Connected Churches
Tools to help churches stay connected.

Connected Churches Toolkit
Connecting The Church To Serve Communities

Churches across the country are using technology to better connect with their members, organize programs and services, and serve the community around them. Use this free Connected Churches Toolkit from Values Partnerships and Google to leverage technology and expand your impact.

In this toolkit you'll learn how to use:

Gmail
for mail and other functions

Google Hangouts
for live video conferences

YouTube
to watch and post videos

The Bible App
to search for bible verses on your phone or computer

Google Forms
to create free, easy-to-use surveys for your congregation

Google Sheets
to keep track of spreadsheets and lists

Google Docs
to create your own documents and store them in the cloud

Uber or Lyft
for transportation in a pinch

Google Slides
to create and store your own presentations for free

Genius
to annotate your sermons online

Mailchimp
to manage your church email lists

And Connected Churches Office Hours!

Table of Contents

What is it?

Gmail is a free, easy-to-use email account that you can access from any computer or device with a web browser. When you have Gmail, you can more easily use other free Google tools. Your Gmail username and password will give you access to other Google programs.

Why use it?

Email is now a go-to form of communication for many – although not all – church members. Gmail also stores your email messages for free, allows you to quickly organize them. And it helps you communicate with a large group of members or other partners at the same time.

How to use it?

Step #1: Visit gmail.google.com
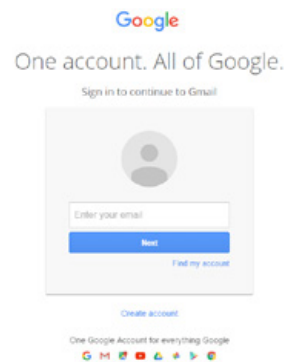
You can also download the Gmail App in the Google Play Store or iPhone App Store

Step #2: Create a new account

To create a new account, click "create account"
(add pointer to "create account")

Enter your name and other requested information into the form

The "mobile phone" and "your current email address" fields are not required.

Sharing this information may be helpful with account recovery, but you don't need to enter this information to proceed.

Your current email address

We will use this address for things like keeping your account secure, helping people find you, and sending notifications. You always have control over this functionality through your Account Settings.

Location
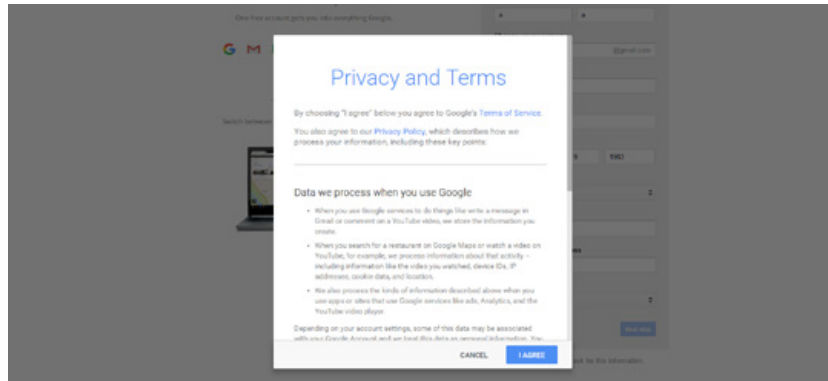
United States

Mobile phone

Your phone number helps us with things like keeping your account secure. For example, we can send you a text message to help you access your account if you ever forget your password.
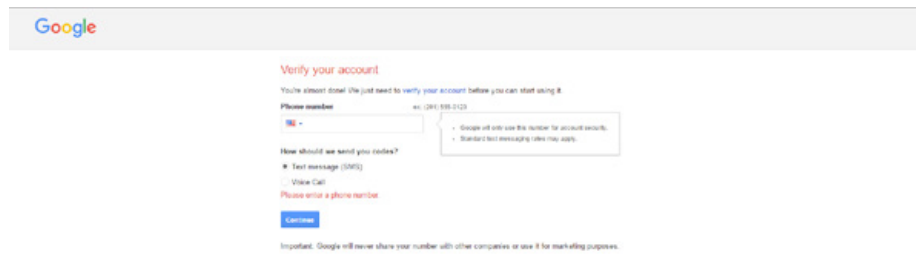
Your current email address

Read the "Privacy Terms" and click "I Agree"
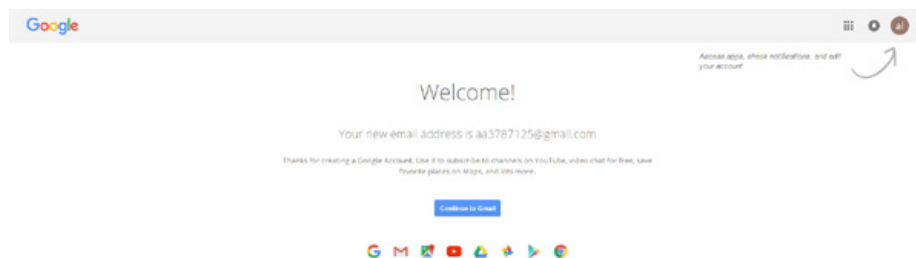

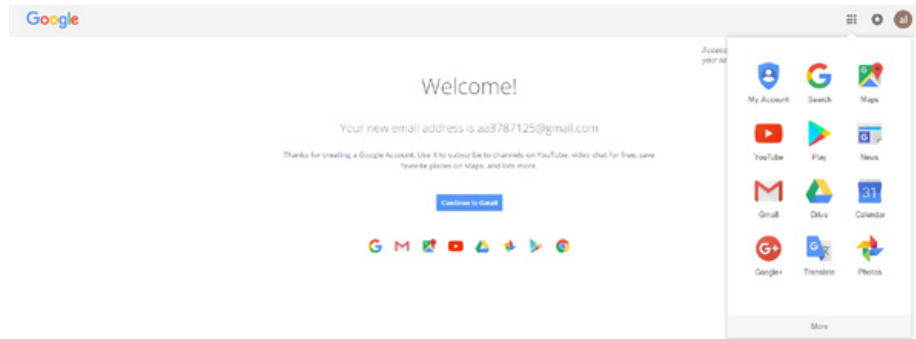Verify your new account

Verify your new account

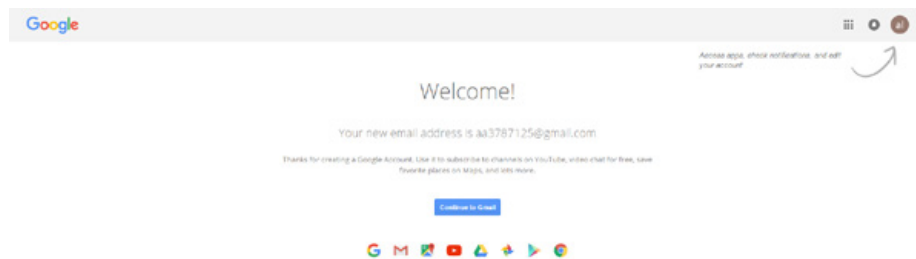Click, "Continue to Gmail" to access your new Gmail account!

Click the (nine squares) in the top right corner of the screen to access other Google products and services

Click the circle in the top right corner of the screen to access your account information and/or to sign out of your account
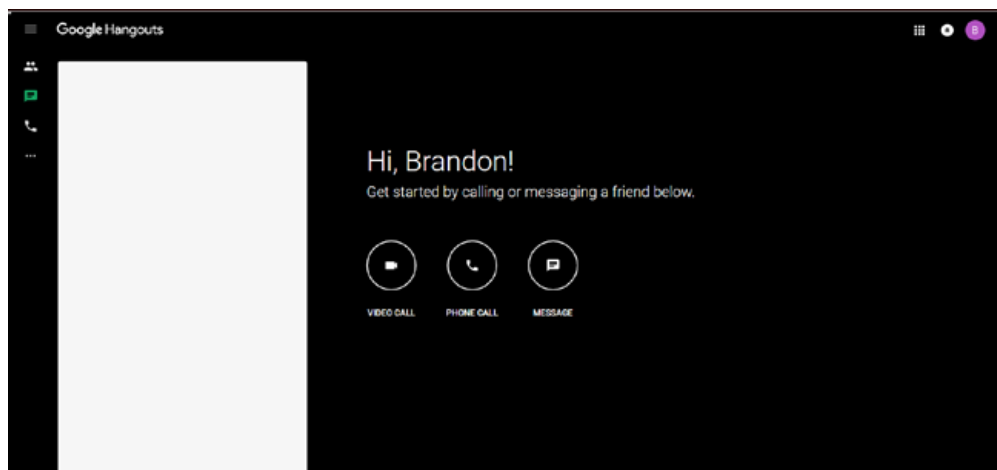
Google Hangouts

What is it?

Free, easy video meetings to use when in-person meetings are not possible.

Why use it?

Have you ever had to make a quick decision – like whether to cancel church in the event of severe weather, or a final decision about an event program – and you wish you could see people face-to-face to make that decision rather than a phone call?

Have you been out of town and not able to make it back in for an important training or class, like the "Board of Examiners" clergy training in the AME Church?

Google Hangouts may be able to help. Hangouts is a free tool for video meetings. It lets you see each other in meetings rather than hop on a conference call. Google Hangouts is not meant to replace in-person conversations; rather, it's a great way to meet when in-person conversations are not possible, because of distance, severe weather and more.

How to use it?

Before you can start having video calls, make sure that your computer is ready to make video calls.

Next sign in to your Google account. Select Hangouts in Gmail or Chrome, or download the Hangouts app to your desktop or mobile device.

To set up Hangouts:

1. Open Gmail

2. In the bottom-left corner of your inbox, click Hangouts to open Hangouts.

Note: If you don't see Hangouts , you may need to turn on Hangouts first.

To set up Hangouts:

If you see the name of someone you're trying to reach:

1. Hover over the name.

2. Click Chat to send a chat message, or click Video call to start a video call.

If the person you're trying to reach isn't on the list, or if you want to contact several people at once:

1. Click Search and type people's names.

2. Check the box next to each person you'd like to reach.

3. When you finish adding everyone, click **Message** or **Video call**.

What is it?

YouTube is a website that allows you to find and watch videos and post your own videos, too.

Why use it?

YouTube is a free tool that lets you quickly pull up a song that you want to use for service; look at old sermons; watch instructional videos; or simply have fun.

Rather than buying a song, just search for it on YouTube. Sermons, inspirational interviews/podcasts, and how-to videos are just some of the types of info that can be found on YouTube. Once you start using YouTube, you'll find more and more uses for it, such as screening a documentary or watching a live service on the other side of the country. You are also able to upload videos if you want to share your worship experience with the world.

How to use it?

Step #1: Visit www.youtube.com or download the app on your phone or tablet.

You can also download the Youtube App in the Google Play Store or iPhone App Store

Sign in using your Google/Gmail account.

