

DIY CHURCH WEBSITE

DIY Sermons

Comprehensive User and Administrator Manual

Version 1.4.0

For WordPress 7.0 and PHP 8.1 or newer

Manual edition: July 2026



Sermon publishing, Scripture, speakers, campuses, podcasting, media, migrations, analytics, and optional WordPress AI in one free plugin.

About this manual

This manual explains DIY Sermons 1.4.0 for church staff, communications teams, pastors, media volunteers, site administrators, and developers. It follows the actual features and terminology in the released plugin.

DIY Sermons is a free, theme-independent plugin from diychurchwebsite.com. It does not require DIY Church Wireframe, an SEO companion, an AI provider, or a premium license.

Important

Test the plugin on a staging copy of the church website before migrating a large archive or changing production URL slugs.

What the manual covers

- Installation, updates, removal, and safe staging practices
- Initial settings for one-campus and multi-campus churches
- Speaker biographies, sermon taxonomies, media, Scripture, and resources
- Podcast feed creation, validation, and directory submission
- Blocks, shortcodes, layouts, filters, sharing, and embedded players
- Optional WordPress AI Connector and S3-compatible storage
- Imports from Advanced Sermons, Sermon Manager, and Series Engine
- Analytics, health checks, multilingual sites, SEO, privacy, and troubleshooting

Conventions

Menu paths appear as DIY Sermons > Setup & Settings. Shortcodes and configuration examples appear in shaded code boxes. Items labeled optional can be skipped without reducing the core sermon-library functionality.

Product and service names belong to their respective owners. Podcast directories and external services can change their submission requirements independently of DIY Sermons.

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1. Welcome to DIY Sermons

DIY Sermons turns WordPress into a structured sermon publishing system. A church can publish sermons with audio, video, livestream links, Bible passages, documents, transcripts, speaker profiles, campuses, series, podcast feeds, and shareable archive pages.

Core design principles

- One church per WordPress installation, with support for one or many campuses.
- Theme independence: plugin templates work with classic and block themes.
- WordPress Media Library first, with remote URLs and optional S3-compatible uploads.
- KJV by default, while allowing additional HelloAO translation IDs.
- AI is optional and separated from core publishing. The sermon library works fully without it.
- No premium gates. All documented features are part of the same free plugin.

System requirements

Requirement	Minimum / recommendation
WordPress	7.0 or newer
PHP	8.1 or newer
HTTPS	Strongly recommended; expected by podcast directories and external storage
Permalinks	Any human-readable permalink structure is recommended
Browser	A current desktop browser for media selection and administrative setup
Backups	A verified database and uploads backup before imports or major configuration changes

What is optional

- Settings & Connectors and an AI provider
- Amazon S3 or another S3-compatible storage service
- WPML or Polylang for multilingual sites
- An external podcast directory account
- An SEO plugin such as Rank Math

2. Install, Update, and Remove the Plugin

Install from the ZIP file

1. Sign in to WordPress as an Administrator.
2. Open Plugins > Add New Plugin, then choose Upload Plugin.
3. Select diy-sermons-1.4.0.zip and choose Install Now.
4. After WordPress confirms the installation, choose Activate Plugin.
5. Open DIY Sermons > Setup & Settings and complete the setup tabs.

Activation check

Activation creates plugin capabilities, rewrite rules, defaults, and the daily health-check schedule. It does not create sample sermons or send content to an outside service.

Update safely

1. Back up the database and wp-content/uploads.
2. Read the new version's change notes and confirm its WordPress and PHP requirements.
3. Test the update on staging when the site has a large archive, custom templates, or storage integrations.
4. Install the replacement ZIP through the normal WordPress update workflow.
5. Open the sermon archive, one sermon, one speaker, one campus, and every active podcast feed for a quick regression check.

Deactivate versus uninstall

Action	Result
Deactivate	Stops the plugin and clears its scheduled health check. Sermons and settings remain in the database.
Delete while Preserve on uninstall is enabled	Content and settings remain for safety.
Delete after disabling Preserve on uninstall	DIY Sermons posts, taxonomies, settings, cached Bible data, schedules, and plugin role capabilities are removed.

Destructive option

Disable Preserve on uninstall only when the church deliberately wants permanent cleanup. Take a complete backup first.

