MaxChurches Complete Documentation Manual

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System Overview

MaxChurches is a comprehensive church management system designed to help churches manage their operations, members, finances, events, and more. The system is built with modern web technologies and provides a user-friendly interface for all church management needs.

Core Features

- **Member Management:** Complete member database with profiles, categories, and online registration
- **Financial Management:** Giving tracking, expense management, budgeting, and financial reporting
- **Event Management:** Service scheduling, event creation, attendance tracking, and guest management
- **Communication:** SMS messaging, WhatsApp integration, and email notifications
- **Reporting & Analytics:** Comprehensive reports and data visualization
- **Multi-church Support:** Manage multiple churches from a single platform

System Architecture

- **Framework:** Laravel 9+ (PHP 8.0+)
- **Database:** MySQL 8.0+ with utf8mb4 character set
- **Frontend:** Bootstrap 5 with responsive design
- **Authentication:** Laravel Sanctum for API tokens
- **Storage:** Local file storage with cloud integration options

Getting Started

Follow these steps to get started with MaxChurches:

1. Account Setup

Create your church account and set up your profile. This includes basic church information, contact details, and initial configuration.

2. User Management

Set up user accounts for church staff and volunteers. Configure roles and permissions for different access levels.

3. Member Import

Import existing member data from Excel files or manually add members through the system interface.

4. System Configuration

Configure system settings, categories, and preferences to match your church's specific needs.

User Guide

Detailed guides for using all system features:

Dashboard

The dashboard provides an overview of your church's key metrics and activities:

- Total Members count
- Total Giving amount
- Attendance statistics
- Growth trends
- Quick action buttons

Member Management

Comprehensive guide to managing church members, visitors, and online registrations:

Adding New Members

1. Navigate to Members ? Add Member
2. Fill in personal information
3. Add contact details
4. Select membership category
5. Assign to ministries (optional)
6. Save member record

Member Categories

- **Active Members:** Currently active church members
- **Inactive Members:** Members who are no longer active
- **Visitors:** People who visit but haven't joined
- **Rejected Applications:** Membership applications that were rejected

Member Import

1. Prepare Excel file with member data
2. Go to Members ? Import Members
3. Upload Excel file
4. Map columns to fields

5. Review and confirm import
6. Check for any errors

Financial Management

Managing church finances, giving, expenses, and financial reporting:

Recording Giving

1. Go to Finances ? Giving
2. Click "Add New Giving"
3. Select member or enter guest details
4. Enter amount and giving type
5. Add payment method
6. Save and print receipt

Giving Types

- **Tithes:** Regular tithe contributions
- **Offerings:** General offerings
- **Building Fund:** Special building fund contributions
- **Missions:** Mission support contributions
- **Other:** Other types of giving

Expense Management

1. Navigate to Finances ? Expenses
2. Click "Add Expense"
3. Select expense category
4. Enter amount and description
5. Attach receipt (optional)
6. Save expense record

Events & Services

Creating and managing church events, services, and special occasions:

Creating Events

1. Go to Events ? Create Event
2. Enter event details
3. Set date and time

4. Select event category
5. Add description and location
6. Save event

Event Types

- **Regular Services:** Weekly church services
- **Special Events:** Special occasions and celebrations
- **Conferences:** Church conferences and meetings
- **Weddings:** Wedding ceremonies
- **Revivals:** Revival meetings and crusades

Attendance Tracking

Recording and managing church attendance for services and events:

Recording Attendance

1. Go to Services ? Attendance
2. Select service or event
3. Mark members present/absent
4. Add visitor count
5. Save attendance record

Communication

SMS messaging, notifications, and communication tools:

SMS Messaging

1. Go to Messages ? SMS
2. Select recipients
3. Compose message
4. Preview message
5. Send SMS

WhatsApp Integration

- Send WhatsApp messages
- Group messaging
- Media sharing
- Scheduled messages

Administrator Guide

System administration and configuration guide for administrators and church leaders.