(If you do not have a Google/Gmail account, follow the "Gmail Account Setup Instructions" to create an account.)
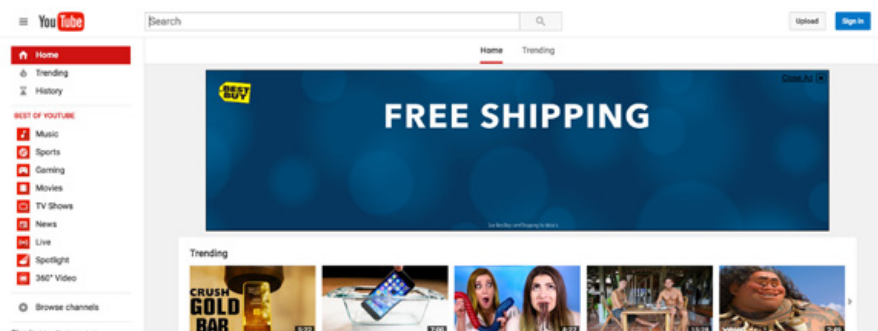
If you're new to YouTube or haven't signed in, the homepage will display the most popular videos and highlights from categories like Music, Sports, and Gaming.
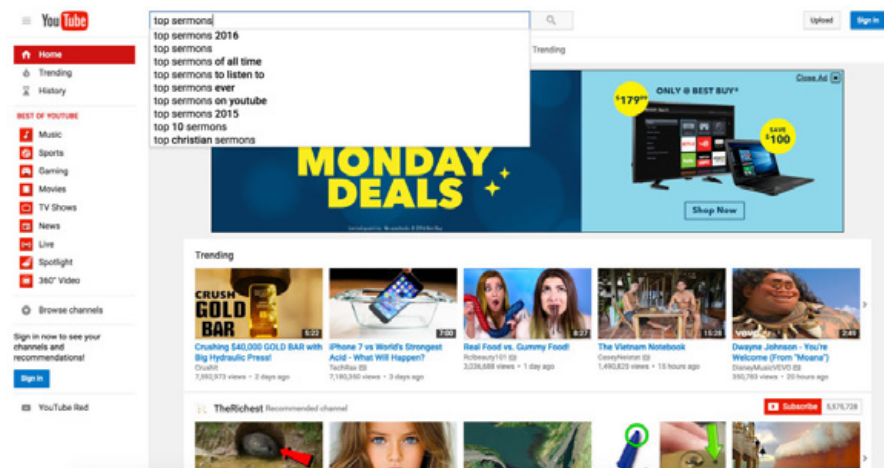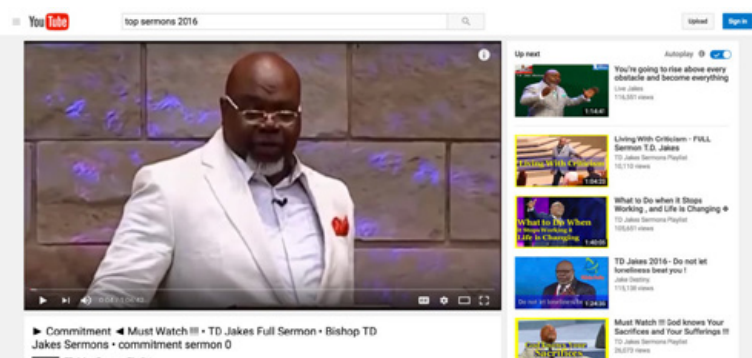

(search)

Once you've signed in, the navigation bar at the top of every YouTube page allows you to easily find the stuff you care about. To sign out or change account settings, select your channel icon in the top corner of YouTube.
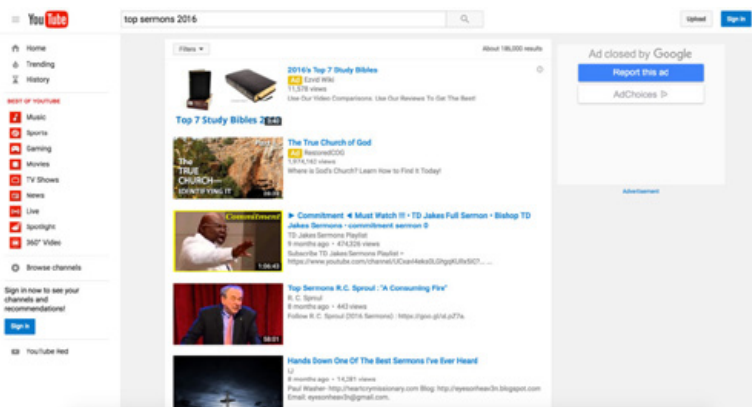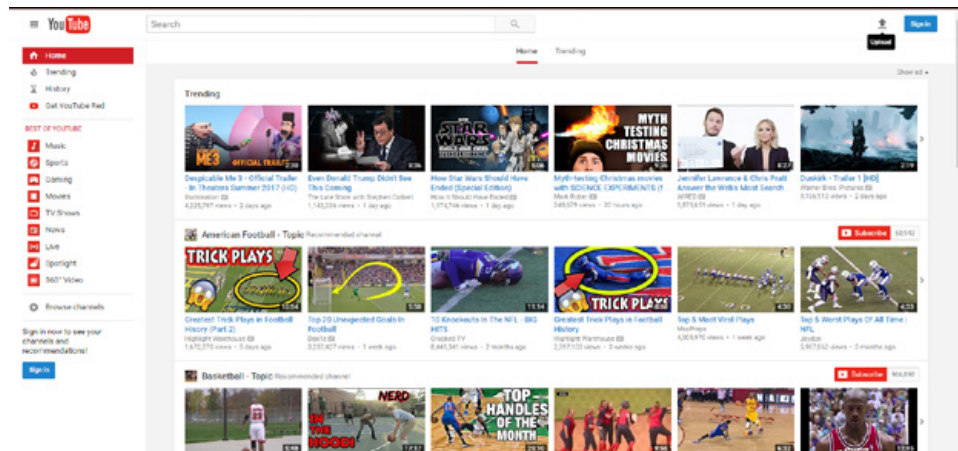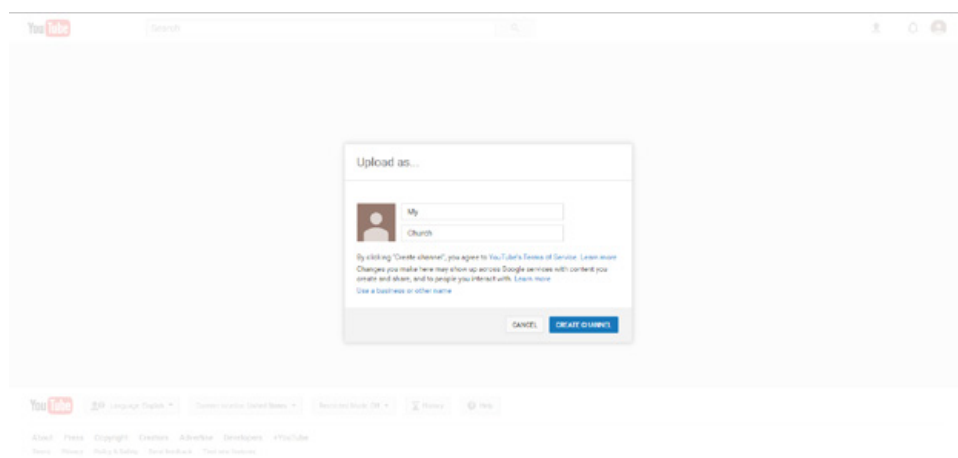

(select)

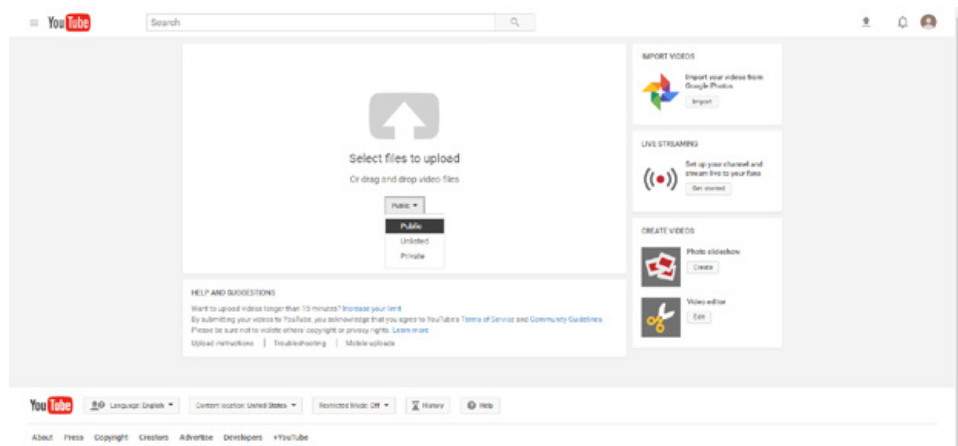When you find a video you like, select it by clicking on the image.

Upload a Video

To upload a video, click "Upload" in the top right corner of the Youtube Homepage

Create a new Youtube Channel. The channel is be a place to store, edit, and view your uploaded videos on Youtube.
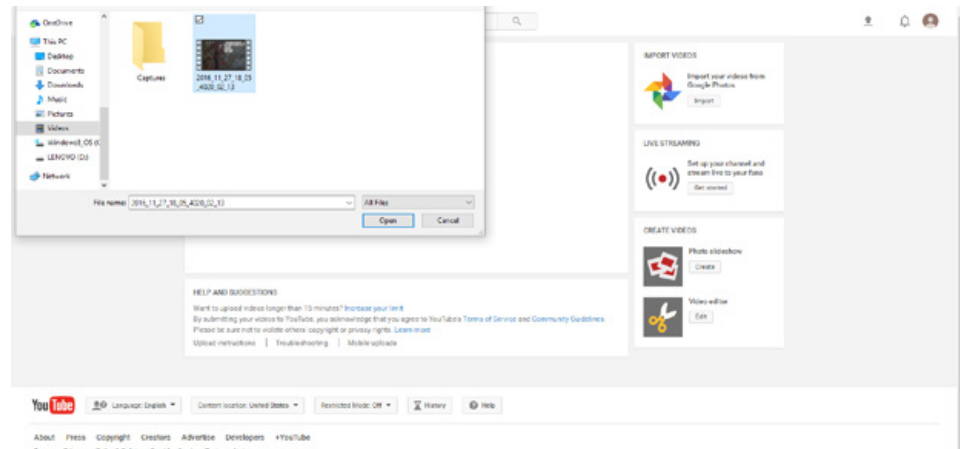
There are several viewing options for your video:

Public – Anyone can search for and view your video
Unlisted – Video is not searchable, but anyone with a link can view the video
Private – Only you and those you specifically allow can view the video

