.

In the Resources folder of the Church Graphics Handbook package you downloaded a folder called **Retro Graphics Textures**. In that folder is an image called **Retro-Texture–1.png**. Open that image inside Photoshop and copy and paste it onto your Retro Graphic canvas.

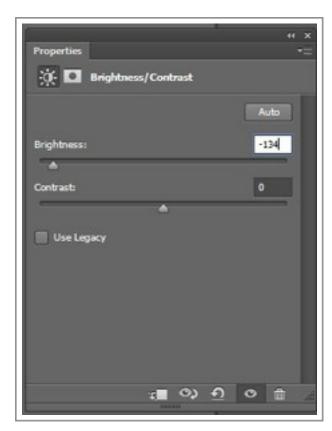Adjust the opacity of the texture layer to 37%.

Step 3

Quick Steps

1. Open Retro-Texture–1.png inside Photoshop
2. Copy and paste the texture onto the graphic
3. Adjust the opacity of the texture to 37%

Step 4

At this point, your graphic may look a bit retro, but it's also very bright - **much too bright to add white text to and still be readable**. We need to darken this image. In the Adjustments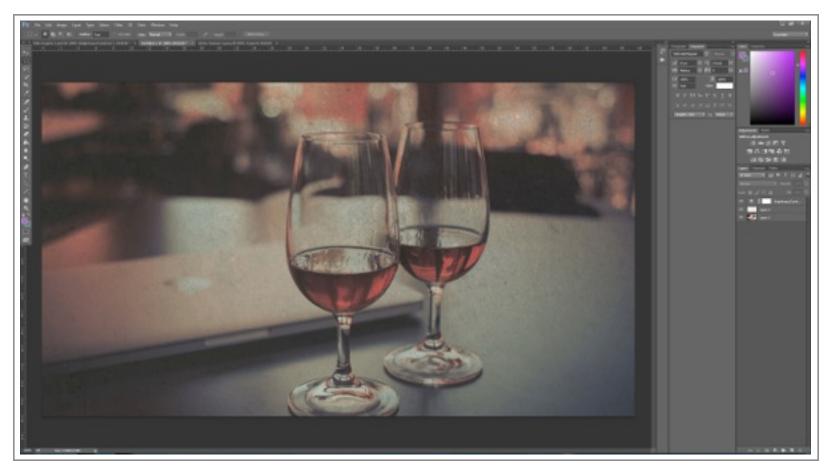 window, click on the icon that looks like a sun *(this represents Brightness/ Contrast)*. If the Adjustments window isn't visible on your screen, turn it on by clicking on Adjustments underneath the Window tab on the navigation menu.

After you've clicked the sun icon that represents Brightness/Contrast, a new window will pop up with two sliders: one represents brightness, the other represents contrast. Use the Brightness slider to lower the brightness of the entire image. **Scale down or type into the box –134.**

Adjust brightness to -134

Your retro photograph has now been properly processed. It has a worn-out look to it, and it's ready to receive text.

Step 4

___

Quick Steps

1. Lower the overall brightness of the image by using the Brightness slider found in the Adjustments window
2. Each photo will require a different level of brightness. Use your eye to gauge how dark it needs to be

Step 5

Now it's time to add text to our graphic. These are the fonts I used for each line in the graphic we're creating:

Line 1: Yellowtail Regular (Breakthrough)

Line 2: Sullivan Fill (Communion)

Line 3: Yellowtail Regular (Service)

Line 4: Nevis Bold (Coming Up in Four Weeks)

Remember, you don't have to leave text as is when you add it to your graphic. Adjust the kerning, leading, size, etc. This is where you can be unique and add your own flare and creativity *(just remember, don't be a hero).*

This is what your graphic should look like so far.

Step 5

Here are some other brilliant fonts that will work well with Retro Graphics:

- Alex Brush Regular
- Homestead Inline/Regular
- Mission Script Regular
- Damion Regular
- Pacifico Regular

Step 6

Our graphic is almost finished. **But one element is still missing.** Do you know what it is? What really stands out to me right now is that, while the photo has been processed nicely to look retro, the text is still crisp and white. The photo and text don't match at all. We need to add a retro flare to the text as well. And to do that, we're going to add a texture, just like we did in the Vintage Graphic Formula.

Begin by creating a folder in your Layers window and naming it **Text**. Next, group the text layers together by dragging them into the newly created Text folder.

Inside every Church Graphics Handbook package is a folder called Resources. Inside that folder is another folder called **Retro Graphics Textures**. And inside that folder is a PNG image titled

Retro-Texture–2.png.

Open that image inside Photoshop.

