



# The Presbyterian Church in Canada

# Writers' Style Guide and Web Standards

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The Presbyterian Church in Canada Writers' Style Guide and Web Standards manual is a collection of practices and conventions guiding the writing and design of PCC documents, either for print or electronic distribution. The Style Guide provides uniformity in style and formatting online and across multiple documents and platforms. The Style Guide's primary focus is to ensure consistency and good grammar. Any work will benefit from its application, including brochures, announcements and emails.

This guide is intended for writers, editors and proofreaders who produce resources, web content and materials for The Presbyterian Church in Canada and staff at the national office.

## **Why Do We Need a Style Guide?**

1. Effective communication with our audience
2. Consistency in language and formatting
3. Clarity
4. Professionalism

The PCC Style Guide will help streamline your work. After you've used these guidelines for a while, the writing process will flow more smoothly since you won't have to stop and deliberate on grammar and style. Your readers will be pleased, too, since inconsistency causes confusion.

This guide will answer some of your editorial questions. Amendments and additions will be made in future editions. In the meantime, you can find more details in *The Canadian Press Stylebook, Caps and Spelling* and the *Oxford Canadian Dictionary* (second edition).

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# Punctuation

## Spacing

- ❖ Use one space between words and between sentences. Search for all double spaces and replace them with single spaces.
- ❖ Use a space between numerals and unit symbols or abbreviations, except between numerals and the degree symbol used with Celsius.

3 kg	<i>not</i>	3kg
200 km	<i>not</i>	200km
15°C	<i>not</i>	15° C or 15 °C

- ❖ In biblical citations, do not add spaces before or after the colon that separates chapter number and verse (*Matthew 6:26*). See “Biblical Citations” (p. 24), the fifth bullet point, for more information regarding spacing.

## Period

- ❖ Use a period to indicate the end of a declarative or imperative sentence.

The car had two flat tires.  
Wait here.

- ❖ Omit a period at the end of a sentence that is included within another sentence.

The wind (I could feel the whole house shuddering) blew fiercely throughout the evening.

Peter replied, “I don’t know him,” when the centurion asked if he knew Jesus.

- ❖ When a sentence is followed by a biblical or page reference in parenthesis, place the period after the parenthetical reference.

“Then God said, ‘Let there be light’” (Genesis 1:3).

- ❖ See “Punctuation and Capitalization in Vertical Lists” (p. 13) for information regarding bullet points when formatting lists.

## Comma

❖ The comma serves three basic functions, but it does so in a variety of ways.

### ❖ Serial comma

- In a sentence, use commas to separate the items in a series. But omit the last comma that normally comes before the final *and* or *or* in a series unless it may cause a misunderstanding.

Dori collects coins, stamps, spoons and postcards.  
Tunde can write dry, technical or poetic sentences.

*Exception:*

The flavours of ice cream offered were vanilla, chocolate, rocky road, and pralines and cream. (*Keep the comma after “rocky road” since the final item includes another “and”: “pralines and cream.”*)

- Commas are not needed when all the items in a series are separated by conjunctions.

Do you get to work by car or public transit or walking?

- A compound sentence is a series of two ideas. Therefore, you should always put a comma before an *and* or *but* joining two distinct thoughts into a single sentence.

For this study we require a minimum of information, and documentation can be largely ignored.

- When you start a new sentence with *And* or *But* or *So*, do not insert a comma.

The dog crept back into the yard. And it had its tail between its legs.  
Travel always makes me ill. So I’m staying home.

*Exception:*

So, after thinking about it, he decided to continue his journey.  
(*This sentence is correct, because “after thinking about it” is a parenthetical comment, and so must be isolated by commas on both sides.*)

❖ **With parenthetical comments**

- The comma's second use is to isolate a parenthetical comment from the rest of the sentence. In this way, its function is similar to that of the em dash (see p. 10), and, to a lesser extent, parentheses and brackets (see p. 10). Parenthetical commas, parentheses and brackets always occur in pairs; however, em dashes, brackets and parenthetical commas require only one mark when the piece of sentence they isolate comes at the beginning or end of the sentence.

The building, unable to withstand the earthquake, collapsed.  
Unable to withstand the earthquake, the building collapsed.  
The building collapsed, unable to withstand the earthquake.

❖ **With restrictive (essential)/non-restrictive (non-essential) clauses**

- Use commas to isolate non-restrictive (non-essential) clauses.

