

CHURCH BULLETIN

A church bulletin is one of the best public relations tools for the church. However, the big potential for this small communication piece is often overlooked. What other communication piece does a church have that almost everyone reads weekly?

Consider your current church bulletin. What other information could be included? What would you find confusing if you were a visitor? Help your congregation connect with each other and be part of a community with this important printed piece.

Style

DO NOT use more than two fonts. Your computer will give you many more options. It's a temptation better left alone.

DO NOT use many different colors for different texts throughout the bulletin. Rainbows are pretty, but that many colors should be left for the sky.

DO use font sizes that everyone can read. Your bulletin shouldn't need to be handed out with a magnifying glass.

DO use specialized fonts sparingly. DO NOT use them for body copy. *Specialty fonts in body copy make for very difficult reading.*

DO use a consistent style from week to week. Headings should always have the same font and size. Body copy should always have the same font and size.

DON'T put everything in all bold, italics, underline, ALL CAPS, or any other emphasizing tool. IF YOU EMPHASIZE ALMOST EVERY WORD. NOTHING ENDS UP BEING EMPHASIZED.

DO number your pages if your bulletin more closely resembles a booklet rather than a simple brochure.

Content

DO be careful about including someone's personal contact information, especially if you put your bulletin information on the internet. A person who simply meant to have a prayer group at their house now has their home address, phone number, and sometimes e-mail address posted online for anyone to see.

DO include your church's CCLI license number for your church if you print music and/or words in the bulletin.

DO consider including a church map that helps visitors find Sabbath School rooms, restrooms, mother's room, etc.

DO list the ages for children's Sabbath School divisions. This may differ from church to church and a visitor might take their child to the wrong class.

DON'T use acronyms and Adventist jargon. You may know what it means, but you may also be leaving a visitor out. "All SDA's are invited for the AY meeting to close the Sabbath in the Dorcas room. Haystacks to follow."

DON'T use the same wording every week. If you have to put in the same announcement multiple weeks, change the wording or add updates so that it catches people's attention again.

DO proofread. Again, proofread. Now find someone else to proofread. If you don't, we can guarantee you the congregation is proofreading during church.

DO make sure everyone's name is spelled correctly. One of the fastest ways to make sure someone doesn't participate in church again is to spell their name wrong.

DO be consistent with titles. If your church lists Dr. or Elder, be sure to do so for everyone that has that title.

DO be concise with your writing. Not - "If we look at the weather report on Saturday night and then we determine whether the campout on Sunday will happen or not, we will try to reach everyone by either phone or e-mail to let them know of the plans." Try - "We will contact you if the campout is canceled due to rain."

DO ask for permission when sharing prayer requests. Someone may want prayer for their situation and feel safe telling the pastor or church office. However, they may not want their problem shared with the entire congregation, and – if your bulletin goes on the internet – the entire world.

DO provide information on how to contact key church staff, including phone numbers and e-mails.

DO include times for services, events, and office hours. Why make people guess?

DO publish all church contact information, including address, phone number, e-mail address and website.

DO check the conference website at www.ncc.adventist.org/whatsnew and click on the link titled "For Your Church Bulletin." In there, you will find announcements from around your conference that you can copy and paste into your bulletin. Also, consider submitting an event for your church to info@nccsda.com.

DO double check to make sure someone who signed up for special music two months ago is still planning to play. People's schedules change and double checking people's participation the week before Sabbath will help your bulletin be more accurate.