User Management

Managing system users, roles, and permissions:

Creating Users

1. Go to Accounts ? Create User
2. Enter user details
3. Assign username and password
4. Select user role
5. Set permissions
6. Save user account

User Roles

- **Super Admin:** Full system access
- **Church Admin:** Church-level administration
- **Pastor:** Ministry-level access
- **Staff:** Limited access
- **Viewer:** Read-only access

Church Setup

Initial church configuration and profile setup:

Church Registration

1. Access church registration form
2. Enter church details
3. Set location and contact info
4. Upload church logo
5. Configure basic settings
6. Complete registration

System Configuration

Configuring system settings and preferences:

General Settings

- Language & Locale
- Time Zone
- Date Format
- Currency Settings
- Email Configuration

SMS Configuration

1. Configure SMS gateway
2. Set API credentials
3. Test SMS delivery
4. Set message templates
5. Configure bulk messaging

Security Settings

Configuring system security and access controls:

Authentication

- Password Policies
- Session Timeout
- Two-Factor Authentication
- Account Lockout

Data Protection

- Data Encryption
- Access Logging
- Data Masking
- Backup Security

API Documentation

Complete REST API reference for developers and third-party integrations.

API Overview

The MaxChurches API provides comprehensive access to church management functionality through RESTful endpoints. Built with Laravel 9+ and Laravel Sanctum for authentication.

Base Information

- **Base URL:** https://maxchurches.com/api
- **Authentication:** Bearer Token (Laravel Sanctum)
- **Response Format:** JSON
- **Rate Limiting:** 60 requests/minute

Authentication

All API requests require a valid access token obtained through authentication.

Getting an Access Token

```
POST /api/auth/login
Content-Type: application/json

{
    "email": "user@example.com",
    "password": "password"
}
```

Using the Token

```
Authorization: Bearer your-access-token-here
```

Common Endpoints

Members

- `GET /api/members` - List all members
- `POST /api/members` - Create new member

- `GET /api/members/{id}` - Get member details
- `PUT /api/members/{id}` - Update member
- `DELETE /api/members/{id}` - Delete member

Finances

- `GET /api/giving` - List all giving records
- `POST /api/giving` - Record new giving
- `GET /api/expenses` - List all expenses
- `POST /api/expenses` - Record new expense

Events

- `GET /api/events` - List all events
- `POST /api/events` - Create new event
- `GET /api/events/{id}` - Get event details
- `PUT /api/events/{id}` - Update event

Database Schema

Complete database structure documentation for developers and DBAs.

Database Overview

MaxChurches uses MySQL 8.0+ with utf8mb4 character set for full Unicode support. The database is designed with proper normalization and relationships to ensure data integrity and performance.

Database Specifications

- **Database Engine:** MySQL 8.0+
- **Character Set:** utf8mb4
- **Storage Engine:** InnoDB
- **Total Tables:** 50+

Core Tables

Users Table

```
CREATE TABLE users (
    id BIGINT UNSIGNED AUTO_INCREMENT PRIMARY KEY,
    name VARCHAR(255) NOT NULL,
    email VARCHAR(255) UNIQUE NOT NULL,
    email_verified_at TIMESTAMP NULL,
    password VARCHAR(255) NOT NULL,
    remember_token VARCHAR(100) NULL,
    created_at TIMESTAMP NULL,
    updated_at TIMESTAMP NULL
);
```

Churches Table

```
CREATE TABLE churches (
    id BIGINT UNSIGNED AUTO_INCREMENT PRIMARY KEY,
    name VARCHAR(255) NOT NULL,
    address TEXT,
    phone VARCHAR(20),
    email VARCHAR(255),
    website VARCHAR(255),
    logo VARCHAR(255),
    created_at TIMESTAMP NULL,
    updated_at TIMESTAMP NULL
);
```

Members Table

```
CREATE TABLE members (
    id BIGINT UNSIGNED AUTO_INCREMENT PRIMARY KEY,
    member_id VARCHAR(50) UNIQUE NOT NULL,
    first_name VARCHAR(100) NOT NULL,
    last_name VARCHAR(100) NOT NULL,
    email VARCHAR(255),
    phone VARCHAR(20),
    address TEXT,
    date_of_birth DATE,
    membership_date DATE,
    status ENUM('active', 'inactive', 'pending', 'rejected') DEFAULT 'pending',
    church_id BIGINT UNSIGNED,
    created_at TIMESTAMP NULL,
    updated_at TIMESTAMP NULL,
    FOREIGN KEY (church_id) REFERENCES churches(id)
);
```

