



How to Hit the Headlines

**Guidance notes
on writing press releases**

with additional material

**Email 'netiquette'
Handling Media interviews**

Other information and useful contacts.

The Methodist Press Officer:-

Rev Robert (Roy) Cooper
13 Brooklands Road, Newtownards, Co Down, BT23 4TL
(028) 9181 5959 comms@irishmethodist.org

Methodist Communications Committee Convenor

Dr Lindsay Easson
5 Highfields Grove, Lisburn, Co Antrim, BT28 3GH
(028) 92678241 lindsay.easson@btinternet.com

Ulster Television Religious Advisor Rev Robert P. Roddie,
118 Kings Road, Knock, Belfast, BT5 7BX robin@roddie.plus.com

Downtown Radio Religious Advisor Rev David Campton
9 Rosepark, Belfast, BT5 7RG. david.campton@irishmethodist.org

RTE Methodist representative Rev John Stephens
Dublin Central Mission, Mount Tabor, Sandymount Green, Dublin
dcmiss@iol.ie

Methodist website
www.irishmethodist.org

Methodist Website Manager
Info@irishmethodist.org

Further guidance on writing for press articles and Christian publications.

A search on the Internet will bring up many useful and interesting sites.

The Edgehill Christian Education Centre (ECEC) run training events from time to time which may be relevant.

Email ecec@irishmethodist.org.

Phone (028) 9068 6938

Post:

Mrs. Kay Irvine, ECEC, 9 Lennoxvale, Belfast, BT9 5BY
Northern Ireland

**The Methodist Church in Ireland
Communications Committee
2005**

Handling Media Interviews

CONTENTS

As a result of issuing press releases requests may be received to take part in broadcast interviews or provide interviews for feature articles to be written by press reporters

These could be on-the-spot interviews over the telephone, short studio-based interviews during music / chat shows, more formal interviews or participation in panels.

Particular skills are involved in handling this situation and the Methodist Church provides training for spokespeople who are likely to be asked to represent the Methodist viewpoint.

If you are contacted by the media to do this and are not sure what to do contact the Methodist Press Officer for advice.

Interviews concerning local events are unlikely to cause a problem but important guidance points are given below:-

- If you do not feel competent to handle the interview then say NO.
- If you need time to think about the subject or to seek advice before giving a telephone interview then say so. Although the reporter may be working to a deadline they will have to wait if you need 5, 15 or 30 minutes to gather your thoughts or consult someone.
- Beforehand work out the main points that you want to get across.
- Practise how to put your points across briefly and clearly - you are likely to have less than 20 seconds to make your point!
- Use conversational language and avoid jargon
- Remember that you are speaking to the listener or viewer, not the interviewer
- Ask the reporter to tell you what they are specifically going to ask you about in the interview. Make it clear if there is any material you are not prepared to comment on
- Make sure that you know if it is to be a live or recorded interview
- You are the person with the story - so say what YOU want to say even if it not what the reporter asked you about!
- Even a 'friendly' reporter is likely to ask you a question with a sting in the tail so that it will liven up the broadcast!
- If in doubt - don't comment!

| | |
|---|-----------|
| WHY? | 1 |
| WHAT? | 3 |
| WHEN? | 4 |
| HOW? | 5 |
| Photographs | 6 |
| A Poor Press Release | 7 |
| Anatomy of a good Press Article | 8 |
| A photograph that makes the story | 9 |
| Writing and formatting a press release | 10 |
| Sample Press Release format | 12 |
| The Methodist Newsletter | 14 |
| Sending effective Press Releases | 15 |
| e-mail netiquette | 18 |
| The Church and the Internet | 21 |
| Handling Press Interviews | 22 |
| Other information and useful contacts | 23 |

