

A
Handbook
For
Congregational
Archives

Courtesy of the
Pacific Southwest District Archives
Spring 2007

*I remember the days of old,
I meditate on all thou hast done.*
Psalm 143:5

As we go through life, most of us like to pause at times to remember our past, and those people God gave to help us along life's path. Memory is God's wonderful gift, enabling us to recall joys and sorrows in our lives. Beneath it all, we see God's everlasting grace and love through His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Archives of the church are the preserved memories of the God's acts of working through His people and graciously leading them. Such remembrance is for our appreciation and encouragement, as we continue in His work, obedient to His command.

Remembrance is one of the great themes in God's Word. As Joshua and the children of Israel were poised to cross the Jordan River into the Promised Land, God told them to select one man from each of the twelve tribes to carry a stone as he crossed the dry river bed and to arrange the stones in a mound for a monument of remembrance. When future generations asked, "What mean these stones?" they would be told of God's mighty deliverance in order to keep the memory alive for generations to come.

In the same manner, the church's archives are established for the remembrance of God's almighty acts in that local congregation. In these records, we can look back to see His hand of blessing leading the congregation.

Michael Doyle,
District Archivist

In Nomine Jesu!

The Congregational Archives

In order for the memory of the each congregation to remain alive and show future generations God's hand of blessings upon it, it is important that the church maintains reliable records and preserves materials about the life of the parish. The Congregational Archives should include the following:

Congregational Information:

- Records: Membership, Baptisms, Confirmations, Marriages, Funerals
- Names of Church Officers
- Names of Church Organizations and Officers
- Dates Organizations were Established
- Congregational Minutes
- Church Organizations' Minutes
- Constitutions (Dated)
- History of Congregation
- End of the Year Reports
- Pictures of Pastors—Dated and Identified
- Yearly Statistical Reports

Additional Congregational Information:

- Anniversary Booklets
- Dedication Booklets
- Bulletins
- Installation Folders
- Newspaper Articles
- Pictures of Important Events—Dated and Identified
- Church Newsletters
- Artifacts
- Documents

School Information:

- Names of Students by Grade Level and Year
- Names of Graduates and Year Graduated
- Names and Pictures of Principals and Years Served
- Names and Pictures of Teachers and Years Served
- Pictures of Students and Special Events—Dated and Identified
- History of School

Storage of Materials

In order to keep materials organized and accessible, it is suggested to have a special filing cabinet(s) and space for the Congregational Archives. Keep anniversary booklets, installation folders, dedication booklets, all the old bulletins, newsletters, records, newspaper articles, congregational minutes, and pictures. Place all identified pictures in acid free sleeves to help preserve them.

Help Available for Archives

May God bless you in this important labor of love in preserving the memory of your congregation and God's blessings upon it in its years of existence. If the District Archivist, Michael Doyle, can be of help to you in this important undertaking of preserving your congregation's history, please feel free to contact him at (909) 985-5948. He would be more than happy to assist you in any way possible.

Since the memory of each congregation is the archives of that church, we encourage each congregation to keep their history up to date and forward important information about the congregation such as: anniversary booklets, installation folders, dedication booklets, newspaper articles, and pictures of important events in the life of the congregation, to the District Archives in care of Michael Doyle, 2085 N. Palm Ave., Upland, CA 91784. Thank you for your help in preserving the memory of your church.

Soli Deo Gloria!