3. Administration Tour

The Sermons menu

Menu item	Purpose
All Sermons	View, search, edit, duplicate, feature, unfeature, archive, or bulk-manage sermons.
Add New	Create a sermon, livestream entry, upcoming message, or podcast episode.
Speakers	Create and maintain public speaker biography profiles.
Campuses	Create church location profiles and campus relationships.
Podcast Shows	Create one or more RSS podcast feeds and directory links.
Series / Topics / Bible Books	Organize sermons for archive pages and filters.
Ministries / Service Types / Sermon Tags	Add additional editorial classifications.
Setup & Settings	Configure setup, Scripture, display, podcast, storage, AI, integrations, and privacy.
Shortcodes	Review the shortcode reference generated by the plugin.
Analytics	Review anonymous aggregate views, starts, progress, completions, downloads, and shares.
System Health	Review environment information and run health checks.
Import & Migrate	Import supported sermon products and roll back imported DIY records.
AI Change History	Review generated AI plans and roll back applied changes.

Recommended staff workflow

- Administrators configure settings, imports, podcast shows, storage, and AI access.
- Editors create speakers, campuses, sermons, classifications, transcripts, and resources.
- A communications reviewer checks excerpts, featured images, share text, podcast details, and accessibility before publication.

4. First-Time Setup

Setup tab

Setting	Default	Guidance
Singular / plural labels	Sermon / Sermons	Change the menu language if the church prefers Messages, Teachings, or another term.
Sermon URL slug	sermons	Controls the sermon archive and individual sermon URLs.
Speaker URL slug	speaker	Controls public speaker profile URLs.
Campus URL slug	campus	Controls public campus profile URLs.
Multiple campuses	Off	Enable when the church has more than one physical or online location.
Sermons per page	12	Accepted range: 1 to 100.
Template mode	Plugin templates	Use theme mode only when the active theme supplies compatible templates.

URL slug change Changing a public slug changes URLs. Add redirects from old URLs and save Settings > Permalinks if WordPress shows a 404 afterward.

Recommended order

1. Decide whether the church is single-campus or multi-campus.
2. Save the Setup tab and confirm the desired URL slugs.
3. Create campus profiles.
4. Create speaker profiles and assign their campuses.
5. Configure Scripture, display, podcast defaults, and privacy.
6. Create a test sermon and a draft sermon-library page.
7. Only then begin a migration or production import.

5. Campuses

Create a campus

1. Open DIY Sermons > Campuses and choose Add New.
2. Enter the campus name as the title and add a public introduction in the editor.
3. Add a featured image if the campus directory should display a location image.
4. Complete the Campus Details panel and publish the profile.

Campus profile fields

Area	Available information
Status	Active, temporarily closed, or archived
Contact	Phone, public email, website, directions or map URL
Location	Street address, mailing address, latitude, longitude, and time zone
Schedule	Service times and office hours
Media	Campus livestream URL
Leadership	Primary campus pastor and campus speakers
Bible	Default translation override for the campus
Display	Campus color and featured image
Social	Facebook, Instagram, X, LinkedIn, YouTube, Vimeo, TikTok, Bluesky, and Threads

Single-campus sites

A single-campus church may create one campus profile or leave campus relationships unused. The plugin does not require a campus selection for every sermon. If the church later adds locations, enable multi-campus mode and assign existing sermons as needed.

Multi-campus publishing patterns

- Select one or more campuses on a sermon when it belongs to specific locations.
- Use Applies to all campuses for church-wide teaching.
- Assign a speaker's primary campus and additional campuses served.
- Create campus-specific podcast shows by using podcast inclusion rules.

6. Speaker Biography Manager

Create a speaker

- 1. Open DIY Sermons > Speakers and choose Add New.
- 2. Use the speaker's public display name as the title.
- 3. Add a short public biography in the editor and a headshot as the featured image.
- 4. Complete the biography fields, campus relationships, contact details, and social profiles.
- 5. Publish the profile before assigning it to a public sermon.

Biography fields

Group	Fields
Identity	Prefix or honorific, first name, last name, ministry title or role
Type	Lead pastor, campus pastor, staff speaker, guest, missionary, or teacher
Status	Active, former, guest, or archived
Campus	Primary campus and additional campuses served
Background	Personal and ministry history, education, credentials, publications, and ordination
Personal	Testimony and optional family information
Contact	Public email and website
Social	Facebook, Instagram, X, LinkedIn, YouTube, Vimeo, TikTok, Bluesky, and Threads
Privacy	Publish only biographical and contact information the speaker has approved for public use. Do not place private addresses, personal phone numbers, or non-public family details in the profile.

7. Series, Topics, and Other Classifications

Available classifications

Classification	Typical use	Filter support
Series	A multi-week teaching collection	Yes
Topic	Grace, prayer, marriage, missions, discipleship	Yes
Bible Book	John, Romans, Psalms	Yes
Ministry	Students, children, women, men, outreach	Yes
Service Type	Sunday morning, midweek, conference, chapel	Yes
Sermon Tag	Flexible internal or public labels	Not a built-in filter control

Editorial recommendations

- Use a controlled vocabulary. Merge near-duplicates such as Prayer and Prayers.
- Use Series for intentional collections, not every calendar month.
- Choose Bible Book terms that match the primary passage or teaching focus.
- Keep Service Type values stable so the filter remains useful.
- Review imported terms before exposing them in a public filter.