The Church and the Internet

- The Methodist Church in Ireland has an official website at www.irishmethodist.org
- News of forthcoming events can be emailed to the website manager at info@irishmethodist.org
- This website also provides contact details for Methodist ministers and a wide range of 'online' Methodists
- Many individual Methodist Churches have their own web sites. These can have an important role in publicising the presence of local churches to a wider audience. By providing details of Service times, church organisations and special events they can enable newcomers or visitors to make appropriate contact with the church.
- A web site adds an international dimension to the witness of a church. Messages and responses are often received which show that a well designed and maintained web site can be a very effective way of sharing news of how the Lord is a work
- Past press releases can be also published on the website along with appropriate photographs
- Care should be taken not to publish personal details, phone numbers or photographs of identifiable people without their knowledge and consent, or in the case of children, the consent of parents or guardians.
- Care should also be taken when including email addresses on web sites as they can be picked up by auto-searches and targeted with junk email. This can be circumvented by including extra spaces in the printed form of the email address.

Avoid passing on anything that smacks of a chain letter, especially the bleeding heart chain letters.

Most of them are hoaxes, anyway. If you receive such a chain letter, delete it. You don't have to make an issue of it with the sender; just delete it. I promise. You won't be run over by a garbage truck the next day.

E-mail netiquette just takes a little forethought. If it helps, think of e-mail as an electronic way of sending a personal note. Your recipients will notice your thoughtfulness, and will appreciate it.

Why...

publicise what is happening in the Church?

We have a message to proclaim

To put it simply – 'We have a message to proclaim and many stories to tell'. Jesus challenged his followers to let their light so shine before men that they may see their good works and praise their Father in heaven. Christians should not be reluctant, then, to put news of the 'Work of God' in the media. With so much happening throughout the connexion it is important to let others know that Methodism within Ireland is alive, active and relevant today.

We have a distinctive witness

While we may be the smallest of the four main churches in Ireland, we have a distinctive witness and a strong story to publicise with many examples of positive Christian work being undertaken throughout the country. Media insiders who know the Methodist Church in Ireland have commented that we often fail to put across our work effectively and tend to 'hide our light under a bushel'! One of the aims of this leaflet is to encourage everyone across the Methodist connection to be more proactive in publishing news of the work and witness of the Methodist Church in Ireland.

We have the opportunity

We are now living in a twenty-four hour multi-media communications environment and there are an increasingly diverse number of ways to use the latest technology to let people know about what is happening within our Churches. While traditional print and analogue broadcast media remain powerful, the digital revolution has brought about revolutionary changes in the speed and ease of communication through email and the internet, mobile phones and text messaging and a wide range of local broadcasting channels and local papers. Opportunities abound for ways in which the local church can publicise its activities and witness to the local community, and with the internet even reach a world-wide audience.

We have to think ahead

Church 'news' must compete for space in the news media. Editors are looking for stories which will sell papers, or attract an audience, and which are 'newsworthy', representing the special, the unusual and the different. Editors work to deadlines and cannot use material from poorly prepared press articles providing the wrong sort of information. To ensure that Church news is featured churches need to be pro-active, providing local media with advance notice of events, topical news and well taken photos. Preparing information for the press therefore requires effort and forward planning on the part of churches.

We have to think big

At a national level the Press Officer of the Methodist Church in Ireland is in regular touch with the main media through official press releases, statements and broadcast opportunities. Local churches should be aware that their news might have a wider appeal. Forwarding press articles to the Press Officer will allow him (or her) to feature the activities of the Methodist Church more effectively in the national media.

We have to ask somebody to do it

At a Society or Circuit level asking someone to take on the job of 'Press Secretary' could be a big step forward. Using the information in this booklet as a guide their role would be to spot the newsworthy events, prepare appropriate press releases and send copies to the local media, the Methodist Newsletter and the Methodist Press Officer.

And finally...

Whatever the issue or event, we hope that you will find this booklet useful in helping to proclaim the work of the Methodist Church in Ireland.

Don't send e-mail that has been forwarded two hundred times, and includes the list of forwards.

I make it a practice of deleting without reading all e-mails with an FW: in the subject line. I haven't missed anything important yet.

Don't send one-line e-mails "thanks."