Using the rectangular marquee tool, select and copy the retro texture, but don't paste it anywhere yet. We're going to save it for later.
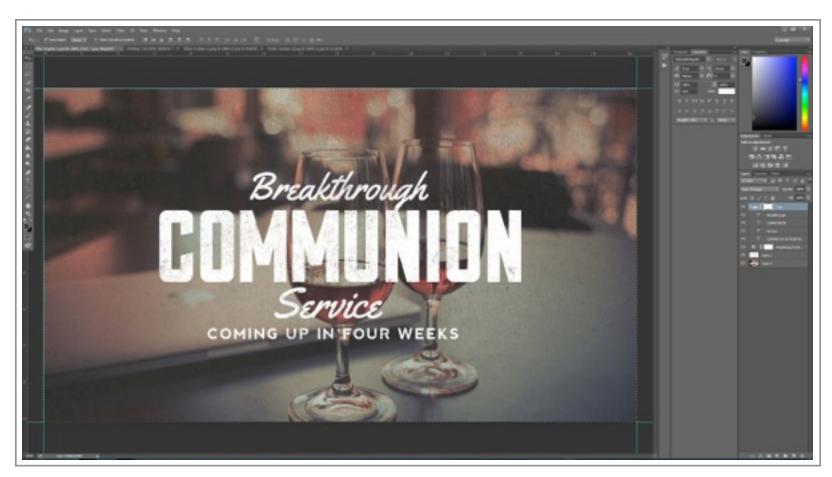

Retro-Texture-2.png

Back inside the Retro Graphic canvas, select the Text folder with your cursor, and add a layer mask to it *(described in detail in the last chapter)*. While holding the Alt key, select the newly created white mask/box on the Text folder. You should now see a brand new white canvas - paste the

previously copied texture onto this canvas. Once completed, click any other layer to return to the graphic.

If completed correctly, your text should now have a retro look to it, similar to the rest of the graphic. **Your graphic is now complete.**

Step 6 - Voila!

Quick Steps

1. Create a new layer folder called Text and drag all text layers into it
2. Open Retro-Texture–2 inside Photoshop and copy the entire image
3. Add a mask to the newly created Text folder
4. While holding the Alt (Option) key, click on the folder mask and paste the copied texture onto the white canvas

Conclusion & Inspiration

Much like the Vintage Graphic Formula, the Retro Graphic Formula is extremely flexible and customizable. Each new graphic requires a new photo, and each new photo will give your graphic a totally unique feel. The one area of concern with the Retro Graphic Formula is **the overall brightness of the photo.** Even after adding the retro texture and adjusting the brightness, if you're using a particularly bright photo, it may still be too bright to add white text to. Use your own judgment and adjust the brightness of the photo accordingly. Also, if you have an image with a bright spot in the center, don't feel as though you have to position your photo precisely in the center of the Photoshop canvas. Move the photo around, scale it, and make it work for you. I've found that one of the best ways to use photos in the **Retro Graphic Formula** is to scale them up a great amount.

Below are some additional Retro Graphics I created for your inspiration. Just like the Flat Graphics and the Vintage Graphics, you'll notice various icons in these images. These were created using the Font Awesome font. Use that font to your advantage when you need an icon - **it truly is awesome**. I created each of these graphics by following the exact formula in this chapter, and I used only fonts from chapter 4.

COME WITH US ON A
MISSION TRIP
this year we're going to mexico
find more info at connect central

SIGN UP TODAY
Serve
using your gifts

No.

10

Chapter 10

WHERE TO GO FROM HERE?

Congratulations! You made it through the Church Graphics Handbook. Here's a quick summary of what you have learned:

1. The Non-Designer's Oath *(a framework for all your design efforts)*
2. The basics of graphic design
3. Where to find great fonts, photos, icons, etc.
4. How to use Photoshop
5. How to create beautiful graphics from scratch using three step-by-step formulas *(Flat/Vintage/Retro)*

The reason I called this a handbook is because you may need to refer back to it occasionally. For that reason, I've tried to make it as easy as possible for you to navigate when you need to find something quickly. For instance, if you need to revisit one of the steps in the graphics formulas, the Quick Steps section provides a breakdown of each step without having to read through all the text. **Hopefully, you'll find this a handy resource when necessary.**

Creating beautiful graphics for your church doesn't have to be difficult - and you don't have to be a designer to do it well. The next step is for you to begin creating beautiful graphics consistently. The formulas in the Church Graphics Handbook are what I used to create the 400+ pre-made templates that come with the The Complete Package. You can use and

re-use these formulas over and over again to create church graphics that look completely unique, but build your church's brand because they have a unified theme.

You're fully equipped to create as many beautiful graphics as your church needs. Whether they're for events, sermon series, ministries, or something else - you're ready to go.

Now it's time to get to work :)

- Brady Shearer // founder of prochurchtools.com *& author of* Church Graphics Handbook