After selecting the appropriate viewing option, click "select files to upload" to select a video file on your computer or device to upload. You may also drag a video file to the indicated area and drop it to begin the file upload.
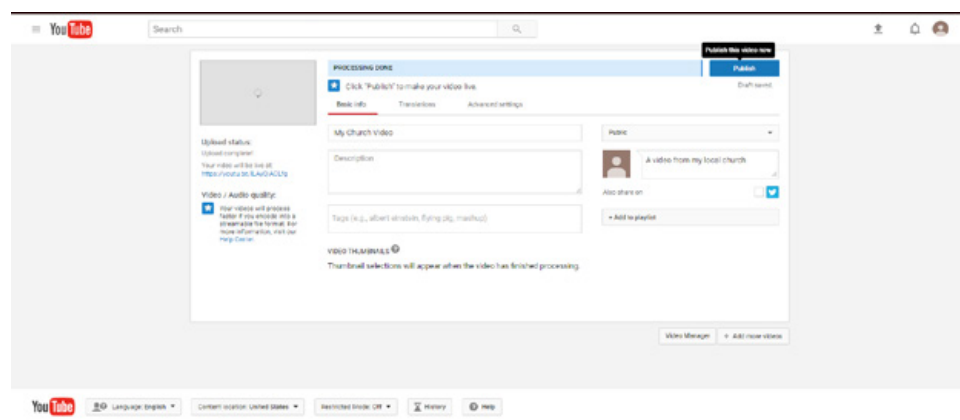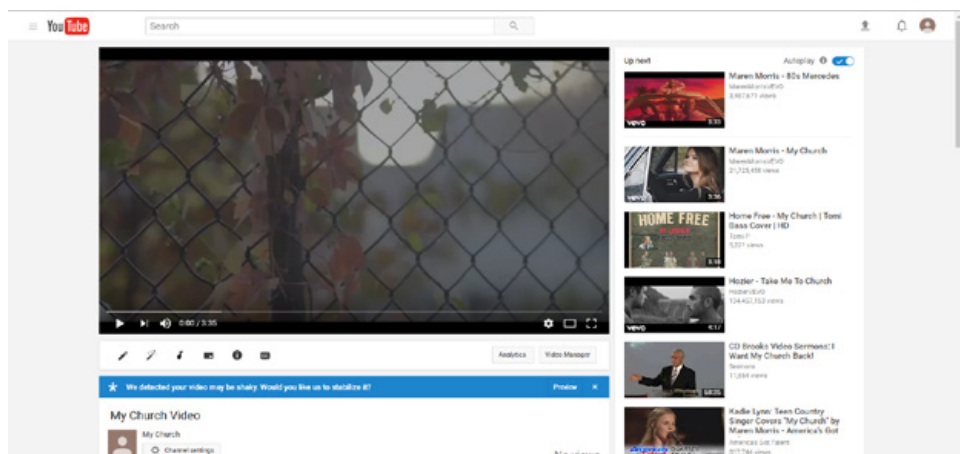

The progress bar will let you know when the upload is completed. When the bar says " Processing Done" click "Publish" to complete the process of uploading your video to Youtube.
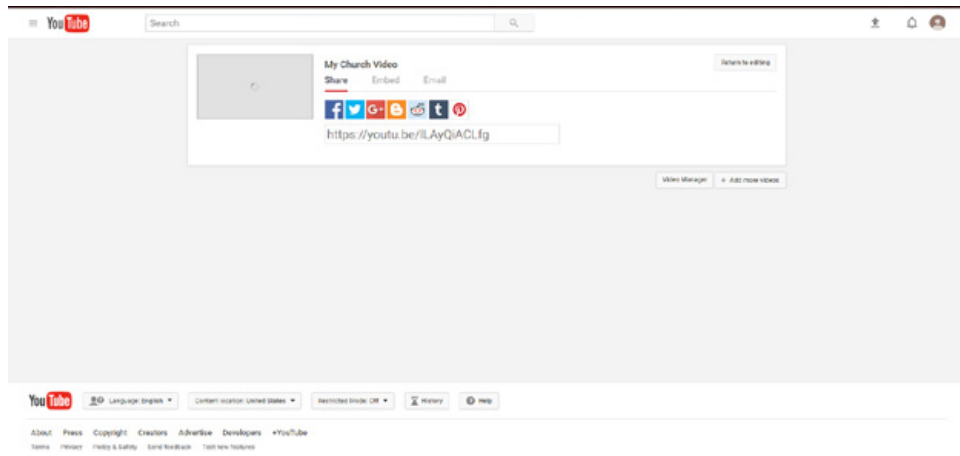
After the upload is complete, you may share your video on social media.
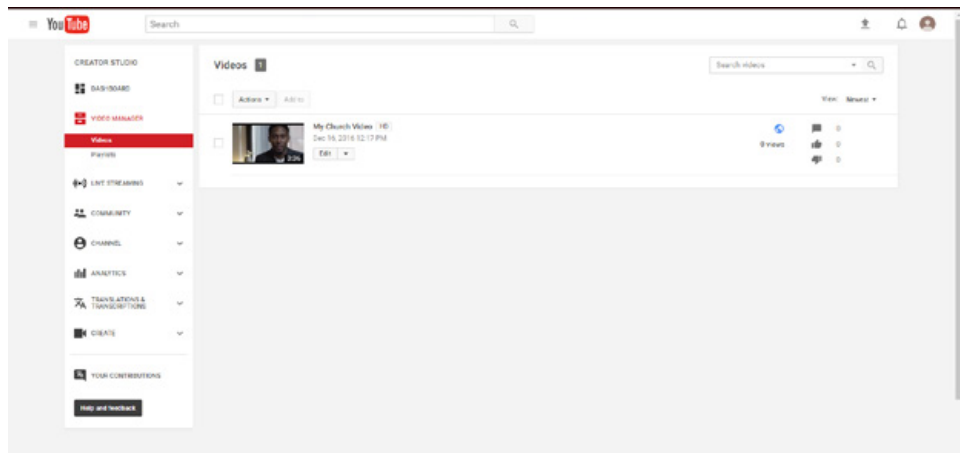
Your videos will be displayed on your channel page

What is it?

A free Bible on your mobile phone, tablet, and computer that allows you to read many versions of the text, highlight text, take notes, and access the Bible on the go.

Why use it?

The You.Version Bible App allows you to access over 1000 versions/ translations of the Bible without carrying around a full library. You can also listen to selected versions of the Bible and access reference texts to enhance your study.

If you have ever wanted to access different versions of the Bible and reference materials on the go, You.Version will allow you to do just that.

How to use it?

Step #1 Download the You.Version Bible App

On your computer, Visit youversion.com and click "Download the Bible App"
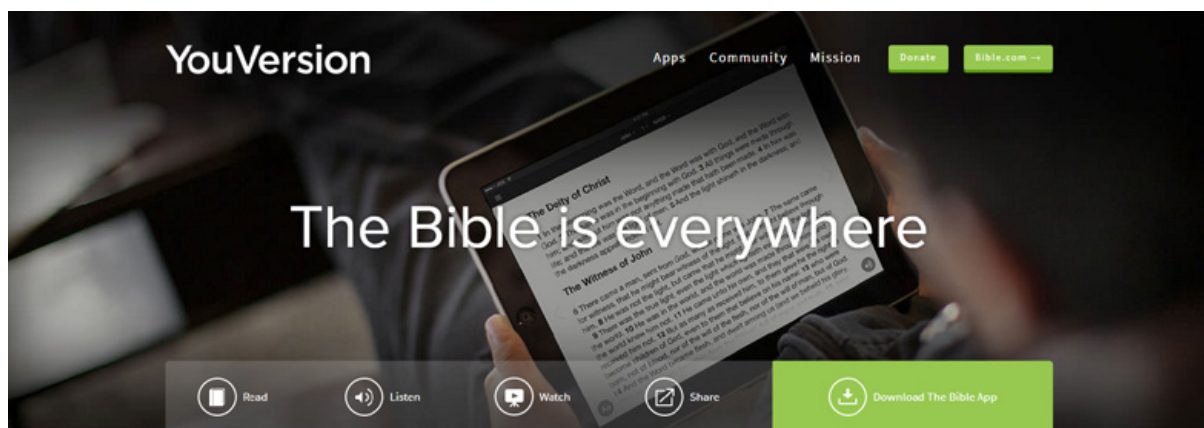
A free Bible on your phone, tablet, and computer. YouVersion is a simple, ad-free Bible that brings God's Word into your daily life.
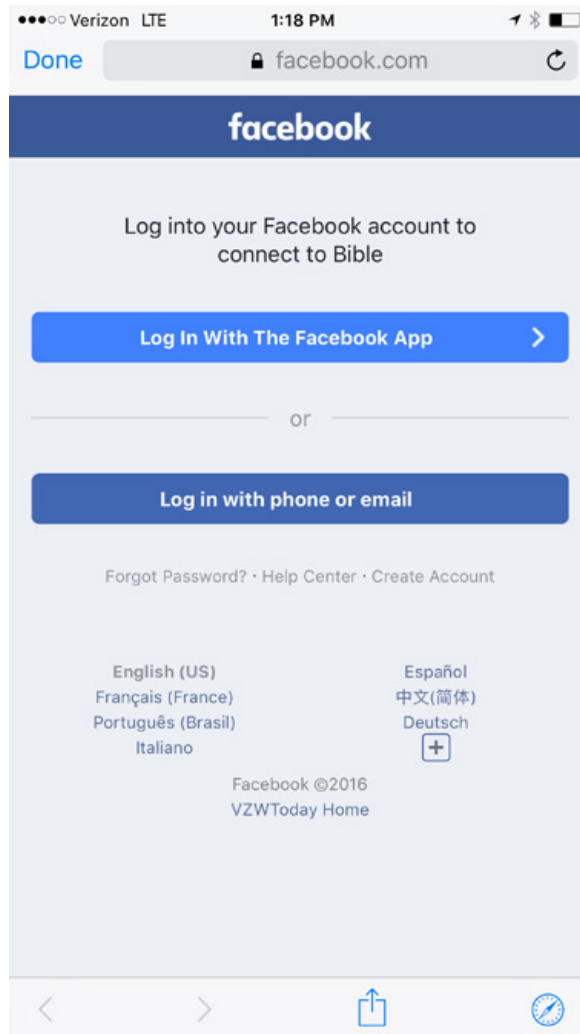
On your tablet or smartphone, visit the Google Play Store or iPhone App Store