For someone who receives a lot of e-mail, these are annoyances, especially if the recipient can't figure out who's thanking them or why.

Always sign your e-mail.

Include a sig file in your e-mail template and you won't have to think about it. What's a sig file? An electronic signature block that includes your name, your company name, tag line and contact information. Make sure you include your e-mail address in this signature block. Many times e-mail programs will not display the address on the "sender" line, but instead will give the person's name or nickname, depending on how their e-mail is configured. Test your own by e-mailing yourself. If your e-mail address does not show up in your heading (the part above the body of the e-mail), you should definitely add it to your signature block. Yes, your recipients can find your address by jumping through a few e-mail hoops, but why make them?

Don't use the "reply" feature for long e-mails.

Just cut and paste the section that you're responding to.

Don't type in all caps.

It feels like you're SHOUTING. Use appropriate capitalization and punctuation. Avoid excessive abbreviation, and leaving out vowels like this: **avd xsv abbr & lvng out vwls lk ths**. Your recipient may not be as clever as you and may translate this as "avid x-server abracadabra and loving out Volkswagens like this." And use the spell check feature if you have one on your e-mail program. Yes, it's a pain; yes, it stops at every odd name spelling, even the word "e-mail," but it will save you from embarrassing mistakes.

e-mail netiquette: how to make certain your messages are welcome

By Yvonne Buchanan, Real-World PR

www.realworldpr.com

About the author: *Yvonne Buchanan has been a public relations writer, editor and freelancer for more than 20 years. She co-owns Real-World PR (www.realworldpr.com), a public relations merchandising company based in Portland, Ore. Real-World PR provides turnkey public relations toolkits to small businesses throughout the U.S.*

Netiquette.

It sounds like a badminton term, but it is actually a set of understood guidelines for how to conduct yourself on the Web. Many people restrict its applicability to online chat rooms and discussion groups, but it should also be applied to your e-mail.

Following are some tips on using appropriate netiquette in your e-mail messages. These tips will not only keep you safe from complaints, several of them are good public relations practices.

Don't send attachments unless the recipient knows they're coming.

Many viruses are sent by attachment. Several e-mail software programs now screen out messages sent with attachments if they're from an unknown source.

Don't send broadcast e-mails unless you have permission to include everyone on your mailing list, then personalize your e-mail by using the bcc feature on your e-mail program, or better yet, an e-mail contact management program that puts each individual's name (separately) in the recipient column. Don't make your recipients wade through a dozen or more "To" names before they can read your message. It doesn't make them feel special.

What... sort of material makes a good press article?

- Advance information about significant events
- New ideas being put into practice – eg related to the community, youth, social action, world development, fair trade, etc
- Opening of new facilities
- International connections
- Cross-community action
- Looking for new staff
- Appointing new staff
- Change of minister
- Visits by somebody of note
- Special achievements by members or church organisations
- Publication of material putting forward a Christian viewpoint
- Fundraising events; donations to special causes
- Stories about people (eg remarkable achievements, long service, missionary service, voluntary work, lives changed)
- Speaking out about a local issue
- Local, national or international honours or successes achieved by church members, or groups (choirs, musicians, etc)

Remember what seems an 'ordinary' event within the Church may still have a different 'angle' when seen from the point of view of a newspaper editor, presenter or even the national media.

When...

is the best time to issue a press release?

- Before the event – preferably. Papers are wary of providing free publicity! However they will be more likely to carry a story if you are also placing an advertisement for the event with them.
- Very soon after the event if there is something worthy of reporting
- It is a good thing when planning an event to also 'plan' the press coverage – stage the press releases, radio coverage, etc. If several commercial companies are prepared to place advertisements giving support to, or in association with, the event then papers may be prepared to carry a major feature on it.
- Churches can plan ahead to issue press releases at key times during the year and then make sure that it is someone's responsibility to issue those press releases at the most effective time.