8. Create and Publish a Sermon

The complete workflow

1. Open DIY Sermons > Add New and enter the sermon title.
2. Write the main description, notes, or message overview in the WordPress editor.
3. Add a concise excerpt for archive cards and search summaries.
4. Add a featured image with meaningful alternative text.
5. Choose the preached date and lifecycle stage.
6. Select speakers, a primary speaker, campuses, and classifications.
7. Add audio, video, livestream, duration, file size, and download preference.
8. Add one or more Scripture passages and load the verse text.
9. Add transcript, podcast fields, resources, and social description.
10. Preview the sermon page on desktop and mobile, then publish.

Lifecycle stages

Stage	Use
Upcoming	Announce a future sermon or service before media is available.
Live now	Highlight a service while a livestream URL is active.
Published archive	Normal published sermon state after the service.
Archived	Retain an older entry while identifying it as archived.

Relationship fields

- Speakers may contain multiple people. Primary speaker identifies the main presenter.
- Campuses may contain multiple locations. Applies to all campuses overrides a specific-campus interpretation.
- Featured sermon supports featured-sermon displays and the featured shortcode.

Duplicate and bulk actions

Use Duplicate from a sermon row to create a draft copy of its editorial metadata and classifications. Analytics, health status, and import tracking are not copied. Bulk actions can mark sermons featured, remove featured status, or set the lifecycle to archived.

9. Audio, Video, Livestreams, and Resources

WordPress Media Library

1. In the sermon Media panel, choose Choose from Media Library beside audio or video.
2. Upload a new file or select an existing attachment.
3. Confirm that the resulting URL and attachment ID are filled automatically.
4. Save or update the sermon.

Remote and embedded media

- Paste a direct audio or video file URL into the corresponding field.
- YouTube and Vimeo URLs are passed through WordPress oEmbed when supported.
- A video URL is preferred over the livestream field after the service ends.
- Remote providers can receive normal browser request information when media loads or plays.

Podcast-critical audio fields

Field	Why it matters
Audio URL	Required for an episode to appear in the podcast feed.
Duration	Displayed to podcast clients when supplied as HH:MM:SS.
File size in bytes	Used as the RSS enclosure length; feed validation warns when missing.
Allow audio download	Controls the public Download audio link.

Documents and resources

Add unlimited resources with a label, URL, type, and language. Supported editorial types include PDF, document, slides, link, and captions. Podcast feeds expose caption or transcript resources through Podcasting 2.0 transcript tags when applicable.

Accessibility

Provide a transcript whenever practical. Add captions for video, descriptive link labels for documents, and alternative text for featured images.

10. Bible Passages and HelloAO

Configure Scripture

Setting	Default	Notes
Default Bible translation	King James Version (eng_kjv)	Select from the current HelloAO catalog
Allowed translation IDs	eng_kjv	Comma-separated HelloAO translation IDs
Chapter cache lifetime	30 days	Accepted range: 1 to 365 days

Add a passage to a sermon

1. Open the Scripture Passages panel in the sermon editor.
2. Choose a labeled Bible version from the HelloAO translation dropdown. King James Version is selected by default, and each sermon passage may use a different version.
3. Choose the Bible book ID and confirm its display name.
4. Enter the chapter, first verse, and last verse.
5. Choose Load verse text.
6. Review the returned text, attribution, and license link, then save the sermon.
7. Use Add another passage when the message has more than one primary reading.

Caching and service behavior

- The browser does not request Bible text when visitors view a sermon. Editors request passages through the WordPress server.
- Successful API responses are cached and a last-known-good copy is retained.
- The attribution and license URL travel with the saved passage.
- The optional AI assistant receives Scripture reference labels, not cached verse quotations.

Translation rights Translation availability does not automatically grant unrestricted republication. Review the attribution and license information for every translation selected by the church.

11. Podcast Shows and Distribution

Create a show

1. Open DIY Sermons > Podcast Shows and choose Add New.
2. Enter the show title, public description, excerpt, and square featured image.
3. Complete author, owner email, language, copyright, feed slug, and episode limit.
4. Choose whether the show is explicit.
5. Optionally include sermons automatically by campus or speaker.
6. Publish the show, then copy its feed URL.

