

CHURCH NEWSLETTER

A church newsletter connects members with each other and their church. It helps them feel part of a larger community. By including information about other members, church events, various ministries, and other information about the church, a newsletter serves an important purpose for its members.

Style

DO NOT use more than two fonts. A font for each different article makes a newsletter confusing.

DO develop a hierarchy. Which is the most important article? That should be clear because the headline and pictures will be bigger.

DO use font sizes that everyone can read.

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 format from week to week. Headings should always have the same font and size. Body copy should always have the same font and size. Maintaining a consistent look from newsletter to newsletter creates a brand for your publication and helps people to identify it better.

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.

Content

DON'T use copyrighted information. If you find it from a website, it's not yours. It's wrong and can also create legal problems. When you use copyrighted information and then post your newsletter online, it becomes searchable by anyone in the world.

DO cover church events for your newsletter. Besides a description of what happened, be sure to ask people there for quotes and include those in your article. People love to see their names in print and to read what others have to say.

DO take pictures at church events. While people are thrilled to see their names, they also love to see pictures.

DO be careful about including someone's personal contact information, especially if you put your newsletter 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 proofread. Again, proofread. Now find someone else to proofread.

DO make sure everyone's name is spelled correctly. Your article may be wonderful, but if a person's name is spelled incorrectly, that's all they will remember.

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

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

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

DO ask others to submit articles as well, or better yet, ask someone to be responsible for one section of the newsletter. A church communication leader is very busy and can cover more church information by including others. Also, having a newsletter staff will help others take interest in the publication as well.

DO mail or hand out your newsletter at the same time each month so people can expect it and look forward to it.

DON'T print information unless you know it's true. Printing rumors can lead to a lot of trouble.

DON'T print sensitive information. If you have a seminar to help people whose marriage is in trouble, it's not the best to print an article about that event. People who attend won't want that shared. When in doubt, don't print.

DO consider writing articles about members, including those recently baptized or who have just joined the church. It helps people connect with each other.

DO consider including a calendar of upcoming church events. This allows church members to plan ahead.

DO include a corner for kids. A kids' section can include games, pictures, etc.

DO include a section on how someone can submit information for the newsletter. If someone really loves your newsletter, they may want to contribute to a future issue.

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 for your newsletter that you can copy and paste into your publication. Also, consider submitting an event for your church to info@nccsda.com.