Make it Easy on the Eyes

Use standard A4 paper typed on one side only. Never break a paragraph across two pages. Leave wide margins for editors to write notes in. A 1 1/2" or 2" margin on each side is fine. Also, use a standard font; fancy text may look nice, but it is hard to read.

Dress for Success

Don't fold your press release like a letter. You should fold it so that the headline and date will be the first thing the editor or reporter sees upon opening the envelope.

All Good Press Releases Must Come to an End

End a press release with either "###" or "-30-" typed across the centre of the page, three lines below the end of your text. If a release has greater than one page, type "-more-", centred at the bottom of the pages preceding the final page.

Useful Internet Sites

10 Tips For Better Press Releases by B.L.Ochman
whatsnextonline.com

Using And Writing Press Releases by Craig Lock
ncenterprise.com

Publicity STARTS with a Press Release by Kate Schultz of
ezineuniversity.com

How to Write Press Releases that Get Published - Paul Krupin
roibot.com

Know Your Deadlines

Magazines and papers, even weekly ones, are often planned months in advance. Seasonal events, such as Christmas and Easter, are great examples of this. Christmas issues are frequently developed in the heat of summer. For calendar items, know when the publication's submission deadline is.

Keep it Short and Informative

Reporters and editors are notoriously busy. Most press releases should be kept to one page. Two is acceptable. If they want more information, they'll ask.

Write it in a News Style

Put the primary information (who, where, what, and when) into the lead (first paragraph), and keep the sales pitch subtle. No exclamation points!!! Use short words and sentences. Make sure what you're saying is very clear. Many publications will directly reprint a press release, as long as it is written in a professional news style. Learn the general guidelines for abbreviating words, writing numbers and capitalizing names.

Email vs Fax and Post

Email has rapidly become the most widely used and preferred method for sending press releases. If you don't know the correct email address then phone and ask first. However, there can be problems, particularly with photographs sent in the wrong format, of poor digital quality or with a very large file size. Sending by post is still acceptable.

Help keep it Together

Always include, at the top corner of every page, a two- or three-word description of the story, the name and phone number of key contact people (no more than two), the page number (if there is more than one page) and the release date (usually "for immediate release" or "please hold until ??/??/??").

Show and Tell

If you have good photos, send them or include the words "photos available upon request" with your information at the top of the first page. Only send high-quality photos, however, and only when they add to your story. Place photos between cardboard when mailing. Don't tape or paper clip the photos or you risk damaging them.

• **How...**

do you go about preparing a press release?

Read this leaflet thoroughly so that you are familiar with what is required and then follow the points below – it is not that difficult really!

- Write the material in a journalistic style
- Lay out the press article in the standard format (see template given later)
- Ensure that you have a good photograph to go with a press release
- Send the article to the right person – phone and find out who that is if you don't know
- Find out what the paper's deadline is and get it to them in time
- Phone to say the article is coming
- Send the material
- Phone to ask if it was received and if the material will be used

It is not what you know – but who you know!

LOCAL MATERIAL - Have a list of contacts – make time to 'foster' those contacts so that they know who the material is coming from.

NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL – Pass material on to the Press Officer as far in advance as possible of when it should be published

Photographs

- For Newspapers a good photo is worth a thousand words!
- A press release with a good photo is much more likely to get published.
- If possible get a professional photographer to attend and take a good photo of the key people – where possible with a touch of humour or participation
- If not make sure a competent person takes good photographs
- Avoid obvious blunders like distracting backgrounds, telegraph poles growing out of heads and poor lighting.
- Preferably take photographs outside where the light will be much better, even if it is cold, blustery and overcast!
- A digital photo can be fine provided the quality is good (a 3+ mega pixel camera at least).
- Material can be emailed, but make sure the photo has a file size not much bigger than 1 mb, unless the Editor agrees to a larger file size.
- Photos must be 'JPEG' type minimum 1000 x 750 pixels with little or no compression of the file (ie file size 90% or greater)
- Include a written caption for the photo and give the names of the people. Make sure you spell the names correctly!
- Try to make the photo show something of interest as well as the key people.