Show fields and artwork

Item	Guidance
Subtitle	A short directory-friendly show tagline.
Owner email	Must be a valid public ownership email for directory verification.
Language	Use a BCP 47 value such as en-US.
Feed slug	Creates /podcast/your-slug/feed/. Keep it stable after submission.
Episode limit	Maximum recent episodes included, between 1 and 500.
Artwork	Square, at least 1400 x 1400 pixels; 3000 x 3000 is recommended.

Assign sermons to a show

On each sermon, select one or more Podcast Shows. A show can also include sermons by campus or speaker rules. Only published sermons with a non-empty audio URL are eligible for its feed.

Episode fields

Season and episode numbers are optional. Episode type may be Full, Trailer, or Bonus, and explicit content can be set per episode. A sermon-specific podcast summary overrides the excerpt, while episode artwork can use a sermon artwork attachment or the featured image.

Validate and submit

1. Publish the show and at least one assigned audio sermon, then choose Validate podcast feed readiness.
2. Correct artwork, owner email, episode, enclosure-size, or HTTPS issues.
3. Submit the feed URL to Apple Podcasts, Spotify, YouTube, Amazon Music, iHeart, Pocket Casts, Podcast Index, and other desired directories.
4. After approval, save each directory URL in the Podcast Show profile. DIY Sermons publishes the feed but does not guarantee directory approval or upload separate copies to every platform.

12. Sermon Libraries, Layouts, and Filters

Create a sermon library page

1. Create or edit a WordPress Page named Sermons, Messages, or Watch.
2. Insert the Sermon Library block, or add `[diy_sermons filters="yes"]`.
3. Choose layout, columns, number of sermons, filter visibility, and card content.
4. Preview the page at desktop, tablet, and mobile widths.
5. Add the page to the site navigation and publish it.

Available layouts

Layout	Best use
Grid	Visual archive with consistent cards and featured images.
List	Wide rows with more horizontal space for descriptions.
Compact	Dense archive or playlist with minimal imagery.
Media-first	Prominent media and image presentation.
Masonry	Flexible visual grid for varying content lengths.
Carousel	Horizontally scrollable featured collection.
Playlist	Compact library with sermon players enabled.
Calendar style	Date-oriented list generated by the calendar shortcode.

Filter controls

Administrators can enable keyword, speaker, series, campus, topic, Bible book, ministry, service, year, media, language, and exact-date controls under Display & Filters. Filters may be horizontal, vertical, compact, built into the library, or displayed in the classic filter widget.

Shareable filter URLs

Filter selections are reflected in query parameters so visitors can bookmark or share a filtered archive. Parameters use the `sermon_` prefix.

```
?sermon_speaker=42&sermon_series=easter-2026&sermon_media=video
?sermon_keyword=grace&sermon_year=2026
?sermon_campus=18&sermon_language=eng_kjv
```

13. Gutenberg Blocks

Block	Primary controls
Sermon Library	Layout, columns, count, filters, image, excerpt, Scripture, player
Sermon Filter	Target library ID and horizontal, vertical, or compact orientation
Sermon Player	Sermon ID and compact mode
Speaker Directory	Count and grid or list layout
Campus Directory	Count and grid or list layout
Podcast Subscribe	Podcast Show ID

Using separate filter and library blocks

1. Give the Sermon Library block a stable target ID when that setting is available in the page markup or shortcode.
2. Insert the Sermon Filter block where the controls should appear.
3. Enter the same library target ID in the filter block.
4. Test filtering without a full page reload and verify that the browser URL updates.

Block preview

Dynamic blocks use a server-side preview. If a preview is blank, save the post type data first and confirm the current user can view the selected sermon or podcast show.

14. Complete Shortcode Reference

Shortcode	Purpose	Attributes
[diy_sermons]	Complete sermon library	layout, columns, count, speaker, series, campus, topic, book, ministry, service, order, pagination, filters, show_image, show_excerpt, show_scripture, show_player
[diy_sermon]	One sermon card	id
[diy_sermon_player]	Audio/video player	id, compact
[diy_latest_sermon]	Latest matching sermon	Common library filters
[diy_featured_sermon]	Latest featured sermon	Common library filters
[diy_sermon_filter]	Full filter interface	target, orientation, button
[diy_sermon_search]	Compact search and filter	target
[diy_sermon_playlist]	Playable compact sermon list	Common library filters
[diy_sermon_series]	Sermons from one series	series, layout, count
[diy_sermon_topics]	Topic directory	None
[diy_speakers]	Speaker directory	campus, layout, count
[diy_speaker]	One speaker profile	id
[diy_campuses]	Campus directory	layout, count
[diy_campus]	One campus profile	id
[diy_scripture]	Saved Scripture passages for a sermon	id
[diy_sermon_resources]	Sermon documents and links	id
[diy_podcast_subscribe]	Podcast subscribe links	id
[diy_podcast_player]	Episodes from one Podcast Show	id, count
[diy_sermon_calendar]	Date-oriented sermon archive	Common library filters
[diy_sermon_count]	Number of matching sermons	Common library filters
[diy_sermon_share]	Social sharing controls	id