Search for "Bible App." One of the most popular apps is simply called "Bible" or "YouVersion" and the producer is Life.Church
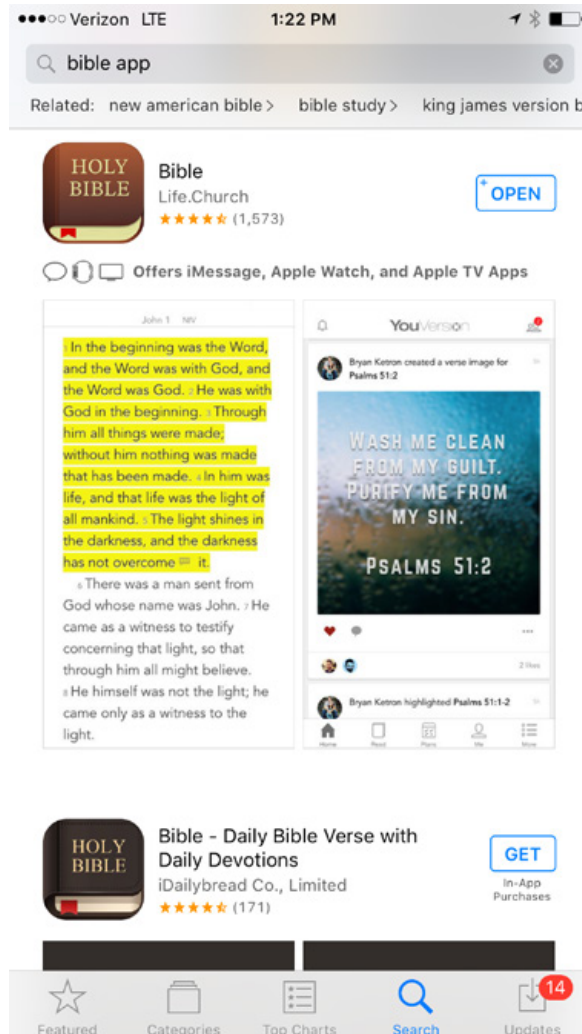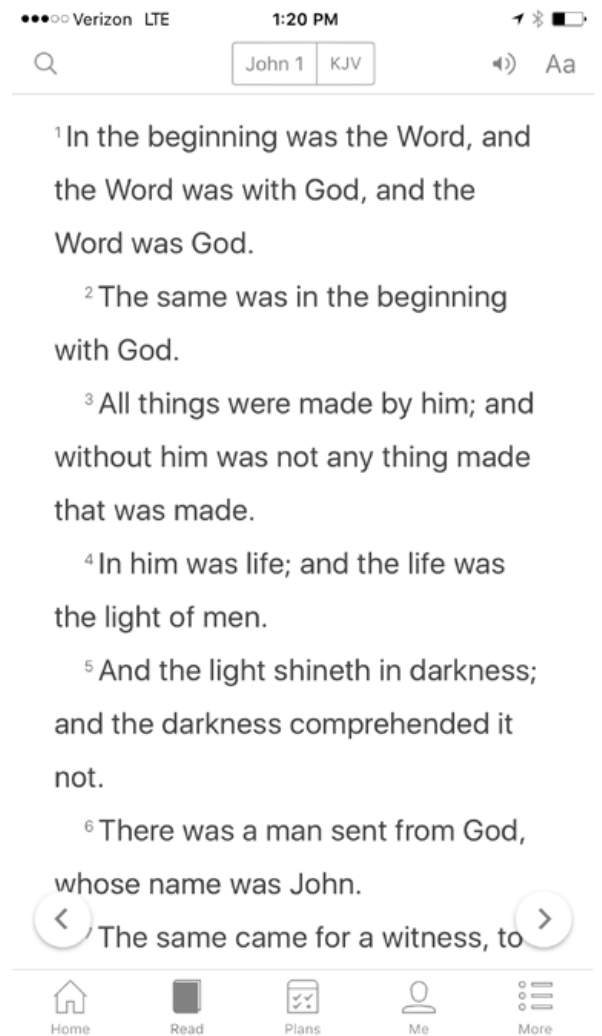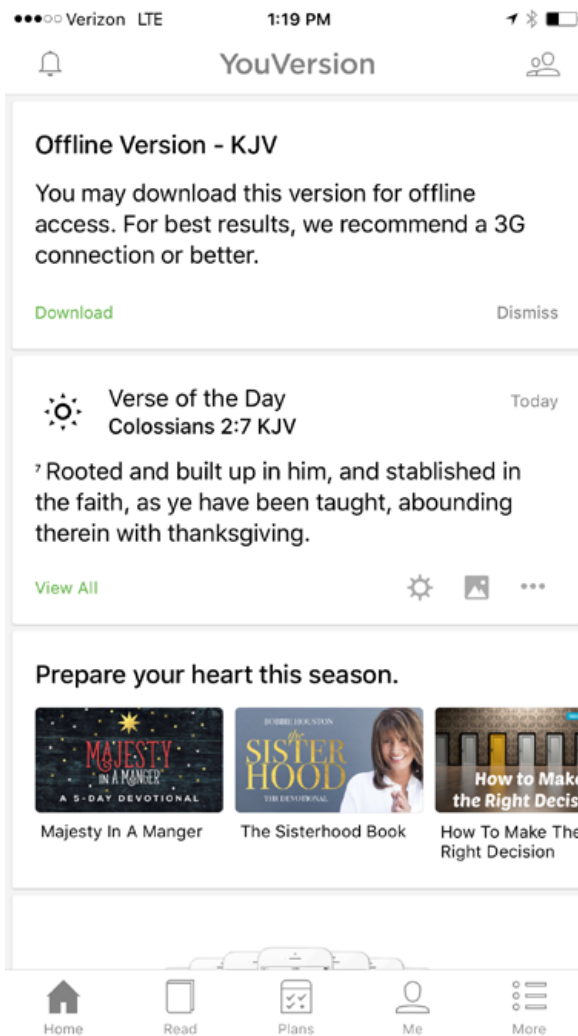

Click to download the application

Step #2 Create an account via email or a social media platform like Facebook.

Step #3 After creating an account, click "Read" at the bottom of the screen to search for and your selected version of the Bible.

Click the magnifying glass to search for references or keywords, or touch the name of the bible book or version to change these options.

What is it?

Google Forms is a tool that lets you create free and easy surveys, event registrations and more, whether it's 3 people or 3,000.

Why use it?

Have you ever wanted to get quick feedback from a group? This could be updating your church roles with names, addresses, emails and phone numbers; or determining the best topic or color for Mother's Day!
Google Forms can help you easily create an online survey that you can work on from different locations. You can also share the survey with others through their Google accounts so they can work on the same survey at the same time. Your changes are saved as you go so there's no fear of the document being lost.
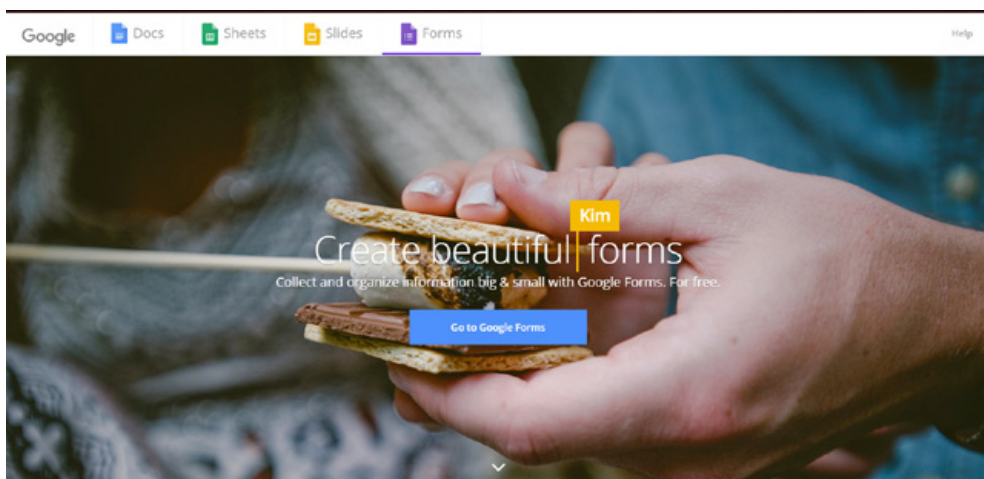
How to use it?

Visit forms.google.com

You can also download the Youtube App in the Google Play Store or iPhone App Store

Sign in using your Google/Gmail account.

(If you do not have a Google/Gmail account, follow the "Gmail Account Setup Instructions" to create an account.)
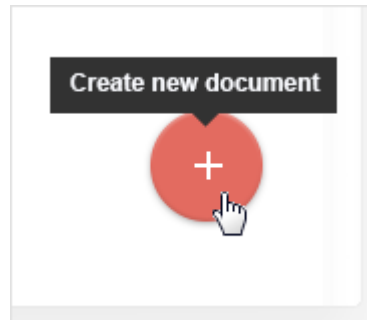
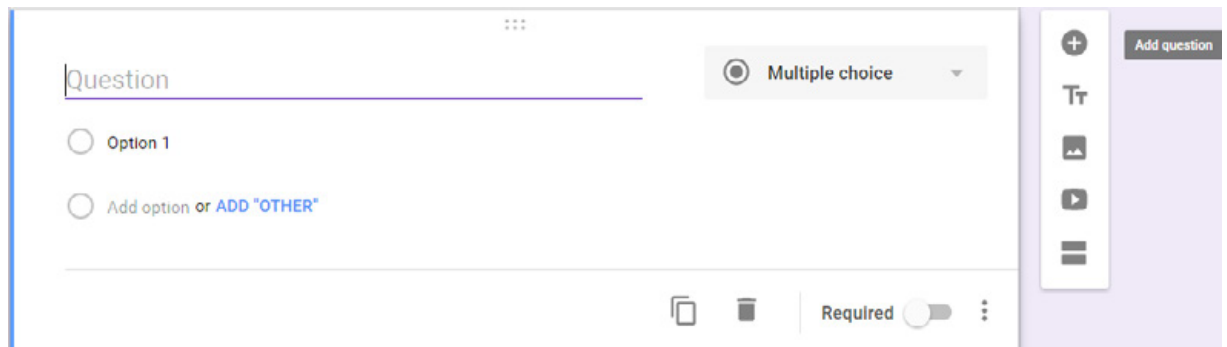Step #2: Sign into Google Slides using your Google Account

Step #3: Create or Import a slide presentation
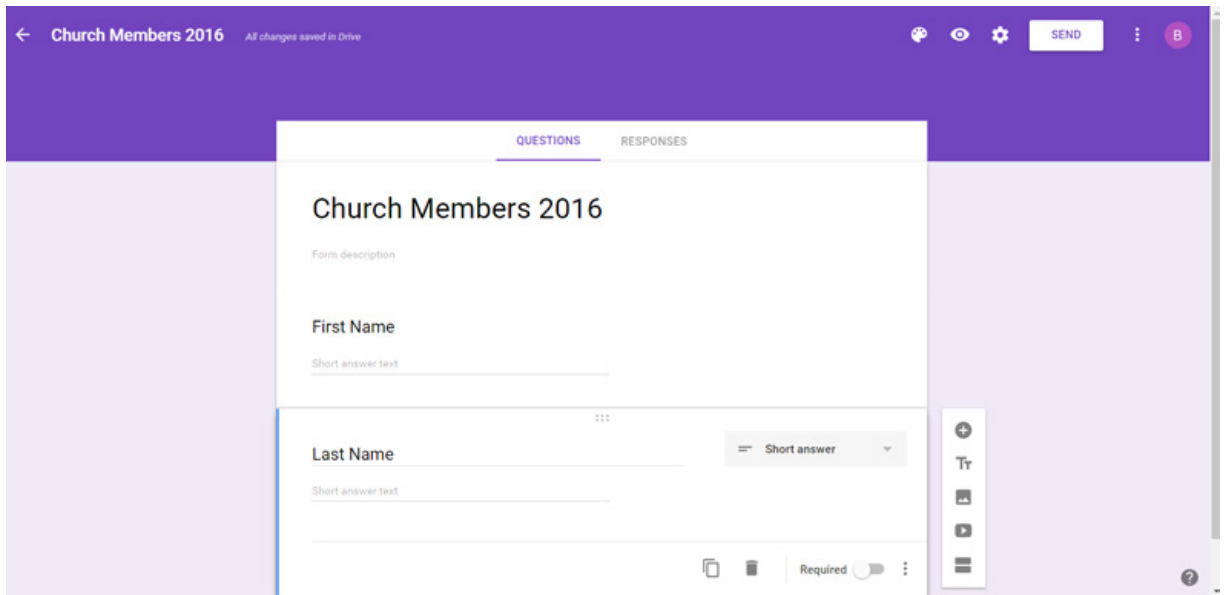
To create a document, click "create new document"
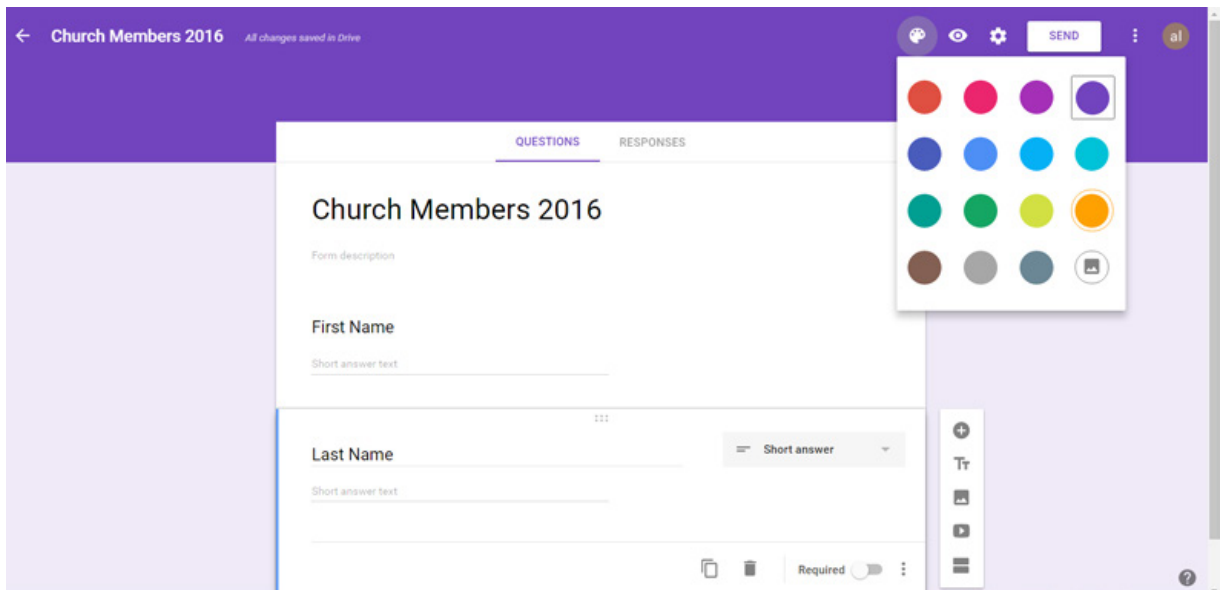