Sending Effective Press Releases

An Article by John Hewitt

Capturing a publication's attention can be a difficult task. You are competing against a variety of other people, causes and events. To win this competition you must do two things. First, you must gain their interest. Second, you must present your story in a professional manner that will make it easy for them to give you the coverage you desire. Here are some tips to help you accomplish this task.

Know Your Target

Find out who the editor or reporter is for the section you want your release to appear in. Include their name on the release, not just on the envelope.

Pick One Person Per Publication

Once you've chosen the appropriate person, stick with them. If the article needs to be passed off to another reporter, the publication will make that decision. If you send your release to more than one person, any problems that develop from duplicate coverage and effort will be blamed on you.

Don't Just Send, Call

To increase your chances of getting coverage, call the intended recipient *before* you send the release and call a few days later to make sure they received it. Making first contact by phone will also help you find the appropriate person to send your release to.

Give it Time

Don't fax or email a release out the day before an event and expect it to receive coverage. Give the maximum possible amount of time for the publication to decide how they want to cover the story. If you feel the event is so far in the distance that they might forget about it, then simply send another release as the time for the item draws nearer.

The Methodist Newsletter



- The *Methodist Newsletter*, with 11 issues a year and a circulation of 4,500 and a readership of over 9,000 is the single most effective way of sharing information across the Methodist Connexion in Ireland.
- It is the ideal way of letting others know about interesting events and people in our congregations.
- News, opinions, articles and reports from churches as well as human interest stories are welcomed by the editors for consideration.
- Wherever possible stories should be Emailed or sent on disk, with a contact address and phone number. Stories are greatly strengthened by photographs. If pictures are digital they should be of a high resolution and sent in JPG or TIFF format. Pictures can look well on a computer screen at 70dpi but need to be at least 300dpi for print.
- Articles should be sent to arrive by the first Monday of the the month of publication. It is advisable when sending unsolicited articles with a 'sell by date' that the editors be contacted in advance.
- When sending obituaries (500-800 words) contributors are asked to include the full name of the deceased, together with dates of birth and death. Please remember that an obituary is about the person's life and not the details of the funeral service!
- Advertisements and queries concerning the ordering and delivery of the magazine (eg change of address) should be addressed to the business manager.
- The editors welcome copies of local church magazines and often are able to spot news stories of connexional interest!

Articles may be sent by Email to: newsletter@irishmethodist.org
By post to: The Editor, Methodist Newsletter, 9 Lennoxvale, Belfast, BT9 5BY

Advertisements should be sent to:
Harold Baird, 16 Aldon Crescent, Lisburn, BT28 2EG. Tel: 7811 9231
Email: jhbaird@utvinternet.com

A Poor Press Release

The Rev. William Woffle was guest speaker at a special service to mark the 100th anniversary of the formation of Unity Methodist Church in 1905. The service, held three weeks ago, opened with the hymn 'The Church's one foundation' and concluded with 'One more step along the world I went' before tea was served in the old hall. Many former members of the congregation attended along with the Lord Mayor of Ballyligit. A choir of 50 accompanied the praise.. Ten bible readings, one for each 10 years, were read by church members – Genesis 1, 1 to 5; I kings 3, 1 to 15;Rev 1 1-20. The soloist Mrs Dolores Warbler sang 'Words of Praise' during the offering. In his address the Rev Woffle praised the work of the Socety Stewards, Sunday School Superintendent, and Shell Club leader.

Some of the mistakes:-

- No headline
- Doesn't start with the most important information
- Mostly provides uninteresting detail
- Doesn't have any interesting information about 'Unity Methodist Church'
- Doesn't mention who is the Minister of the Church
- Is three weeks out of date
- Fails to feature any real 'human interest' aspects
- Several typing, spelling and punctuation mistakes

Anatomy of a good Press Article

Headline designed to catch interest

Quiet baptism for Brown's son

By Shirley English

THE six-month-old baby son of Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, was christened at an intimate family ceremony in North Queensferry Church on Sunday.