Common attribute values

Attribute	Examples / accepted values
layout	grid, list, compact, media, masonry, carousel
columns	1 through 6
count	1 through 100 for normal libraries
speaker / campus	Numeric WordPress post ID
series / topic / book / ministry / service	Term slug or term ID
order	ASC or DESC
pagination	yes or no
filters	yes or no
show_image / show_excerpt / show_scripture / show_player	yes or no
orientation	horizontal, vertical, or compact

Examples

```
[diy_sermons filters="yes" layout="grid" columns="3" count="12"]

[diy_sermons speaker="42" campus="18" layout="list"]

[diy_sermon_series series="gospel-of-john" layout="grid" count="24"]

[diy_sermon_player id="123" compact="yes"]

[diy_podcast_player id="77" count="10"]

[diy_podcast_subscribe id="77"]
```

Finding IDs

Edit a sermon, speaker, campus, or podcast show and inspect the post number in the browser URL. Term slugs are visible on the taxonomy edit screen.

15. Sharing, Embeds, and Listening Tools

Sharing options

The Display & Filters settings can enable native browser sharing, Facebook, X, LinkedIn, Bluesky, WhatsApp, Telegram, Reddit, Pinterest, email, and Copy link. Share links use the sermon permalink and title.

Social metadata

- Add a featured image for a strong social preview.
- Write a sermon excerpt and optional social sharing description.
- When a recognized SEO provider owns social metadata, DIY Sermons avoids competing fallback tags.

Embeddable player

Every published sermon has an isolated player URL in this form:

```
https://example.org/sermon-embed/123/
```

The endpoint is designed for iframe use on partner sites. Replace 123 with the sermon post ID. Only public, published sermons are available.

```
<iframe src="https://example.org/sermon-embed/123/" width="100%" height="420" loading="lazy" title="Sermon player"></iframe>
```

Listening queue and resume position

- Visitors can add sermons to a browser-local listening queue.
- Playback position is stored locally in that browser and resumes when practical.
- The queue and positions are not user accounts and do not synchronize between devices.

16. Optional WordPress AI Connector

Requirements

WordPress 7.0 AI Client support and a compatible provider under Settings > Connectors are required. AI must also be enabled in DIY Sermons, and the user needs both AI and sermon-editing capabilities.

Available actions

Action	Possible output
Summary and excerpt	A proposed WordPress excerpt and social description
Podcast show notes	A proposed podcast summary
Social media drafts	Drafts for Facebook, Instagram, X, LinkedIn, Bluesky, and YouTube
Study guide and questions	A proposed discussion or study-guide draft
Topic suggestions	Up to 12 concise topic terms
Translation draft	A draft in the target language for human review
Complete enrichment package	A structured combination of available output fields

Generate, approve, and apply

1. Save the sermon, choose an action, and enter a target language only for translation work.
2. Choose Generate review plan and compare the preview with the source sermon.
3. Choose Approve and apply immediately only when the proposal is accurate.
4. Review the updated sermon before public publication.

Safeguards and limits

- Sermon content is treated as untrusted data and responses must match a bounded schema.
- The assistant is told not to invent quotations, credentials, people, dates, locations, or theological claims.
- Cached Bible text is excluded; a fingerprint blocks stale plans after sermon changes.
- Requests are rate-limited per authorized user.

History and rollback

Open DIY Sermons > AI Change History to review plans when that history screen is available. An applied change can be rolled back once, restoring the saved editorial fields and topic assignments. AI output is assistance, not authoritative theology, Bible text, legal advice, or a substitute for pastoral review.

17. Optional S3-Compatible Object Storage

Supported approach

WordPress Media Library remains the default. DIY Sermons can also create short-lived signed browser uploads for Amazon S3, Cloudflare R2, Wasabi, Backblaze B2 S3, DigitalOcean Spaces, and compatible services.