My granddaughter, Talia, and I drive the same type of car.  
*(I have only one granddaughter, so Talia's name is non-essential to understanding the meaning of the sentence.)*

My sister Naheed has taken up rock climbing.  
*(I have more than one sister, so Naheed's name is essential to the meaning of the sentence.)*

- Over time, some formal comma use has become a matter of preference not rule. The following parenthetical sentences are considered to be correct, even the first line. If the author wishes the reader to pause, to regard an expression as parenthetical, the emphasis is set off; if not, the sentence is left unpunctuated.

*Acceptable:*

This is indeed a glaring mistake in your copy.  
This is, indeed, a glaring mistake in your copy.

We therefore want you to revise it immediately.  
We, therefore, want you to revise it immediately.

- Keep in mind that when a sentence begins with *Indeed*, *Therefore* or *However*, a comma usually follows.

Indeed, this is a glaring mistake in your copy.  
Therefore, we want you to revise it immediately.  
However, I would like to read it again.

*Exception:*

However Kemi looked at it, she knew the cashier was wrong.

## Semicolon

### ❖ Sentences

- Unlike commas, semicolons can connect two complete sentences (or clauses) that are fairly short and closely linked in meaning, where the second sentence usually elaborates on or complements the first one. Often, a period could be used instead of a semicolon and the meaning would be the same; but semicolons keep a softer connection between the two sentences (or clauses).

Quinn ordered the pasta; Ash chose the fish.  
I thought my friend had a problem; this left me in a quandary about what to do.

### ❖ Lists

- The semicolon can be used to break up a series or list in a sentence, where the items require stronger punctuation than a comma to make them understood.

On our holidays, we visited Paris, France; London, England; and Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

## Colon

- ❖ Use a colon at the end of a complete sentence that needs some kind of series or list or additional comment to complete the information.

He was dressed entirely in grey: suit, shirt, tie and socks.  
They issued this statement: “Under no circumstances...”

*Not*

I don't like camping because: it's too cold, it's too wet and it's mosquito season.

- ❖ Use a colon to emphasize a sequence of thought between two clauses that form a single sentence.

Humanity and death: the two are inseparable.

- ❖ A colon is also used to introduce speech in scripted dialogue.

Karl: That's how angels pray.  
Do-Yun: Hmm, interesting.

- ❖ See “Punctuation and Capitalization in Vertical Lists” (p. 13) for more information on how to apply punctuation when creating lists.

## Dashes

### ❖ Hyphen

- Generally, if you use a phrase (i.e., “face to face” or “up to date”) as an adjective, and it comes in front of a noun, you hyphenate it.

Eun and Krystin had a face-to-face meeting.

- However, if you use that phrase after a verb, you don't hyphenate it.

Stacey and Ray met face to face.

Try to stay up to date by getting up-to-date reports from Stacey and Ray.

- No hyphen is needed when an *-ly* adverb precedes an adjective.

*Correct*

Adib created delightfully frothy milkshakes.

*Not*

Adib created delightfully-frothy milkshakes.

*Note:*

This rule applies to *-ly* adverbs, not to other parts of speech that end in *-ly*.

For example: This is a family-oriented service. The word “family” is a noun, and “oriented” modifies “family.” Together, “family-oriented” modifies “service.” The hyphen is needed.

- Apply hyphens when writing ages as a compound adjective.

The 88-year-old woman won.

She moped around like a two-year-old.

*But*

Kim is 55 years old.

- To avoid repetitive wording in hyphenated compound adjectives, omit the portion of text that comes after the first hyphen, and follow it with a space. So, instead of: 10-year-old to 12-year-old Scotch whisky...

10- to 12-year-old Scotch whisky

short- and long-term projects

- Use a hyphen to form compound words/adjectives (*self-evaluate*, *three-year-old*), and to emphasize a prefix (*re-creation*, meaning “the act of creating anew”).
- The hyphen always attaches to the part of the word preceding it, so never start a new line of text with a hyphen.



- As a rule, if you don't need a hyphen for meaning or emphasis, don't use one (*coordinate, interfaith, multicultural, predetermined, premarital, reassure*). But refer to the *Oxford Canadian Dictionary* (second edition) as a guide for which words are hyphenated. Where the *Oxford Canadian Dictionary* lists options, use the first or preferred spelling.

Note, however, that hyphenated proper names must always retain their hyphen (*Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights*).