Step #4 Edit a Form

Once you have a new form open, to edit a form just click the body or title to add, edit, or format text.
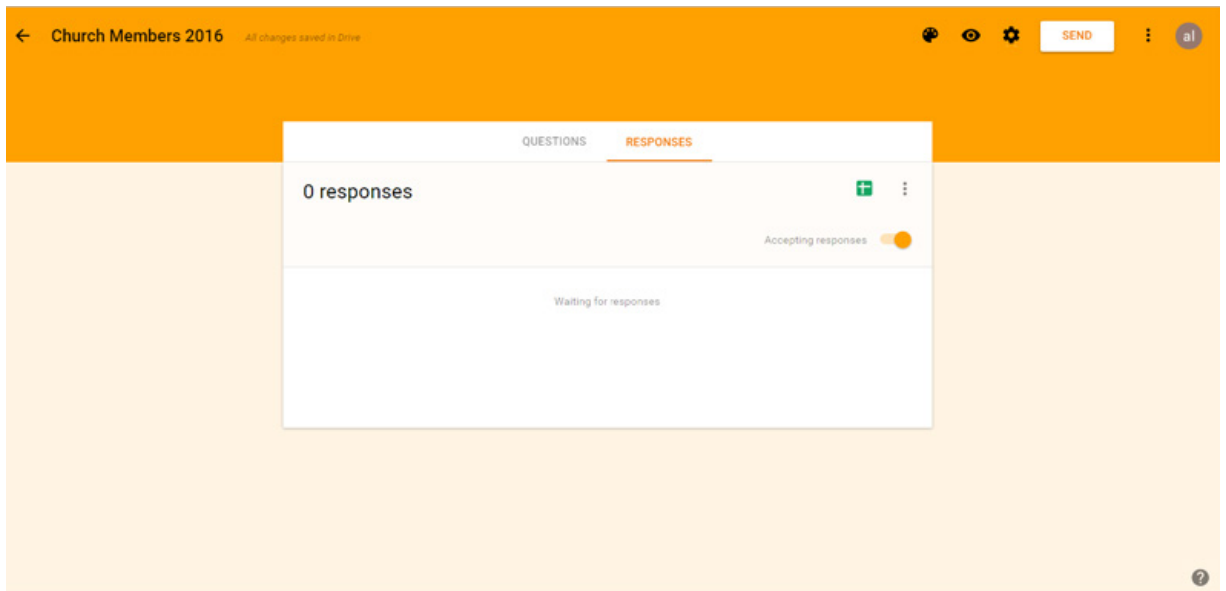

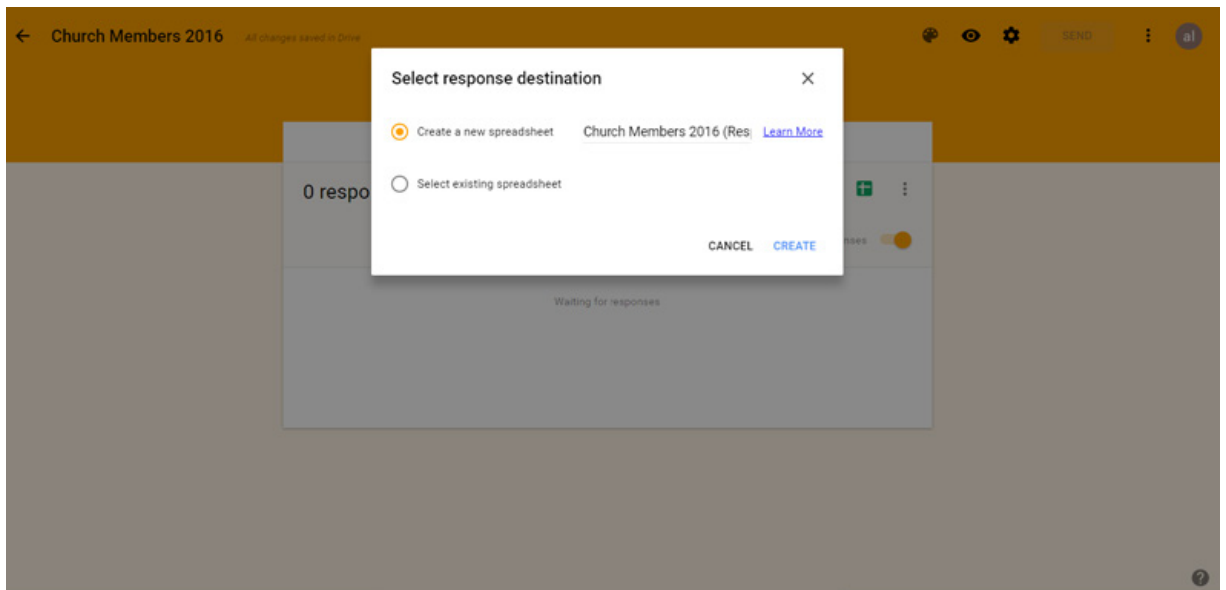Click "add question" to add new questions, images, and headers.

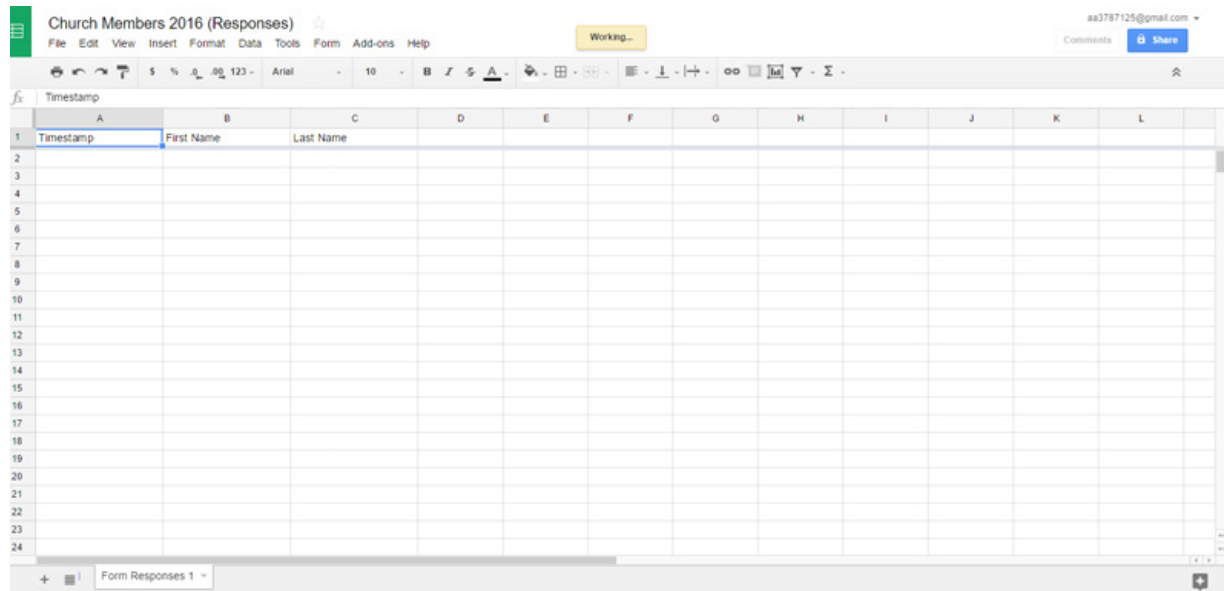To change the theme of your Form, click the paint palette in the top right corner

To select where the responses to your form are collected, click "responses"

Click the green Google Sheets logo to create a new sheet for your form responses

Your form responses will be automatically collected in the newly created Google Sheet
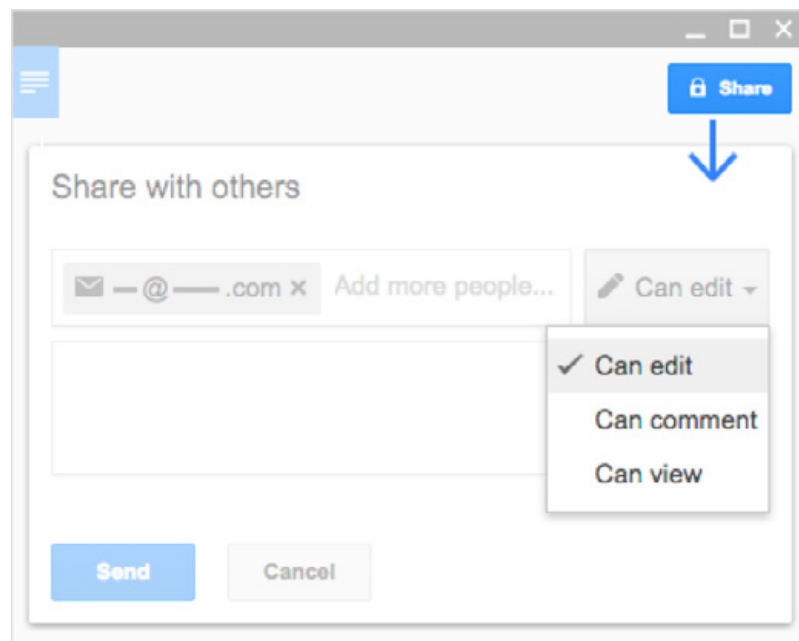
NOTE: Your document is "Saved" automatically! You don't have to press save!

Step #5 Share a form

To share a form,

1. Click "share" (share button)
2. Enter the email address of the person you want to share with
3. Choose the level of access to give collaborators
4. Click "send" to share the form

Google Sheets

What is it?

