

All Saints Style Sheet

all caps

Do not submit copy in all capital letters; it will need to be completely retyped. The graphics assistant will decide when all caps might be appropriate, as for a headline.

abbreviations

Use only after first using the full name: *All Saints Lutheran has voted to ... and this decision by ASL is binding; All Saints Youth ...for an ASY gathering*

abbreviations of states

Use standard abbreviations, except for Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Ohio, Texas and Utah. (Memory aid: Spell out the names of the two states that are not part of the contiguous United States and of the continental states that are five letters or fewer.)

Do not use postal abbreviations, as they are meant for postal contexts only and can be confusing: (e.g. *AK, AL, MA, ME, MO*).

Here are the Associated Press state abbreviations: *Ala., Ariz., Ark., Calif., Colo., Conn., Del., Fla., Ga., Ill., Ind., Kan., Ky., La., Md., Mass., Mich., Minn., Miss., Mo., Mont., Neb., Nev., N.H., N.J., N.M., N.Y., N.C., N.D., Okla., Ore., Pa., R.I., S.C., S.D., Tenn., Vt., Va., Wash., W.Va., Wis., Wyo.*

Use a comma to separate city from state: *... in Minnetonka, Minn.*

Use a comma after a state when used with a city: *...in Aberdeen, S.D., where he was born...*

Do not add Minn. for local cities, including *Minnetonka, Hopkins, Minneapolis, St. Paul*; or for very familiar cities and towns in Minnesota: *Mankato, Duluth*

State may be omitted for well-known cities: *headquartered in Chicago, San Francisco, Boston*

Do not abbreviate states when used without a city: *...traveling in Texas, Arizona and Colorado.*

ages

Always use figures: *He was 17 years old. He was a 17-year-old high school student. The baby is 3 months old. All 5-year-olds are welcome to attend. She lived to be 89.*

Note: Hyphenate (as above) when the age phrase is used as an adjective.

Bible, Holy Bible

Always capitalized; however, the adjective *biblical* is always uncapitalized: *...will be studying the Bible and discussing biblical interpretations*

Bible verses

Put one space after the colon, as *Mark 3: 4-7, II Chronicles 2: 3*

Use Roman numerals for multiple books of the Bible: *II Kings*, not *2 Kings*

Do not abbreviate books of the Bible.

boldface and italics

Generally, do not use. The graphics assistant will decide how to handle headlines, pulled quotations and quoting of long passages of material.

Do not use boldface and italics within text for emphasis.

bulleted lists

Each item in the list should be lower-case. Do not use a comma after each item nor a period at the end of the list.

Try to keep all items parallel in construction: e.g. all start with a noun.

capitalization of groups and titles

Capitalize a title when it precedes a name or is used as a name (proper noun): *Pastor Chris and Pastor Tim, the Hunger Team, the Church Council*; but use lowercase for all common nouns: *call a pastor, speak to a councilmember, talk to a team member*

Capitalize areas of the church that are named (i.e. proper nouns, specific to All Saints): *Fellowship Hall, Loaves & Fishes Rooms, Deborah Room*

Use lowercase for general areas (i.e. common nouns found in all churches): *altar, narthex, chapel, library, lounge, kitchen*

dates

Always include the day of the week (it is easier for readers to perceive) with a comma after it: *...will meet on Wednesday, December 3, at 5:30 p.m.*

Do not use ordinal suffixes (*-th, -st, -rd*) for dates: *...on January 1, ...before February 28, etc.*

Do not use the year when it's the current year.

Use a comma after the full date phrase: *...occurred on July 3, 1997, during a storm...*

Do not use commas when date is unspecified (i.e., only month and year are used): *The new setting will be used starting January 2010 and will continue...*

e-mail:

Use a hyphen. If the word begins a sentence, use *E-mail*.

exclamation point:

Use only one.

font

Submit copy in Times New Roman, especially if you are writing it on a machine outside the church. Do not use display fonts, even for headlines; the graphics assistant will make these decisions based on what is most effective and appropriate for the publication.

frequently confused usages:

affect (v.) *How does this affect the group?*

effect: (n.) *What effect will it have?*

Note: *affect* can less often be a noun, as in a term for facial expression; *effect* can sometimes be a verb, as in *effecting a change*

aid: help, assistance or a tip (*to give aid, to aid in preventing, a helpful memory aid*)

aide: a person (*the teacher's aide said..., a health aide will be provided*)

compliment or **complimentary** refers to expressing civility or admiration, as in *wrote a very complimentary note*; also free, as *complimentary tickets*

complement or **complementary** refers to completing something: *a full complement, colors that complement a décor*

fewer / less: *fewer* is for number, *less* is for amounts, as *Fewer people brought in less food*. Memory aid: use *fewer* when the noun modified is a plural (*fewer numbers, fewer books, fewer members, fewer problems*); *less* is always used with a singular noun (*less time, less enthusiasm, less conflict, less profit*)

its / it's

Use *it's* as a contraction ("it is" or less commonly "it has"): *It's time to go; it's been a good year*.