#### ❖ **En dash**

- Hyphens are used to separate groups of numbers, such as telephone numbers or numbers of financial accounts. But for almost all other cases, the correct punctuation mark is an en dash (–), which indicates a range or a difference. En dashes are used to indicate a span of years, a range in monetary amounts, sports scores (*Her team won 6–3*) and votes (*City council approved the project with a 5–2 vote*).
- An en dash is a little longer than a hyphen and shorter than an em dash. It is called an en dash because it's the length of the letter *n*, whereas an em dash is the length of the letter *m*. The keyboard command for an en dash is Alt + 0150 in Windows and Option + hyphen on Mac.
- The en dash can be used to attribute a quotation.

“You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step.”  
– Martin Luther King Jr.

- When used with text, always insert a space on both sides of the en dash.
- Use an en dash between numbers to indicate range. Close up spaces on both sides of the dash.

pages 15–20; Luke 5:27–28; 2003–2004

#### *Exception:*

When citing a biblical reference that spans more than one chapter or book of the Bible, insert a space on both sides of the en dash. See “Biblical Citations” (p. 24) for more.

Genesis 1:1 – 2:4

- If *from* precedes the first number, do not use an en dash. Use the word *to* instead.

It ran from 15 to 20 pages.

- Use an en dash to connect dates, except when preceded by *from* or *between*.

the 1982–83 tax year

from January to May (not “from January–May”)

between 1970 and 1977 (not “between 1970–77” or “1970–1977”)

- En dashes are also used to connect a prefix or suffix to an open compound (“post–second world war” or “New York–based”), to connect two open compounds (“the Bloor Street–Danforth Avenue subway line”), or to connect two hyphenated compounds (“a quasi-good–quasi-bad plan”)

### ❖ **Em dash**

- An em dash ( — ) represents an abrupt change in thought and parenthetical comments. Spaces are not needed between the text and the em dash. The keyboard command for an em dash is Alt + 0151 in Windows or Shift + Option + hyphen on Mac.

The teacher—a really good instructor—designed an innovative lesson plan.

*Note:*

In typography, an en dash with spaces on each side is often used in place of the em dash but follows the same principles. Whichever method you choose, consistency is key.

The teacher – a really good instructor – designed an innovative lesson plan.

- In bibliographies, use an em dash followed by a space in place of an author’s name, where there are multiple title entries for the same author.

## **Parentheses and Brackets**

- ❖ Parentheses are curved; brackets are square.

- ❖ Use parentheses to indicate a whispered aside or a bit of supplementary information that is not necessary for the meaning of the sentence. Parentheses may also be used to enclose related or explanatory material.

His skin cancer (medically, a keratosis) was not dangerous. (Other kinds of skin cancer can be dangerous.)

- ❖ When quoting material, use brackets to indicate text inserted by an editor to clarify the writer’s or speaker’s meaning.

The spokesperson said, “They’ve shot [President John F.] Kennedy!”

- ❖ Brackets and parentheses follow exactly the same rules.
  - They always occur in pairs; if you have an opening parenthesis, you must have a closing one, and vice versa.
  - They may have anywhere from one word to several paragraphs within them.
  - Whether punctuation goes inside or outside depends on the meaning of the enclosed material.
  - Brackets, as opposed to parentheses, are generally used for editorial comments and to enclose translations given immediately after short quotations.

It rained cats and dogs (figuratively speaking). *(The period is needed outside the parentheses in order for the sentence to end.)*

She promised to write the next day. (She didn't do it.) *(Place the period inside the parentheses as the enclosed matter is a full sentence.)*

The farmer grows apples (three varieties), pears and plums. *(The comma follows the parentheses because you'd have a comma there if there were no parentheses.)*

Walter Gretzky (father of NHL legend Wayne Gretzky) was made a member of the Order of Canada in 2007. *(If you removed the parenthetical comment, you wouldn't need any other punctuation in this sentence.)*

He said, "I promise it won't happen again" (while crossing his fingers behind his back). *(The aside is part of the sentence, but not part of the quotation.)*

## Ellipsis

- ❖ Use the ellipsis mark to indicate the omission of material within quotations or to suggest a voice trailing off in dialogue. Use the auto-format ellipsis, not three periods. The keyboard command for an ellipsis mark is Alt + Ctrl + period in Windows and Option + semicolon on Mac.
- ❖ Do not insert spaces at either end of the ellipsis unless it appears at the end of the sentence, in which case insert one space between the ellipsis and the beginning of the next sentence. Always uses three points, even when the ellipsis appears at the end of a sentence.

In the beginning...the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep... Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.

- ❖ An ellipsis is not needed before or after an *obviously* incomplete sentence separately quoted.

This also applies to biblical quotes.

Original quote: “Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light” (Genesis 1:3).