Create and edit spreadsheets, task lists, project plans, analyze data with charts and filters, and much more.

Why use it?

Have you ever wanted to organize lists of church members, church budgets, or other data? Do you ever work on a document from multiple computers or collaborate with others on one document?

Google Sheets can help you create an editable online spreadsheet that you can work on from different locations. You can also share the spreadsheet with others through their Google accounts so they can work on the same document at the same time. Your changes are saved as you go so there's no fear of the document being lost.
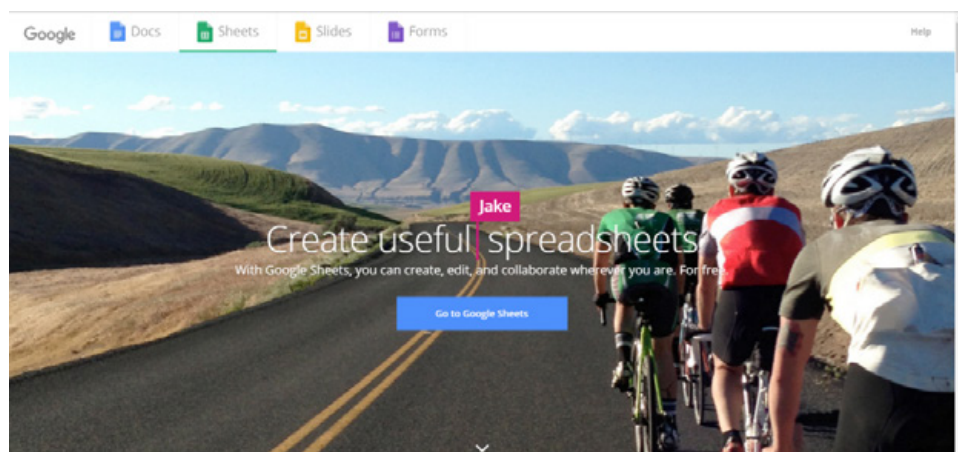
How to use it?

Visit sheets.google.com

You can also download the Youtube App in the Google Play Store or iPhone App Store
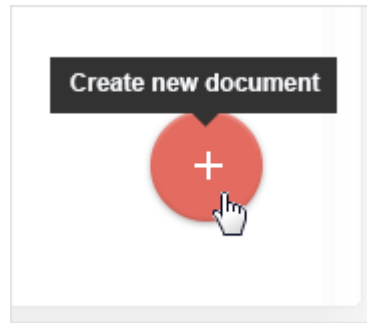
Sign in using your Google/Gmail account.

(If you do not have a Google/Gmail account, follow the "Gmail Account Setup Instructions" to create an account.)

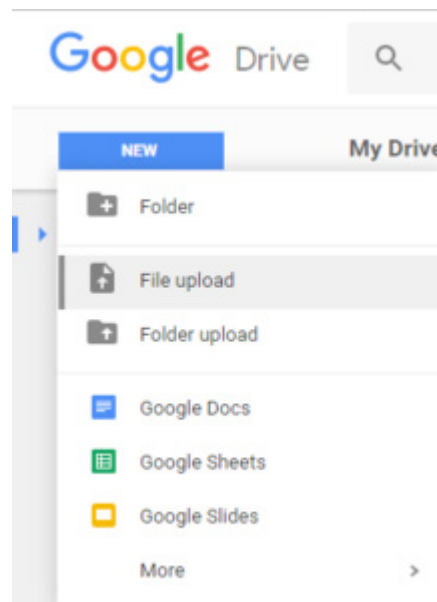Step #2: Sign into Google Sheets using your Google Account

Step #3: Create or Import a spreadsheet
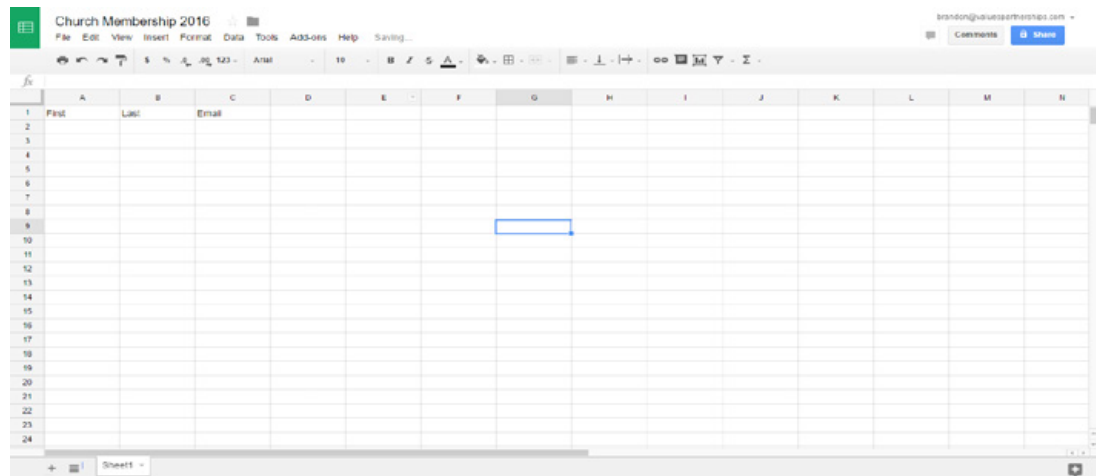
To create a document, click "create new document"

To import a document

1. Click (3 stripes) in top left-hand corner to view the Main Menu
2. Click "Drive"
3. Click "New"
4. Select "File Upload" and select the spreadsheet file to upload

Step #4 Edit a document

Once you have a new or imported document open, to edit a document simply click the body or title to add, edit, or format text.
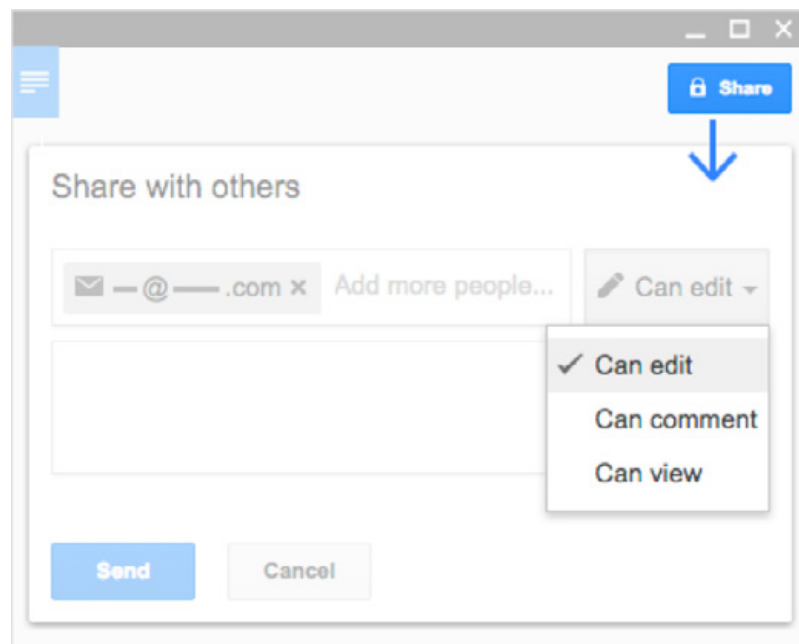

Click the title in the top left to rename your sheet

Step #5 Share a sheet
To share a sheet,

1. Click "share" (share button)
2. Enter the email address of the person you want to share with
3. Choose the level of access to give collaborators
4. Click "send" to share the sheet

Google Docs

What is it?

Google Docs is a word processing tool. It lets you create free documents that save to your Google account. You don't have to save these documents to a disc – they are automatically saved for you "in the cloud." You can also share your documents with other folks and edit them together.

Why use it?

Let's say you're working on a program for a special event, and you want to work on it with a small group of collaborators. Or you want to organize your sermons or other documents in one place rather than emailing them to yourself or carrying around a bunch of discs.

Google Docs is an easy tool that lets you create an editable online document that you can work on from different locations. You can also share the document with others through their Google accounts so they can work on the same document at the same time. Your changes are saved as you go so there's no fear of the document being lost.

How to use it?

Visit docs.google.com

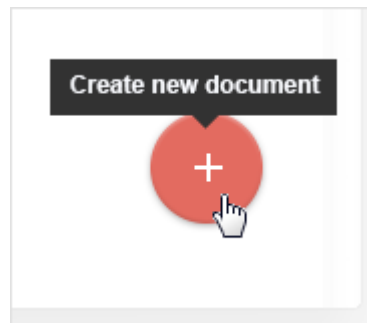You can also download the Youtube App in the Google Play Store or iPhone App Store
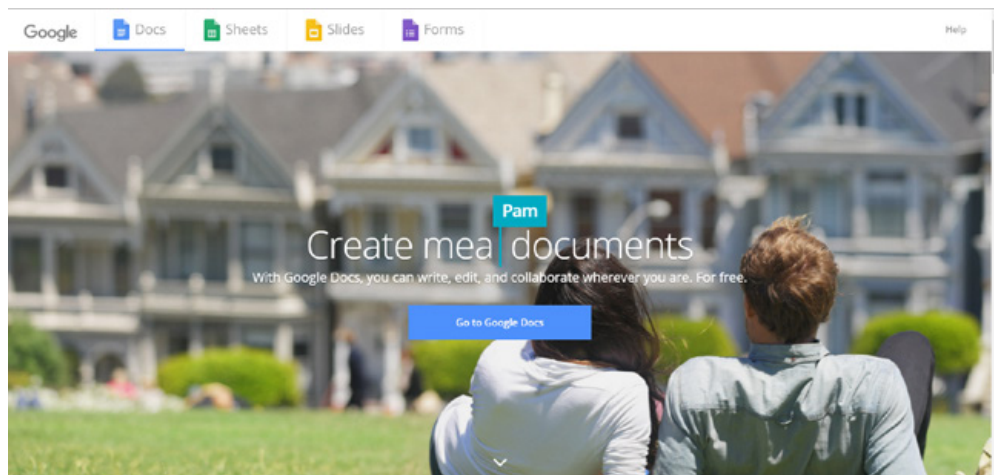
Step #2: Sign into Google Docs using your Google Account

Sign in using your Google/Gmail account.
(If you do not have a Google/Gmail account, follow the "Gmail Account Setup Instructions" to create an account.)
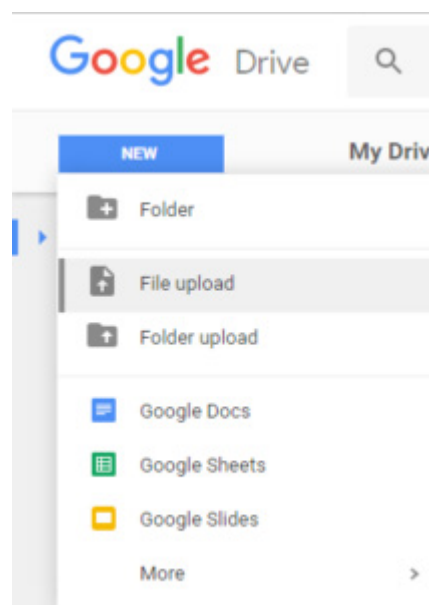
Step #3: Create or Import a document