Configuration fields

Setting	Purpose
Region	Storage service region, such as us-east-1
Bucket	Destination bucket name
Custom endpoint	Leave blank for Amazon S3; enter the provider endpoint for compatible services
Public or CDN base URL	Public playback URL prefix for uploaded objects
Object prefix	Folder-like prefix; default is sermons
Access key / secret key	Credentials with only the required bucket permissions

Safer credential configuration

Constants or environment values take priority over database settings:

```
define('DIY_SERMONS_S3_ACCESS_KEY', 'your-access-key');
define('DIY_SERMONS_S3_SECRET_KEY', 'your-secret-key');
define('DIY_SERMONS_S3_SESSION_TOKEN', 'optional-session-token');
```

Bucket CORS

The bucket must permit PUT requests from the WordPress site origin. A provider-specific policy may resemble:

```
[
{
  "AllowedOrigins": ["https://www.example.org"],
  "AllowedMethods": ["PUT"],
  "AllowedHeaders": ["Content-Type", "*"],
  "ExposeHeaders": ["ETag"],
  "MaxAgeSeconds": 3000
}
]
```

Test and upload

1. Save the storage settings.
2. Choose Test object storage. The credentials require enough access to verify the bucket.
3. Edit a sermon and choose Upload to object storage beside its media field.
4. Select an allowed audio, video, PDF, caption, or office-document file.
5. Wait for the upload to finish and verify that the public URL plays without authentication.

Use a dedicated least-privilege credential. Never post a secret key in the support forum, a screenshot, an email, or a public repository.

18. Import and Migration

Before importing

1. Create a complete database and uploads backup.
2. Run the import first on staging.
3. Keep the source plugin active until the result has been reviewed.
4. Create the final campus structure and confirm URL slugs before migration.
5. Record the source sermon count and inspect a representative sample of old records.

Supported sources

Source	Method	Mapped information
Advanced Sermons	Direct WordPress-native import	Posts, status, title, content, excerpt, date, featured image, media metadata, speakers, campuses, and available classifications
Sermon Manager for WordPress	Direct WordPress-native import	Posts, status, title, content, excerpt, date, featured image, media metadata, preachers, series, topics, Bible books, and service types
Series Engine	Official CSV export upload	Speakers, series, topics, messages, audio, duration, file size, video, and recognizable Scripture references

Direct importer workflow

1. Open DIY Sermons > Import & Migrate.
2. Review the detected published-record count.
3. Choose whether to include drafts and private sermons.
4. Run the duplicate-safe import.
5. For large archives, choose Continue migration after each 100-sermon batch until complete.
6. Review imported speakers, campuses, classifications, media, dates, and sermon pages.

Series Engine CSV workflow

1. Export All Content from Series Engine using its official CSV process.
2. Upload the CSV under the Series Engine section of Import & Migrate.
3. Wait for speakers, terms, and messages to map.
4. Review imported Scripture references and use Load verse text where a reference was converted into an editable passage row.

Duplicate protection and rollback

Every imported DIY record stores the source name and source ID. Re-running the same importer skips mapped items. Rollback moves importer-created records to Trash and never edits source-plugin content. It is not a substitute for a backup; review terms and manual edits before reversing a migration.

19. Analytics

What is recorded

Metric	Meaning
Views	A sermon player was viewed once per browser session.
Audio starts	Audio playback started.
Video starts	Video playback started.
25%, 50%, and 75%	Playback reached the corresponding milestone.
Completed	The media element reached its end.
Downloads	A visitor chose the plugin's audio-download link.
Shares	A plugin share control was used.

Privacy model

- Metrics are aggregate counters rather than personal visitor profiles.
- Raw visitor IP addresses are not stored by the plugin analytics feature.
- Daily detail follows the configured retention window, from 1 to 730 days.
- The browser-local queue and resume position remain in the visitor's browser.

Using the report

Open DIY Sermons > Analytics. Compare starts with completions, monitor downloads and shares, and identify sermons that may deserve a transcript, study guide, refreshed artwork, or featured placement. Analytics are directional and should not be treated as audited audience measurements.

20. System Health and Editorial Quality

Health checks

A daily scheduled check reviews a bounded group of recently modified published sermons. Administrators can also run a manual scan from DIY Sermons > System Health.

Items checked

- Presence of audio or video
- Presence of Scripture passages
- Presence of a transcript
- Presence of a featured image
- Podcast enclosure file size when audio is present
- Remote audio and video URL availability during a remote probe

Completeness score

The sermon list displays a percentage based on title, preached date, speakers, Scripture, media, excerpt, featured image, and transcript. The score is an editorial aid, not a publishing requirement.

Accessibility checklist

- Add accurate alternative text to every meaningful image.
- Provide a transcript and captions whenever possible.
- Use descriptive resource labels such as Download discussion guide instead of Click here.
- Check keyboard operation of players, filters, accordions, and share controls.
- Maintain sufficient color contrast in the active theme.
- Test focus order and headings on the final sermon page.