Shortened quote: “Then God said, ‘Let there be light’” (Genesis 1:3).

- ❖ Use the ellipsis sparingly to represent pauses and unfinished statements in place of an em dash.

He swung with all his might...and missed.  
But I thought...

## Quotation Marks

- ❖ Use double quotation marks for quoted matter; use single marks when quoted matter appears within a quotation or dialogue. Always use “smart” quotation marks (curly), not straight marks, which are really inch and foot marks.

“My grandma said to me, ‘You need a grammar book.’”

- ❖ When quoting a single speaker for more than one paragraph, put quotation marks at the beginning of each paragraph but at the end of only the last paragraph.
- ❖ Set periods and commas inside quotation marks.
- ❖ Set semicolons and colons outside quotation marks.
- ❖ Set question marks and exclamation marks inside if they apply only to the quoted matter, and outside if they refer to the whole sentence.

“How many people came?” the minister asked.  
Do you know who said, “Let them eat cake”?

## Slash

- ❖ When using a slash to separate terms or numbers, or in abbreviations or websites, do not put spaces on either side of the slash.

yes/no  
Good News Bible/Good News Translation  
1/2  
01/05/15  
\$500/week  
60 km/h  
presbyterian.ca/gao

- ❖ When running lines of poetry into text, use a slash to mark the end of one line and the beginning of another. For this use, include a single space on either side of the slash.

Andrew Marvell’s praise of John Milton, “Thou hast not missed one thought that could befit, / And all that was improper dost omit.”

## Punctuation and Capitalization in Vertical Lists Using Bullets/Numbers

- ❖ When using bullets or numbers, use hanging indents.
- ❖ In numbered or alphabetized lists, either a period or a single parenthesis may be used to separate the number or letter from the text. Whichever method you choose, be consistent throughout the entire document.
  1.    *or*    1)
  2.           2)
  - a.    *or*    a)
  - b.           b)

### ❖ Periods

- Omit periods in a vertical list unless the items are complete sentences. If the vertical list completes a sentence that begins with an introductory phrase, the final period is also omitted unless the items in the list are separated by commas, semicolons or periods.

#### *Example 1*

The purpose of the event was to

- raise awareness
- raise funds
- get youth involved

#### *Example 2*

After careful consideration, the advisory committee concluded that

1. the project lacked support from the membership;
2. the project lacked sufficient funding;
3. the project should be cancelled.

## ❖ Colon

- A colon is commonly used to introduce a list where the introductory sentence is complete.

### *Example 3*

The teacher gave three homework assignments:

- one page of math problems
- a 500-word essay
- a map to label

### *Note:*

If the introductory phrase is incomplete, the colon should be omitted (see Examples 1 and 2, above). A colon is not used to introduce these lists because a colon would not be used if the same lists were written in prose format (see Example 1).

The purpose of the event was to raise awareness, to raise funds and to get youth involved.

- Use a colon after the terms *as follows* or *the following* if followed immediately by the bulleted or numbered list. (A colon would also be used in Examples 3 and 4 if the lists were written in prose format.)

### *Example 4*

The steps involved are as follows:

- Sauté the onions and garlic in melted butter.
- Add the white wine and mussels.
- Steam for ten minutes.

### *Note:*

Elements in a list must be parallel in structure (*sauté, add, steam*, not *sauté, adding, steam*).

- If the introducing statement is complete and stands on its own, a period may be used instead of a colon.

### *Example 5*

The doctor's instructions were clear.

1. Stop smoking.
2. Eat more vegetables and less meat.
3. Start an exercise routine and stick to it.

❖ **Capitalization**

- If you are creating a vertical list or a numbered or bulleted series in which the items are complete sentences, then each sentence must start with a capital letter and end with a period (see Examples 4 and 5, above).
  
- Use a lowercase letter to launch items in a list if the items are very short (see Examples 1 and 3, above) or if the vertical list is punctuated as a sentence (see Example 2, above).

## Spelling

- ❖ Apply Canadian spelling. Use the *Oxford Canadian Dictionary* (second edition) as your chief guide, but also set your computer spell-checker to “Canadian English.” The second edition of the *Oxford Canadian Dictionary* is preferred, as some spellings have been updated to reflect common use (e.g., *website*, no longer *Web site*).
- ❖ The *Oxford Canadian Dictionary* is a combination of British and American spellings that have become widely adopted as the “Canadian preference.” Most British spelling variants are maintained, such as *ou* (*colour, neighbour*) and *re* (*centre, theatre*). However, several American spellings have been adopted, such as *program* instead of *programme*, *fulfill* instead of *fulfil*, and *skeptic* instead of *sceptic*.
- ❖ Generally, consonants are doubled (*travelled, worshipped*). Where the *Oxford Canadian Dictionary* lists variant spellings in terms of doubled consonants, use the first spelling given, even if this contradicts the doubled-consonant guideline (*focused*, not *focussed*).
- ❖ See “Specialized Names and Terms” (pp. 19–23) for a quick guide to spellings of frequently used words, and specialized names and terms.