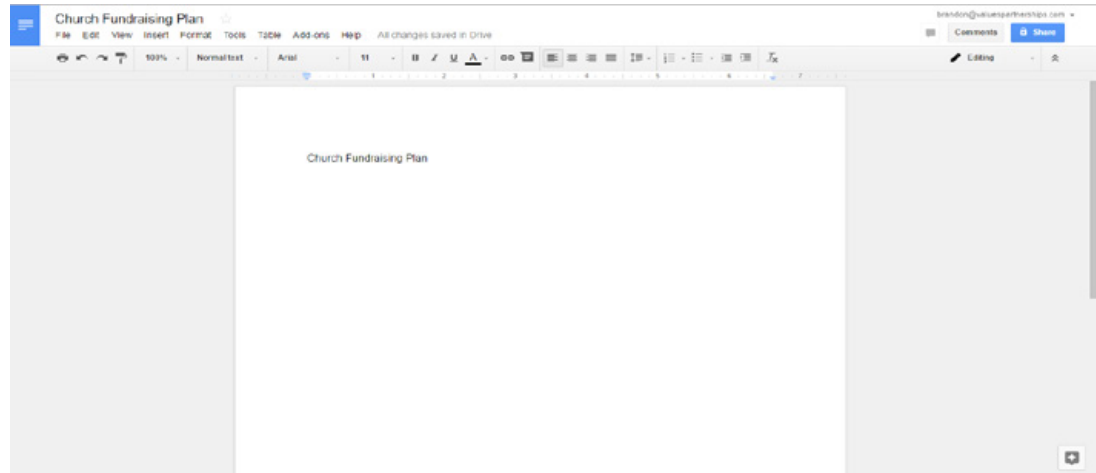To create a document, click "create new document"

To import a document,

1. Click (3 stripes) in top left-hand corner to view the Main Menu
2. Click "Drive" (drive icon)
3. Click "New"
4. Select "Upload files…" and select the file to upload

Step #4 Edit a document

Once you have a new or imported document open, to edit a document simply click the body or title to add, edit, or format text
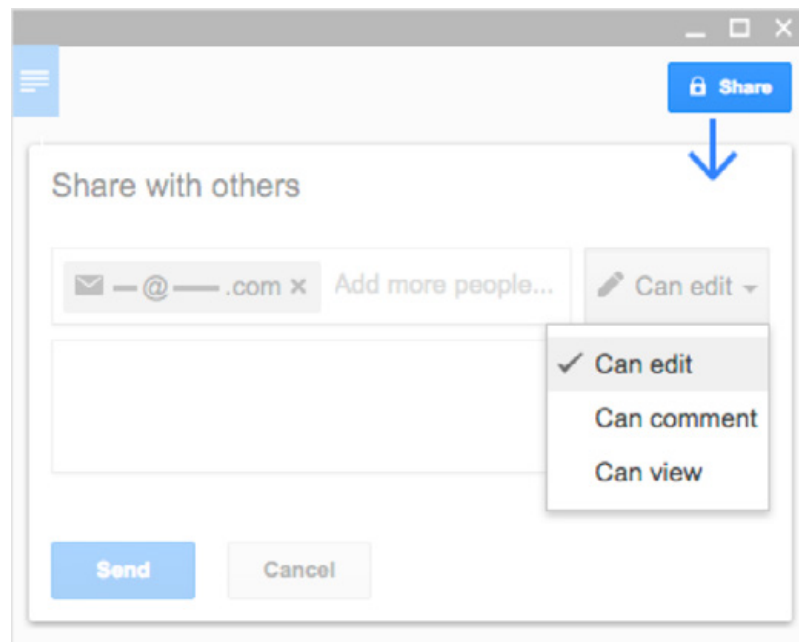

Click the title in the top left to rename your sheet

Step #5 Share a sheet
To share a sheet,

1. Click "share" (share button)
2. Enter the email address of the person you want to share with
3. Choose the level of access to give collaborators
4. Click "send" to share the document

What is it?

This is like a taxi service that you access quickly and easily from your phone. Apps like Uber and Lyft have drivers available to pick-up and drop-off users at their desired locations.

Why use it?

Sometimes you or a church member needs a ride in a pinch. Perhaps the church van or bus is not working or you have a sick-and-shut-in member who desperately needs to get to church. You can order them an Uber or a Lyft – which dispatches a car to their home and brings them to church, charging the ride to a church credit card

Ridesharing apps allow you to "call" a car to pick you up at your location and drop you off where you need to be. You attach a credit or debit card to the account so there's no waiting at the end for a payment to process. Tip is also included in your payment. This service is easy to use and a great resource if you don't have someone to pick you up or are unable to use public transportation.

How to use it?

Step #1: Download a free ridesharing app such as Uber or Lyft through the App store.
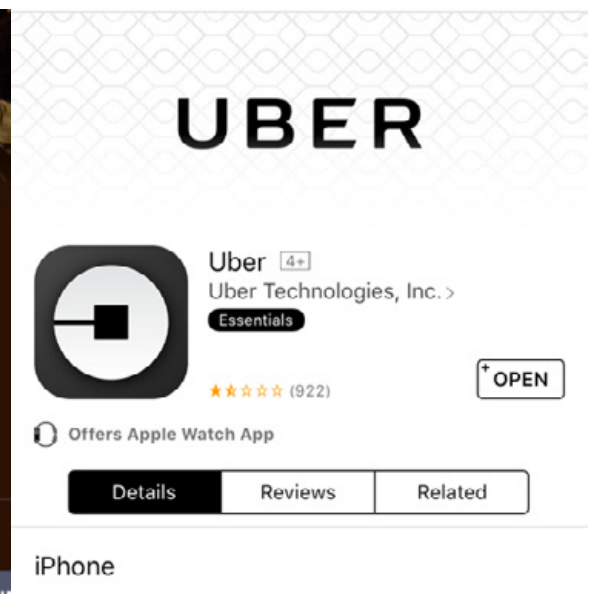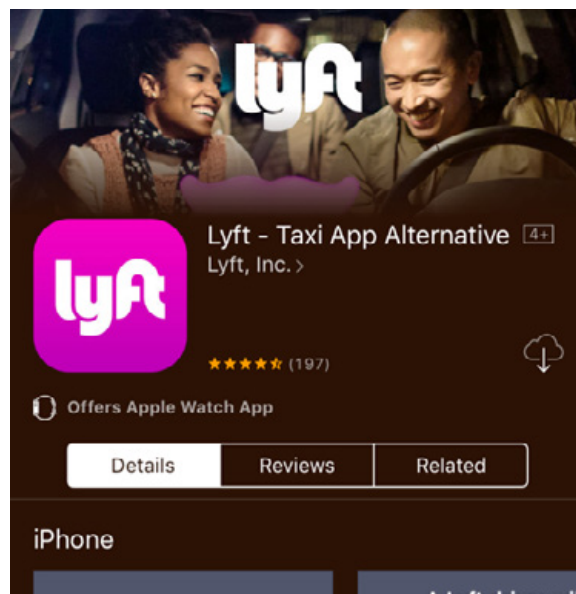
Step #2: Follow the app's set-up instructions, which will include creating an account and connecting a credit card to your account.

Step #3: When you need to order a ride, simply open the app, request a car from your location, and enter in your destination – the app will guide you more specifically.

What is it?

Create, edit, and present professional presentations, training modules, and much more.

Why use it?

Slides makes creating a study guide for bible study, presentation for a Sunday sermon, or a summary of a community program easy. And it's all stored in the cloud, so no more emailing documents to yourself or carrying around discs.
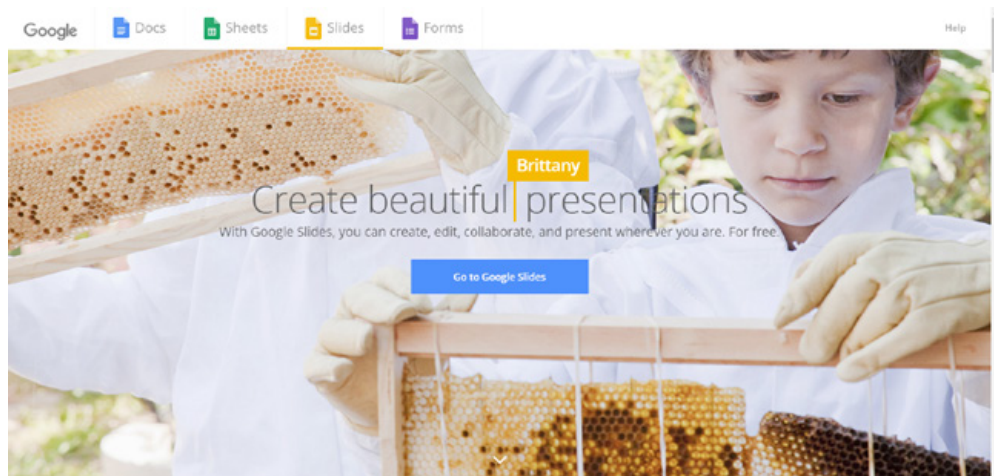
How to use it?

Visit slides.google.com

You can also download the Youtube App in the Google Play Store or iPhone App Store
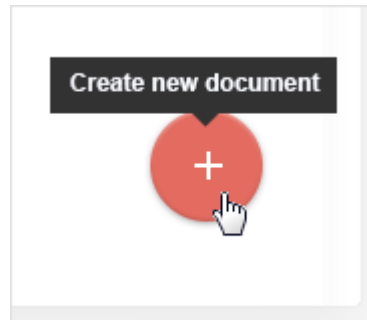
Sign in using your Google/Gmail account.

(If you do not have a Google/Gmail account, follow the "Gmail Account Setup Instructions" to create an account.)

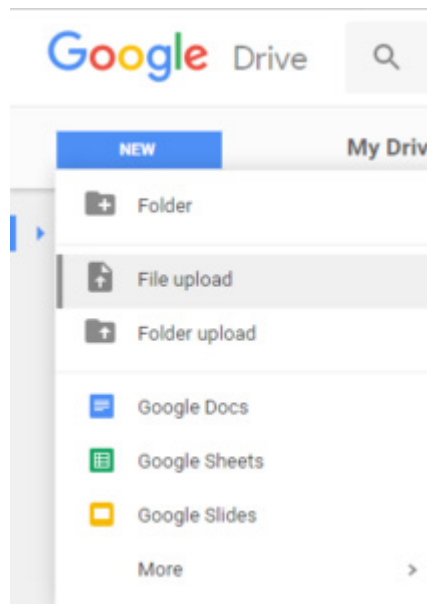Step #2: Sign into Google Slides using your Google Account