Use *its* as a possessive pronoun (like his, hers, ours, etc.): *The committee shared its findings*.

Note: These possessive nouns require the apostrophe: *children's clothes, committee's project*

These possessive pronouns do not require apostrophes: *his, hers, its, ours, theirs*

Test by seeing if *it's* can be read as *it is* and make sense; if not, it should be written *its*.

pickup (n.) *The pickup collided with the SUV*.

pick up (v. phrase): *Pick up your child after the party*.

pick-up (adj.): *The pick-up spot will be the front parking lot*.

sign-up (n. or adj.): *Look for the sign-up sheet at the Welcome Center*.

sign up (v. phrase): *Be sure to sign up by March 15*.

group names at All Saints

Spell, capitalize and punctuate as follows: *Crossroads, F.I.R.E., OWLS, Trippin' Tuesday, Parents Night Out, 56'ers*

hyphen vs. dash

A hyphen joins two or more words, in effect making them into one: *food pick-up, day-to-day activities, one-on-one meeting, ship-to-shore radio, third-grade pupil*. Note: Test by asking, Is she a third pupil? a grade pupil? No; she's a third-grade pupil.

A hyphen may indicate a span: *ages 2-11, the February-May term, 1st-5th graders*

An em dash is two hyphens (or alt 0150) indicating an interruption in syntactical flow: *Give generously—you will be glad you did*.

Always use periods instead of hyphens in phone numbers: *952.935.4330*

money

Use figures: *\$10, \$5.99, 25 cents*

Do not use the decimal point and cents positions if there are zero cents.

Do not space between the dollar sign and the number.

If a sentence must start with a dollar amount, write it out: *Five hundred dollars was raised...*

Millions and billions are hard to read as figures in text; use words: *ELCA World Hunger hopes to contribute more than \$2 million in the next 10 years*.

Avoid using *under* and *over* for amounts; use *more than, less than*.

months

Write out, do not abbreviate: *...will meet on January 10, February 8, March 11, April 13*

Do not use note-taking form, such as *11-17-09* or *11/17/09* (exception: *9/11* in reference to the attacks on September 11, 2001).

numbers and figures

Write out numbers one through nine; switch to figures at 10 (exceptions: dates, ages, grades, prices, times, measurements). Do not start a sentence with a figure; write out the number (the exception is a year: *2009 was a good year for All Saints.*). For numbers over 999,999, use figure and word: *24 million people, \$5 billion, a trillion germs*. Use a comma in 4-figure numbers (except for years): *...received 1,372 pounds of food; spent 5,000 for furnishings in 2009.*

O, Oh and oh

O is always capitalized, is never followed by punctuation, and is used primarily in religious or poetic contexts. The interjection *oh* is only capitalized if it is the first word of a sentence or quotation; it is usually followed by a comma or some other punctuation (such as *!* or *?*). It can express strong emotion or just a reflective pause: *Oh, I don't know. Oh! I forgot! Oh, no, I wouldn't say that.*

pastor

When used as a title, always use with the name: *Pastor Johnson, Pastor Tim, Pastor Linda James*. Capitalize only when it precedes the name, not when used as a noun on its own: *...or speak to the pastor for budget suggestions*

personal pronouns referring to deities

Do not capitalize *my, he, him, his, you, your*, etc., unless reproducing or citing published material.

phone numbers

Use periods rather than hyphens: *Call the church office at 952.934.3550.*

phone number and e-mail address with a person's name

Rewrite the sentence if necessary so they can be included parenthetically after the name: *You may contact John Smith (952.000.0000x13 or johnsmith@whatever.net).* Note: This is the most space-economical and clearest way of giving both a phone number and email address. It also avoids the confusion some people have if an e-mail address is at the end of a sentence. With the period outside the parenthesis, it is clear that it is not part of the e-mail address.

plurals

Plural nouns do not require apostrophes.

possessive apostrophe

Follow conventional rules: *a meeting at Lou Johnson's home, a meeting at the Johnsons' home; meeting at Dave Owen's home* (if his surname is Owen), *meeting at Dave Owens's home* (if his surname is Owens), *meetings at the group leaders' homes*. Exceptions are *Jesus* and *Moses*, which do not add an extra *s*: *to do Jesus' bidding, following Moses' leadership*

Note: Test by asking if whatever precedes the apostrophe is who it belongs to: *the Johnsons' home*—the home belongs to the Johnsons; *Dave Owen's home*—the home belongs to Dave Owen.