John Macaulay Brown was baptised by Reverend Sheila Munro in front of 60 close family and friends during the normal Sunday morning service at the same parish church where his sister Jennifer Jane's funeral was held.

The Browns did not ask anyone to be godparents for John and none of the Chancellor's political colleagues were believed to have been invited.

The Chancellor's wife, Sarah, revealed that the couple sought special permission from the church for Reverend Munro to conduct the christening although she is no longer parish minister at North Queensferry.

Reverend Munro has known the Browns for many years and is trusted by them.

She performed the couple's wedding in 2000 in the dining room of their North Queensferry home, a short walk from the church, and later conducted the funeral service for their daughter, who died aged ten days in January 2002.

The Browns supplied the church flowers for the weekend christening ceremony which also honoured the memory of baby Jennifer.

Mrs Brown said: "We invited anyone who asked us about a christening gift to make a donation to the Jennifer Brown Research Fund's appeal to help mothers and babies in Fife."

Yesterday, a Treasury spokesman confirmed that John's christening had been a "small, quiet family event," but would give no further details.

A friend of the Browns said the day had been filled with happiness. She said that the couple were overwhelmed by the amount of money that had been raised for charity in their daughter's memory.

First sentence presents the main message. Many readers will read no further than this

First sentence presents the main message. Many readers will read no further than this

Later paragraphs add less important, but interesting details which give the story more appeal

Objective view of events by others who were there adds another insight into the significance of what happened.

[**Shortened headline**] - Page 2

[Additional text goes here, double spaced, indented paragraphs]

□

[Your last paragraph should be appropriate background information, about the church, organisation, people involved, longer term significance etc which will help the editor appreciate the significance of the press release. The website address of the Church or organisation can be included at this point.]

At the end of the release, put the three hash signs centered at the bottom. This lets your reader know they've come to the end. Alternatively put - END -

#

Sample Format for a Press Release

Name of Organisation

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(Or to be held until - date -)

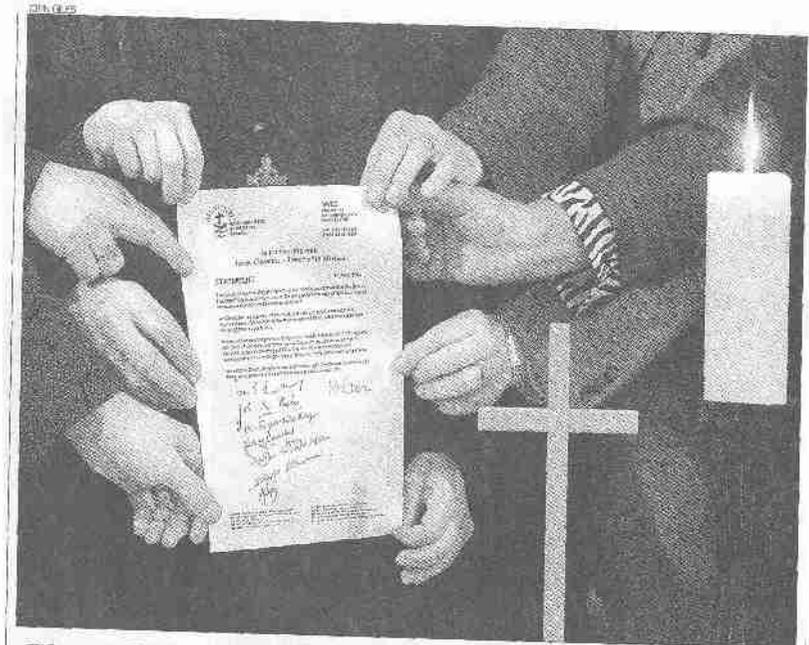
For More Information, Contact: [DATE], 200X

[Name of contact person]
[Name of Organisation]
[Phone number] () (voice)
[Phone number] () (fax)
[e-mail address]

[Headline Goes Here, Initial Cap, Bold]
[Text goes here, double spaced, indented paragraphs].