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1. Click (3 stripes) in top left-hand corner to view the Main Menu
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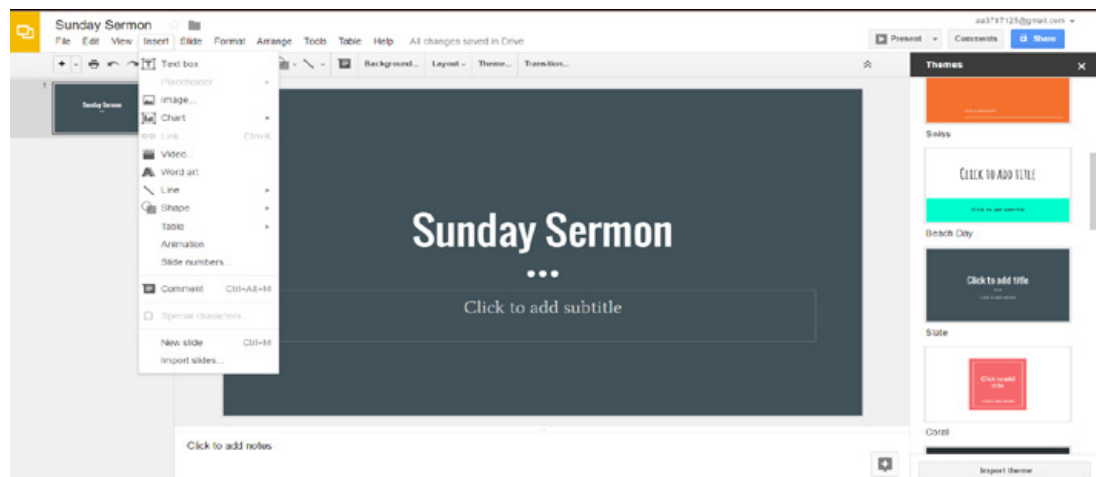4. Select "Upload files…" and select the slide presentation to upload

Step #4 Edit a document

Once you have a new or imported document open, to edit a document simply click the body or title to add, edit, or format text
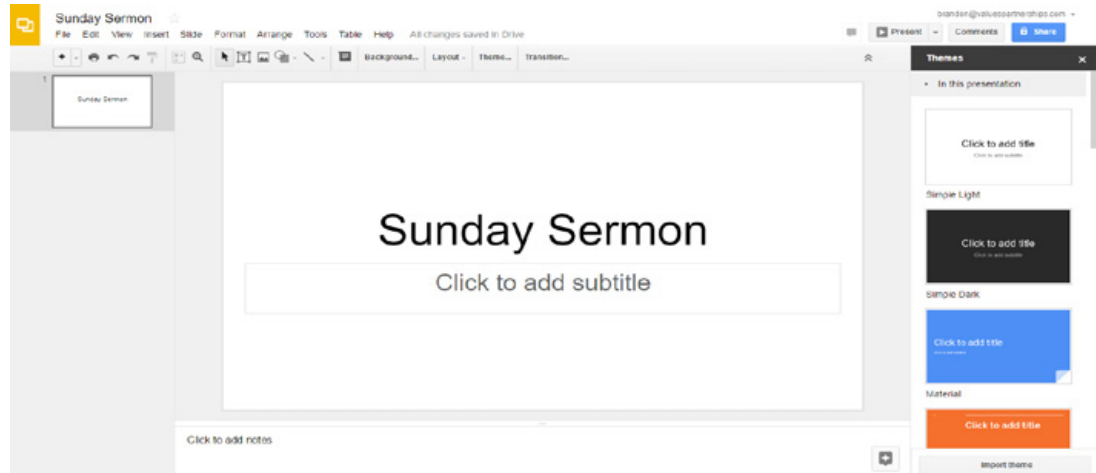
To insert photos, videos, charts, and other additions to your presentation, click "insert"

NOTE: Your document is "Saved" automatically! You don't have to press save!

Step #5 Share a slide presentation

To share a slide presentation,

1. Click "share" (share button)
2. Enter the email address of the person you want to share with
3. Choose the level of access to give collaborators
4. Click "send" to share the slide presentation
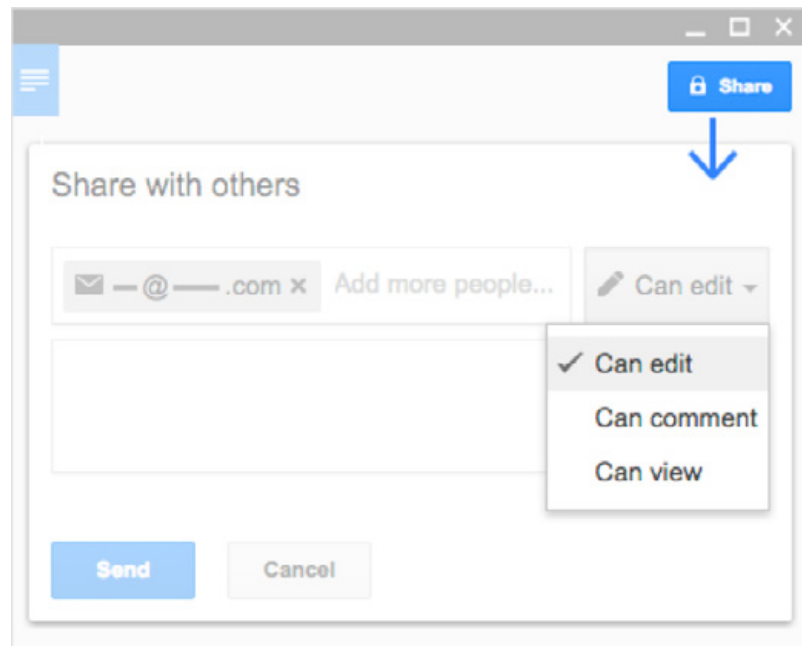
What is it?

A free app that allows you to make line-by-line annotations to your sermons to give people more details on what you meant by a particular line.
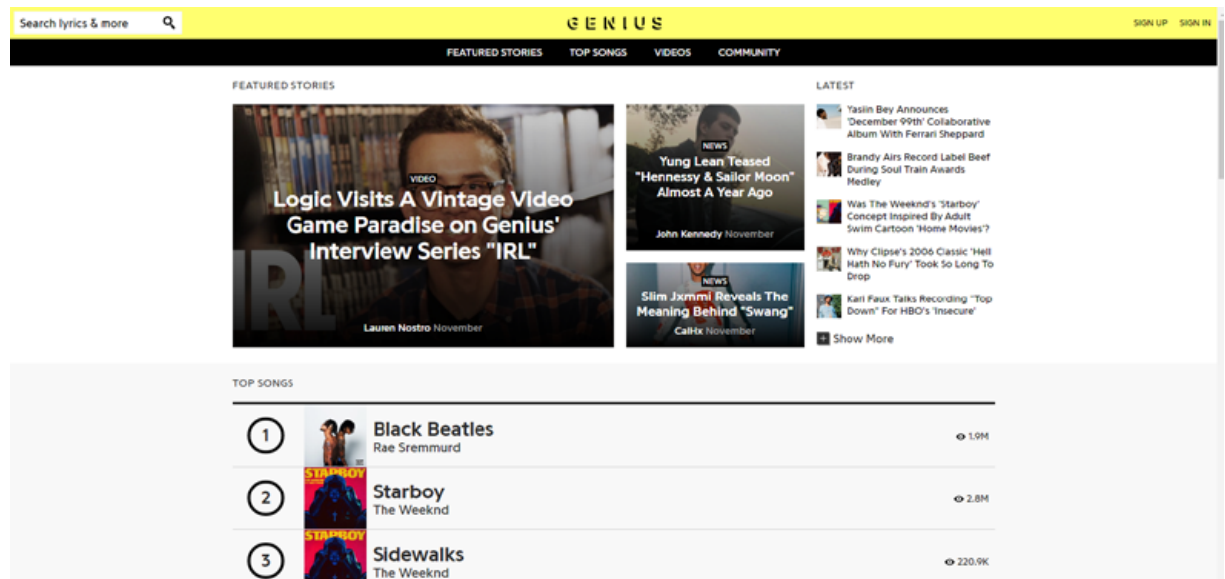
Why use it?

Have you ever wanted to annotate your sermons to give people more insight into particular concepts, scriptures or statements? Genius allows you to highlight text or an image and add your own notes, explanation, context, or extra links.

How to use it?

Step #1 Access or download Genius

On your computer, Visit genius.com and click "Sign Up"
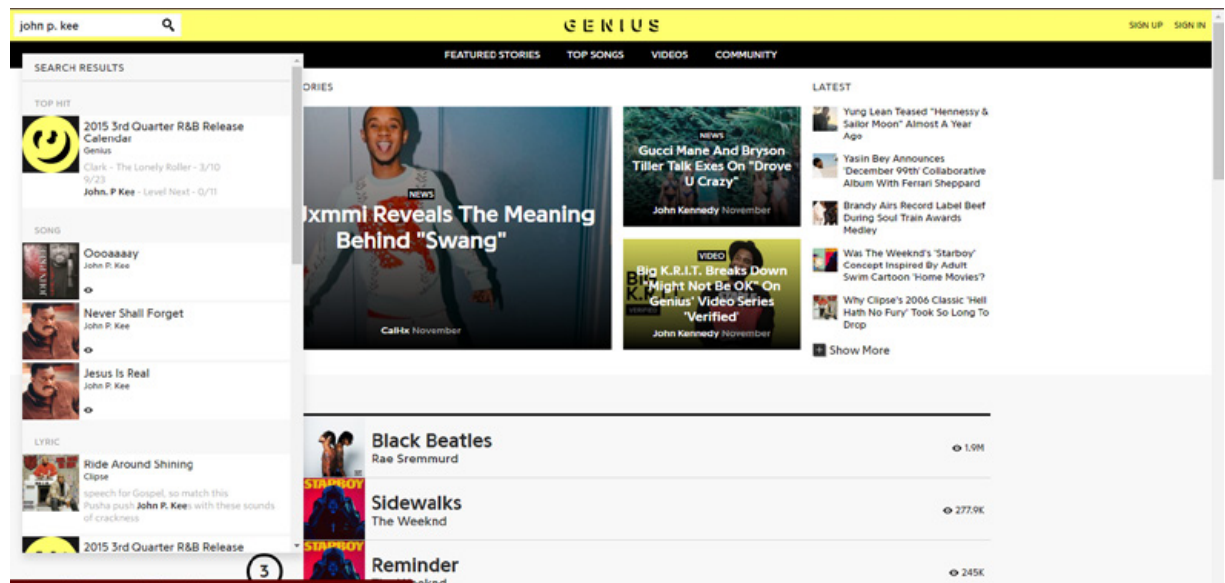

Step #2 Sign up at the top
You can use Google or Facebook to sign up!

Step #3 View or Add songs, sermons, or other content
To view content, simply search for songs, sermons, or documents by name, subject, or author

Select the content you want to view

To Add a song or other content, click "Add a Song" at the top - it says Song, but you can use for Sermons as well!

Note: you may have to add a profile picture to your account before you are allowed to post your sermon.

Add the pastors name in "By" field, the sermon title in "Title" field, and "X - Other" for category

Input text of your sermon in the "Lyrics" field. Add the appropriate date and other data as appropriate

Type in an explanation for a particular line and press "Save"

That's it! You can now share the link to your annotated sermon via social media or by emailing it to people.

What is it?

A free email marketing software that provides you with a platform to design, send, and save templates of your emails.

Why use it?

Do you send out a newsletter every week with the same template and just need to change content? Do you want to share this newsletter over social media and email?

MailChimp allows you to create an online template that is easy to maneuver and that you can start from every week rather than from scratch. Also, MailChimp will save the list of email addresses that you want the content to go out to. It can be shared on Facebook and Twitter as well.

How to use it?

Visit mailchimp.com on your laptop.

Step #2: Click "Sign Up Free" and create an account with just your Email, a Username, and Password. You will then be sent an activation Email

Step #3: Follow the guided steps to get set up.

Step #4: Create a template

Connected Church Office Hours

Google Digital Inclusion Specialists are offering Office Hours to answer your questions about the tools above. To sign up for Office Hours visit (website) to reserve a time.

For more information email: **connectedchurches@valuespartnerships.com**