Do not use *All Saint's*; some rare cases might call for *All Saints'*, but you can usually rewrite to avoid it: *the history of All Saints* instead of *All Saints' history*

Note: Test by substituting a different church name, such as Grace Lutheran: *Grace Lutheran's [All Saints'] site on the corner of...* but, *the Grace Lutheran council [All Saints council] will meet...* Another sure fix is to use the full name: *All Saints Lutheran's contingent will leave...*

No apostrophe is necessary when All Saints is used as adjective: *All Saints congregational meeting, All Saints choirs will perform, meeting of the Saints Men*

quotation marks

Use them whenever you are directly quoting someone else's words.

Do not use them for emphasis within text: Wrong: *Get ready for a "good time" as the confirmation class presents...*

semi-colon

Use to separate phrases that contain commas: *Attending were Marcia Darrow, an attorney; Fred Andrews, a senator, writer and former astronaut; and Henry Thomas, a physician.* Note: Retain the semi-colon before the final *and*.

Use to link two independent clauses when either using a conjunction or making two separate sentences is not desirable: *Trust in the Lord; he is your strength.*

Generally, do not use when the second part of the sentence is not an independent clause:

Wrong: *Today is the start of Advent; a time of anticipation.*

Correct: *Today is the start of Advent, a time of anticipation.* Or, *Today is the start of Advent; this time of anticipation is deeply significant to Christians.*

space after a period

Use one, not two.

times

Always use figures: *1 a.m., 12 noon, 4:30 p.m.*

Use *a.m.* (not *am*, *AM* or *A.M.*) and *p.m.* (not *pm*, *P.M.* or *PM*).

Do not use *o'clock*.

Use *12 noon*, not *12 p.m.* and *12 midnight*, not *12 a.m.*

On-the-hour times will not have the colon and zeroes: *11 a.m.*, not *11:00 a.m.* Eliminating the colon and double zeroes gives a cleaner look and is easier to understand.

Be sure a time span is clearly indicated: *...from 7:30-9 p.m... from 7:30 a.m.- 9 p.m.*

Avoid redundant phrases: Wrong: *6 a.m. in the morning; 7:30 p.m. each Wednesday evening in Lent*

Correct: *6 a.m. Sunday, Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m.*

titles of books

Use italics for book titles; use quotation marks for chapters within books (exception: *the Bible*); e.g. The group will discuss *How to Live a More Meaningful Life* at its Tuesday meeting, focusing on Chapter 3, "Finding Your Way."

titles of poems and movies

Use quotation marks: *...will discuss Frost's "The Road Not Taken" at the gathering; ...an excursion to the Excelsior Dock Theater to see "Finding Nemo"*

Common Misuses and Other Issues to Consider:

multiple exclamation points

Don't do it; one is sufficient.

quoting thank-yous in the Scribe

If quoting directly, be sure the note is clearly attributed to its author and the context for the thank-you is given.

using a comma just for a dramatic pause

Don't use: Wrong: *Our own Tom and Sarah Evenson, will present a fabulous Christmas program.*

Correct: *Our own Tom and Sarah Evenson will present...*

emphasis

Do not use capitals or underscoring for emphasis within text: Wrong: *Stay for a lecture by famed local author JUDITH GUEST, who will discuss her novels.* Correct: *...famed local author Judith Guest, who will discuss her novels.*

"smart quotes"

Periods and commas go inside quote marks, even when the marks are around a single word: *You can browse the Giving Market with your "shopping list."*

subject-verb agreement

Subject and verb should agree in number: *Your generosity and faithfulness in giving enable us to...* (Note that a plural verb is required for the plural subject); *A series of new-member gatherings is planned...*

Note: Test by taking out the phrase after the preposition (*in giving / of new-member gatherings*) and seeing if it sounds correct (*Your generosity and faithfulness enable us.../ A series is planned.*)

personal pronouns

A pronoun and its antecedent should agree in number and should be gender-inclusive:

Wrong: *If your son or daughter is graduating this spring, give their name to the office...*

Correct: *If your son or daughter is graduating...give his or her name to the office.*

passive voice

Avoid overuse of passive voice in verbs, which can give a deadening or overly distanced tone to your words:

Wrong: *The church council was then consulted, the plan was investigated, and the decision was made. The contractor was informed, and the plans were discontinued. Notification of the decision will be made to the congregation next month.*

Better: *The church council, after thorough consultation, decided not to proceed. The committee chair informed the contractor of the decision, and the plan was dropped. The chairperson will officially inform the congregation next month.*