Financial Tables

Church Money Table

```
CREATE TABLE church_money (
    id BIGINT UNSIGNED AUTO_INCREMENT PRIMARY KEY,
    member_id BIGINT UNSIGNED,
    amount DECIMAL(10,2) NOT NULL,
    giving_type VARCHAR(100),
    payment_method VARCHAR(50),
    description TEXT,
    date_given DATE NOT NULL,
    church_id BIGINT UNSIGNED,
    created_at TIMESTAMP NULL,
    updated_at TIMESTAMP NULL,
    FOREIGN KEY (member_id) REFERENCES members(id),
    FOREIGN KEY (church_id) REFERENCES churches(id)
);
```

Event Tables

Events Table

```
CREATE TABLE events (
    id BIGINT UNSIGNED AUTO_INCREMENT PRIMARY KEY,
    title VARCHAR(255) NOT NULL,
    description TEXT,
    event_date DATE NOT NULL,
    start_time TIME,
    end_time TIME,
    location VARCHAR(255),
```

```
    event_type VARCHAR(100),
    church_id BIGINT UNSIGNED,
    created_at TIMESTAMP NULL,
    updated_at TIMESTAMP NULL,
    FOREIGN KEY (church_id) REFERENCES churches(id)
);
```

Deployment Guide

Complete installation and deployment guide for MaxChurches.

System Requirements

Ensure your server meets the following requirements before installation:

Server Requirements

- PHP 8.0 or higher
- MySQL 5.7+ or MariaDB 10.2+
- Apache 2.4+ or Nginx 1.18+
- Composer 2.0+
- Node.js 16+ (for assets)

PHP Extensions

- OpenSSL PHP Extension
- PDO PHP Extension
- Mbstring PHP Extension
- Tokenizer PHP Extension
- XML PHP Extension
- GD PHP Extension

Installation

Step-by-step installation process for MaxChurches:

1. Clone Repository

```
git clone https://github.com/maxchurches/maxchurches.git
cd maxchurches
```

2. Install Dependencies

```
composer install
npm install
```

3. Environment Setup

```
cp .env.example .env
php artisan key:generate
```

4. Build Assets

```
npm run build
# or for development:
npm run dev
```

Configuration

Configure the application settings and environment variables:

Environment Variables

```
APP_NAME="MaxChurches"
APP_ENV=production
APP_KEY=base64:your-app-key
APP_DEBUG=false
APP_URL=https://yourdomain.com

DB_CONNECTION=mysql
DB_HOST=127.0.0.1
DB_PORT=3306
DB_DATABASE=maxchurches
DB_USERNAME=your_username
DB_PASSWORD=your_password
```

Database Setup

Setting up the database and running migrations:

Run Migrations

```
php artisan migrate
php artisan db:seed
```

Storage Setup

```
php artisan storage:link
chmod -R 755 storage
chmod -R 755 bootstrap/cache
```

Security Setup

Configure security settings for production deployment:

File Permissions

```
chmod -R 755 storage
chmod -R 755 bootstrap/cache
chmod 644 .env
chmod 600 storage/app/*.key
```

Environment Security

- Set APP_DEBUG=false
- Use strong APP_KEY
- Restrict file access
- Hide sensitive files

Troubleshooting

Common issues and solutions for users and administrators.

Common User Issues

Login Issues

If you're having trouble logging in, check the following:

- Verify your username and password
- Check if your account is active
- Clear browser cache and cookies
- Contact your system administrator

Data Import Issues

Common data import problems and solutions:

- Ensure Excel file format is correct
- Check column headers match expected format
- Verify data types and formats
- Check file size limits

Common Admin Issues

User Access Issues

Common user access problems and solutions:

- Check user account status (active/inactive)
- Verify role permissions
- Reset user password
- Check session timeout settings
- Review access logs

System Performance

Performance optimization tips:

- Monitor server resources
- Optimize database queries

- Clear system cache
- Review error logs
- Update system components

Deployment Issues

Permission Errors

Common permission issues and solutions:

- Set correct file permissions: `chmod -R 755 storage bootstrap/cache`
- Ensure web server owns files: `chown -R www-data:www-data .`
- Check .env file permissions: `chmod 644 .env`
- Verify PHP can write to storage directories

Database Connection Issues

Database connection problems:

- Verify database credentials in .env file
- Check database server is running
- Ensure database exists and user has permissions
- Test connection: `php artisan tinker`
- Check firewall settings