

# The Newsletter Newsletter®

VOLUME 27, NUMBER 9

## HOW TO

Suppose you were a member of a family that loved you but never bothered to give you a name, just calling you "my son" or "my daughter" when introducing you to others. Your identity might get a bit fuzzy or undefined to those who were introduced to you. So it can be with a church newsletter that has no name. Like every child in your family, the church publication merits a real name, one that your church community will remember.

As an ambassador of your church, your newsletter should have an effective name that reflects the identity of your church in some way. Newsletters that simply use the name of the church (*The First Church Newsletter*) are not attention-getting. Choose something that has a bit of flair, if possible, but make sure the name is appropriate to a church newsletter. Most importantly, choose a name that sends a message about your church. When picking a name for your newsletter for the first time, or strengthening an old name, consider the following:

**Your church mission.** What is your mission statement? Can you tie it to your newsletter's name somehow, lending continuity to your mission through this important ministry tool? *The Good News Letter*, for example, works particularly well for a church whose mission statement is "to spread the Good News to all." Subtitles that include a brief version of your church's mission statement can make the purpose of your newsletter clearer. For example, a newsletter named *The Samaritan* might use the subtitle "Carrying news of God's work into the community and the world!"

## Naming the church newsletter – TOGETHER!

**Local geography.** Is there something that stands out geographically in your area? Is the church, for example, in the mountains, near an ocean or in the midst of fields? Consider including a geographical reference in the newsletter name. A church near the ocean might use the name, *Tide-ings*, for example, while a church in the mountains might call its newsletter *News From the Mount*, suggesting Jesus' Sermon on the Mount.

**Demographics.** Does your church serve a congregation that has special needs? If so, you might adapt your name accordingly. *Signs of the Spirit*, for example, would be appropriate for a congregation with a significant number of deaf members, suggesting

signed (ASL) communication. A church that serves migrant workers might call its newsletter *Fruits of the Spirit*. Both names will appeal to a general readership as well, but the special-needs members will be appreciative.

**Church features.** Is there something eye-catching about the church building that might lend itself to the newsletter name? Is there, for instance, a distinctive stained-glass window or another feature that is the first thing people notice about the church? Incorporate it into your newsletter name. Names such as *The Window* or *Window of Werner* tell readers that the newsletter offers a look inside the life of the church.

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F I R S T A N Y C H U R C H

## NAME OUR NEWSLETTER!

We're looking for a new name for our church newsletter and want your ideas. Put your name ideas in the offering plate, drop them off at the office or e-mail them to [names@FirstAnyChurch.org](mailto:names@FirstAnyChurch.org).

You may find inspiration for a newsletter name by thinking about: *our church name, our church's mission, our people, features of our church building, local geography, a favorite Scripture verse or our community.*

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
 2) \_\_\_\_\_  
 3) \_\_\_\_\_

YOUR NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DEADLINE FOR SUB

◀ Involve the congregation by printing up an insert for the bulletin or newsletter, explaining why a new name is being chosen and what you hope to accomplish.

▼ Print a ballot to put into the next newsletter so the congregation can make the final selection.

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**Church name.** While we don't encourage using the church's name for the newsletter name, using part of it can be quite effective. A church called St. Peter's of the Fields, for instance, might call its newsletter *Field Notes*, while St. Paul's Church could use *Messages From St. Paul* or *St. Paul's Epistle*. Those names each carry subtle messages that go beyond the churches' names.

Northside Christian Church of Yorktown, Virginia, incorporates the church name in the newsletter name: *Inside Northside*. The theme continues throughout the newsletter, heading columns the same way — "Inside Larry's Office" for the pastor's message and "Inside Music and Drama" for the performing-arts column. Shepherd's Gate Lutheran Church of Shelby Township, Michigan, links the newsletter to the church name by calling it *Rod & Staff*. Simple names can be quite effective and are usually preferable to elaborate names.


**Scripture.** Scripture can provide the foundation for a strong newsletter name. *Fruits of the Spirit*, mentioned earlier, is taken from the Beatitudes. A newsletter called *The Disciple* could carry the Scripture, "Go and make disciples of all nations" as a subtitle or use a paraphrase of the old hymn, "Go, Make of All Disciples," to emphasize the church's mission.

## VOTE FOR YOUR FAVORITE NEWSLETTER NAME

Thanks to everyone who submitted name ideas for our newsletter. The naming committee has narrowed down the list of suggested names to the five listed below. Vote for your favorite name and then put your ballot in the offering plate, drop it off at the office or use the online ballot at [www.FirstAnyChurch.org/vote](http://www.FirstAnyChurch.org/vote).

**PLEASE VOTE FOR ONLY ONE NAME:**

ALONG THE WAY     BETWEEN FRIENDS     FACE TO FACE  
 FIRST THINGS     FROM THE HEART



F I R S T A N Y C H U R C H

### Involve the congregation

With so many avenues to explore, choosing just the right name will interest many in the congregation. Open the "name game" to the congregation. Involve them by printing up an insert for the bulletin or newsletter, explaining why a new name is being chosen and what you hope to accomplish. List points for them to consider when suggesting names: mission statement, geography, people, building, church name, Scripture, etc. Include a space on the insert where members can write their suggestions. Ask members to return the forms to the church office or put them in the offering plate. Give a deadline for submissions and hang colorful reminders in visible places around the church.

When the submissions are in, have the appropriate committee (or a special naming committee) choose the favorite five or 10 names. Print a

ballot to put into the next newsletter so the congregation can make the final selection. When voting is complete, write a celebratory article for your newly named newsletter, announcing the official choice, explaining the significance of the name, giving credit to the person who originally suggested the name, and thanking the congregation for their help. Call additional attention to the entire process by making progress reports during church announcements or in the weekly bulletins.

Involving the congregation in the "name game" also increases their interest in the newsletter. Members are more likely to read the newsletter and submit news, when they know they had a voice in choosing the name.

For examples of newsletter names currently in use by subscribers to *The Newsletter Newsletter*, see our Web site [www.NewsletterNewsletter.com](http://www.NewsletterNewsletter.com). **N**