If the press release is more than one page long, use the word:
--more--
centred at the bottom of the page, then continue the text on the next page with a brief description of the headline, and page number.

A photograph that makes the story



Churches oppose the BNP

Church leaders join forces yesterday to sign a statement condemning the British National Party (Ruth Gledhill writes). The heads of the main Christian denominations in West Yorkshire said they deplore

the racist policies of the far-right party. The statement, drawn up by the West Yorkshire Ecumenical Council, called on Christian people to vote for candidates whose policies "reflect a spirit of inclusive welcome"

for people of all races and faiths. It said: "As Christians, we deplore all attempts to divide our society on race and asylum issues. We seek to follow the example of Christ, who calls us to love our neighbour as ourselves."

Signatories included the Bishop of Ripon and Leeds, the Right Rev John Packer, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Leeds, the Right Rev Arthur Roche, the chairman of the Methodist Church in Leeds, the Rev Michael Townsend, and the Moderator of the United Reformed Church, the Rev Arnold Harrison.

- ◆ It conveys the message of unity that is part of the story
- ◆ It draws people attention to the fact that a statement has been issued
- ◆ The cross and the candle immediately give the 'religious' flavour
- ◆ The full list of names is included
- ◆ The headline succinctly states main point
- ◆ First sentence gives statement of what has taken place
- ◆ Rest of article provides background details
- ◆ Relevant quotations form the full report convey the main message of the report

Writing and formatting a Press Release

What's Your Story?

Find your story, and develop it!

Think of different angles

- human interest angles
- historical links
- international links
- new developments
- unique accomplishments
- creative ideas
- unusual events,
- humour and wisdom, fun and tragedy

The Six Questions

A good press release answers the all-important journalistic questions known as the Five Ws — Who, What, Where, When, and Why. The press release should also answer the Five W's tagalong — How.

Journalistic Style

A journalistic style is quite different from most writing styles. In most writing, you slowly develop and describe something that leads you to a particular point or conclusion. Newswriting gets straight to the point, and develops the story "backwards". The main point is stated at the beginning, and the rest of the information reveals itself from the most important to the least important.

Getting down to the details

- The **title** of your press release is vital - some say that 90% of your time should be spent on your title; make it bold and strong. Where appropriate give it a humorous twist.
- The **opening sentence** must make the main point - Go for the jugular! Many people will not read past this sentence.
- Tell your story in headline and leading paragraph
- Stick to the main points in the early sentences
- Build up the **details** in later paragraphs
- Add in **human interest** angles
- Stay away from superlatives, but try to give it some punch! It will be obvious if you are trying to over play the message.

- Choose your words carefully and keep the style simple and direct.
- Avoid unnecessary words and phrases
- Check for correct grammar and punctuation
- Avoid giving statistics in tables and graphs unless you are writing a full length article which you have previously discussed with the editor.
- Finish by adding useful background information which the editor may choose to include if he/she has space. This may include information about the church, or the organization running the event, the people involved, or the longer-term significance of the event.
- The Press Release should preferably be no more than one A4 page in length (double spaced) and certainly no more than 2 pages!
- Any photograph provided should have a separate caption including the names or the people in the photograph.

Formatting the Press Release

- Press Releases should follow a standard format which is shown on pages 12 and 13.
- When using email it is preferable to send the press release as the main email text rather than a document attachment. This avoids problems such as forgetting to attach the document (this happens frequently!) and documents in a format the recipient cannot open.
- With email text use single spacing, with a double space between paragraphs.
- If a document attachment is necessary use Microsoft Word format (.doc) or Rich Text Format (.rft).
- In documents use double spacing between lines
- Use only standard fonts (Arial or New Times Roman). The editor will change fonts to ones his publication uses.
- Double check everything!

When your press release is ready to go, take an extra moment to double-check all facts, dates, names, spelling, and grammar. Reread your press release. Is it informative? Is the information clearly defined? Does it speak to the general public? Do the headline and lead grab you and make you want to find out more?