21. Multilingual Websites

Translation readiness

DIY Sermons uses a translatable text domain, declares custom fields for WPML, provides multilingual query hooks, detects Polylang language context, and supports language labels on resources and Bible passages.

Recommended process

1. Install and configure WPML or Polylang before translating the sermon archive.
2. Choose which sermon, speaker, campus, podcast, and taxonomy records should be translated.
3. Translate titles, excerpts, descriptions, transcripts, biographies, service times, and resource labels.
4. Configure allowed Bible translation IDs for the languages the church publishes.
5. Create language-specific podcast shows when directories require separate language feeds.
6. Test archive filters and permalinks in every language.

AI translations

The AI Translation Draft field is only a draft. Transfer reviewed content into the multilingual plugin's normal translation workflow.

22. SEO and Structured Data

Built-in behavior

- Sermon pages emit sermon-specific schema as CreativeWork or PodcastEpisode depending on their media and podcast relationships.
- Speaker relationships can be represented as Person objects with public social profiles.
- Audio and video can be represented as associated media.
- Podcast relationships can be represented as PodcastSeries.
- Fallback Open Graph and Twitter card tags are supplied when another recognized SEO provider is not active.

Rank Math integration

When Rank Math is active, DIY Sermons adds its sermon graph through Rank Math's JSON-LD integration rather than printing a second competing script.

Editorial SEO checklist

- Write a unique, descriptive sermon title.
- Add a concise excerpt and social description.
- Use a high-quality featured image with alternative text.
- Assign accurate speaker, series, topic, Bible book, campus, and service terms.
- Publish a transcript when available.
- Avoid changing feed slugs and sermon permalinks after distribution without redirects.

23. Roles, Security, Privacy, and Backups

Default role behavior

Role	Typical DIY Sermons access
Administrator	Settings, imports, podcasts, storage, AI, analytics, health, and all sermon editing.
Editor	Create, edit, publish, and delete sermon records according to the assigned sermon capabilities.
Other roles	No special DIY Sermons management capability unless a site administrator grants one.

Security practices

- Grant administrative capabilities only to trusted users.
- Use unique accounts and multi-factor authentication where available.
- Keep WordPress, PHP, the theme, and all plugins updated.
- Use least-privilege storage credentials and protect wp-config.php.
- Review AI output before approval and public publication.
- Do not place private pastoral or member information in sermon metadata.

External services

HelloAO receives editor-requested Bible API paths. The configured AI provider receives the bounded sermon snapshot only when an authorized editor asks for an AI plan. Embedded media providers, CDNs, storage services, and podcast directories may process normal request information under their own policies.

Backup schedule

- Back up the database daily for an active publishing site.
- Back up wp-content/uploads on a schedule appropriate to media volume.
- Export or document object-storage configuration separately without exposing secrets.
- Perform a restore test, not only a backup test.
- Take an on-demand backup before imports, URL changes, bulk operations, or uninstall cleanup.

24. Troubleshooting

Symptom	What to check
Sermon URL returns 404	Open Settings > Permalinks and choose Save Changes. Confirm the sermon is published and the slug is not conflicting with a page.
Player is empty	Confirm the audio, video, or livestream URL is complete and public. Test the URL directly in a private browser window.
YouTube or Vimeo will not embed	Confirm WordPress recognizes the provider URL and the provider permits embedding. Use the canonical public video URL.
Bible passage will not load	Run Test HelloAO connection, verify translation and book IDs, check outbound HTTPS, and retry after the service is available.
Podcast show has no episodes	Publish at least one sermon with an audio URL and assign it to the show directly or through an inclusion rule.
Podcast validation reports missing size	Enter the audio file size in bytes or use a local Media Library attachment whose size WordPress can read.
Podcast artwork fails	Use a square featured image at least 1400 x 1400 pixels; 3000 x 3000 is recommended.
AI controls are disabled	Confirm WordPress AI support, enable AI in DIY Sermons, configure Settings > Connectors, and verify the user has AI permission.
AI plan says sermon changed	Save the latest sermon edits and generate a fresh plan. The old plan is intentionally blocked.
S3 connection fails	Recheck region, bucket, endpoint, credentials, system time, TLS, and ListBucket permission.
S3 upload fails in browser	Add a CORS PUT rule for the exact site origin and confirm PutObject permission and public playback URL.
Filter does not affect a library	Place the filter inside the library or match its target ID to the intended library.
Import stops after 100 records	Return to Import & Migrate and choose Continue migration. Batching is deliberate.
Imported media is unavailable	The source URL may be private, expired, or tied to the old plugin. Replace it with a permanent public URL.
Theme styling looks unusual	Test plugin template mode, check theme global styles, and inspect custom CSS for generic audio, video, form, or article rules.

