

*Please take time to read this document before submitting your articles for the annual Fall Newsletter.*

## **TIPS FOR WRITING YOUR NEWSLETTER ARTICLES**

Before you begin writing, **carefully consider your subject matter**. Think it all through very carefully, what you are going to say and how you are going to say it. If you know exactly how you are going to end off, the easier it will be to shape the article as a whole. **Spend some quiet time thinking before you even start writing.**

Everyone loves a good story! Instead of trying to summarize a year's worth of ministry and events, **choose one or two highlights and write about them in a way to draw in the reader**. We want our readers to have more than just an update of events, we want them to become **excited by what God is accomplishing** through your ministry and events.

Sometimes the essence of writing a good interesting article is simplicity, but with a touch of humor or the unusual. **Add your personal touch, a bit of your personality**, your individual thoughts and creativity to the article you are shaping. Don't be impersonal. Be sure to use words that everyone will understand. Avoid slang, jargon and abbreviations!

Aim for clarity of thought in your writing. Always try to put yourself in the position of the reader. Ensure that your article reads quickly and easily. If an article is too long the reader can easily lose concentration and give up. Try to make your meaning clear and ensure that your sentences are well structured. **Your article should answer the five questions of a very inquisitive person: WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN and WHY (or HOW).**

**How long should your article be?** It's a good idea to have a range of article lengths. Aim for **250 – 350 words**, keeping in mind that the closer you get to the maximum number of words, the more likely it is that your article may need to be edited due to space limitations. I don't like to cut out part of your article any more than you like having me cut out part of the article. By keeping the articles at a reasonable length, there will be room for a wider variety of articles and room for photos, illustrations and other design options.

### **Keep the following things in mind while writing your article:**

1. Have an introduction. Your first words are of vital importance to grab your reader's attention. Start your article in such a way as to entice and pump up your reader and get them to continue reading.
2. The main body comprises most of an article. Develop your theme step by step and progress logically, naturally and smoothly from one point to the next so that they lead to a conclusion. Include photos that will help make your point or will draw the reader's interest. Photos help break up the text and keep the reader from becoming bored or tired of reading large sections of text. Photos add flavor and interest.
3. Have a final deduction or conclusion; essentially a summary of all the main points mentioned before. Have a strong summary to round off your article.

After completion, re-read your article a number of times. Polish it up by changing words and expressions. Examine your sentences and paragraphs carefully to ensure that the words flow smoothly. Have someone else read the article. If you find you have to explain verbally certain aspects of the article, revise those sections. Reword areas that readers can misconstrue. Check to see if each paragraph deals with one idea, developed in one or more sentences that logically advances the points you are trying to make, add meaning or develop the story you are telling or the message you want to convey.

Happy writing!