Information to collect before asking for support

- DIY Sermons version, WordPress version, PHP version, active theme, and relevant plugins
- The exact screen, shortcode, block, sermon ID, or podcast feed involved
- A copy of the visible error text with secrets removed
- The System Health report
- Whether the issue occurs with a default theme on staging
- Browser console or WordPress debug-log details when appropriate

25. Maintenance Checklist

Frequency	Tasks
Every sermon	Check title, excerpt, image alt text, date, speaker, campus, media, Scripture, transcript, resources, classifications, social text, and podcast assignment.
Weekly	Review scheduled/upcoming sermons, broken media alerts, podcast feed output, and recent analytics.
Monthly	Run the manual health check, review incomplete records, test one podcast feed, and verify backups.
Quarterly	Review speakers, campuses, staff permissions, classifications, old livestream URLs, and external directory links.
Before major events	Test livestream, featured placement, social preview, mobile layout, download links, and server capacity.
Before updates/imports	Create and verify a full backup, then test on staging.

Appendix A: Publication Checklist

- ☐ Sermon title is clear and unique
- ☐ Main description or notes are complete
- ☐ Excerpt is concise and useful
- ☐ Featured image is properly licensed and has alt text
- ☐ Preached date and lifecycle are correct
- ☐ Primary speaker and additional speakers are assigned
- ☐ Campus selection or all-campus setting is correct
- ☐ Series, topic, Bible book, ministry, and service terms are accurate
- ☐ Audio and video URLs work in a private window
- ☐ Duration and file size are supplied for podcast audio
- ☐ Livestream URL is current or removed after archival
- ☐ Bible translation, reference, text, attribution, and license are reviewed
- ☐ Transcript and captions are included when available
- ☐ Resources have descriptive labels and public URLs
- ☐ Podcast show, season, episode, type, and explicit setting are correct
- ☐ Social description and share image are ready
- ☐ Desktop, mobile, keyboard, and screen-reader basics are checked
- ☐ Final preview is approved by the responsible church staff member

Appendix B: Default Settings Reference

Setting	Default
Sermon labels	Sermon / Sermons
Slugs	sermons / speaker / campus
Multiple campuses	Disabled
Default Bible translation	eng_kjv
Allowed translations	eng_kjv
Bible cache	30 days
Sermons per page	12
Layout / columns	Grid / 3
Filters	Keyword, speaker, series, campus, topic, book, ministry, service, year, media
Sharing	Native, Facebook, X, LinkedIn, Bluesky, WhatsApp, Telegram, Reddit, email, copy
Analytics	Enabled; 365-day daily retention
AI	Enabled when WordPress AI is available; 20 requests per user per hour
Object storage	Disabled; prefix sermons; region us-east-1
Template mode	Plugin templates
Preserve on uninstall	Enabled

Appendix C: Glossary

Term	Meaning
BCP 47	A standard language tag, such as en-US.
Campus	A church location or congregation represented by a public profile.
CORS	Browser security rules that control cross-origin storage uploads.
Enclosure	The audio-file element in a podcast RSS episode.
Feed slug	The stable URL segment used by a Podcast Show RSS feed.
HelloAO	The Bible API service used to retrieve translation catalogs and passage text.
JSON-LD	A structured-data format used to describe sermons, media, people, and podcasts to search systems.
Lifecycle	The sermon's upcoming, live, published, or archived stage.
Object storage	Cloud file storage accessed through an S3-compatible API.
oEmbed	WordPress technology for converting supported media URLs into embedded players.
Podcast Show	A DIY Sermons record that owns an RSS feed and episode inclusion rules.
Shortcode	Bracketed WordPress markup that renders a plugin feature inside content.
Staging	A non-public copy of the site used to test changes safely.
Taxonomy	A WordPress classification such as series, topic, or Bible book.
Translation ID	The HelloAO identifier used to request a specific Bible translation.

Appendix D: Support and Resources

Product home and community support: <https://diychurchwebsite.com>

The planned self-service portal and forum are the appropriate places for usage questions, documented troubleshooting, feature ideas, and community help.

Before posting

Remove passwords, API keys, storage secrets, private email addresses, member information, and unredacted server logs from every support request.

Useful resources

- DIY Sermons built-in Shortcodes screen
- DIY Sermons System Health report
- WordPress Settings > Connectors for configured AI providers
- The selected podcast directory's current submission documentation
- The selected object-storage provider's current CORS and S3 credential documentation
- The attribution and license URL stored with each Bible passage

Thank you for using DIY Sermons and for serving the church community through accessible, well-organized teaching resources.