# Capitalization

- ❖ Capitalization should be used sparingly. Generally, the lowercase style is preferred. Unnecessary capitalization disrupts flow and can cause a reader to stumble through paragraphs. It can also cause confusion.
- ❖ The list of what should be capitalized is extensive (proper names, trademark names, government agencies, companies, places, religions, etc.). When looking for guidance on capitalization not specified in this guide, refer to the *Oxford Canadian Dictionary* (second edition) and *The Canadian Press Stylebook*. In the case of a discrepancy, the PCC style guide should be followed first.
- ❖ For a list of capitalized and lowercase words of relevance to The Presbyterian Church in Canada, see “Specialized Names and Terms” (p. 19).
- ❖ Do not use all caps in text or in titles; the use of all caps in document titles is the choice of the resource designer.
- ❖ Always start a sentence with a capital letter. For that reason, avoid starting a sentence with a numeral; numerals cannot be capitalized. See “Numbers” (p. 29) for more.
- ❖ When a company uses its web address as its corporate name, capitalize the first letter (Amazon.com).
- ❖ For headings and subheadings, you may either capitalize the first letter of the first word only or capitalize the first letter of all nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs. Consistency is key. Lowercase articles, coordinating conjunctions and prepositions, unless they are the first word in a heading or subheading. Also lowercase *to* in infinitives.
- ❖ If any quoted statement can stand on its own as a sentence (whether it qualifies fully as a sentence on grammatical grounds or not), start it with a capital letter. If it is an excerpt from a sentence or a continuation of a sentence, keep it lowercase.

I would call this a “highly specialized item.”  
Datu said, “This kit is a highly specialized item.”  
What are the implications of saying, “Yes”?

- ❖ As a rule, when in doubt, avoid capital letters; this applies especially to religious terms. See “Specialized Names and Terms” (p. 19) for more.

19th century  
second world war (but as a proper name, World War II)

## **Titles and Committees**

- ❖ In general, capitalize formal titles that directly precede a name, but lowercase them when they stand alone or are set off by commas.

We invited Moderator Mary Fontaine to speak at our church.

We invited the moderator to speak at our church.

We invited Mary Fontaine, the moderator, to speak at our church.

- ❖ In general, lowercase occupational titles and job descriptions.

The Rev. Joan Masterton, convener of the Cutting Edge of Mission Committee

### *Exception:*

Exceptions may be made in lists or formal contexts. Also, internally, the preference may be to capitalize occupational titles for staff and positions.

Ian Ross-McDonald, General Secretary

Principal Clerk Victor Kim

- ❖ Capitalize the proper names of committees. Lowercase the word *committee* when it is not part of a proper name.

International Affairs Committee

Committee on History

The committee prepared its report to General Assembly.

## **Geography**

- ❖ Capitalize geographic and widely recognized descriptive regions (see the last bullet point below for use regarding direction).

Northern Canada, Western Canada, Maritime provinces

*Note:* The Atlantic provinces are Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. The Maritimes consist of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

- ❖ Capitalize specific natural features.

Canadian Shield, Gulf Stream, Rocky Mountains, Lake Winnipeg, Great Lakes

- ❖ Lowercase points on the compass, mere direction and location, and descriptive regions not widely recognized.

north, east coast (*shoreline, not region*), southern Sask., northwestern Ontario, downtown Calgary, north-end Toronto

## Specialized Names and Terms

- ❖ The following is a list of the departments, organizations and events within The Presbyterian Church in Canada. These names should always be capitalized as shown here. Abbreviations that are commonly used are given in parentheses. Special characteristics to be aware of are noted.
  - The Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC) – always include the word *The* with a capital *T*; however, when applying the acronym, “the PCC,” keep *the* lowercase; also, the correct preposition in the name is *in*, not *of*
  - Anglican Church of Canada
  - Atlantic Mission Society (AMS)
  - Archives and Records Office
  - Canadian Ministries (CM)
  - Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB) – omit *the*
  - Catholic Church in Canada
  - Communications Office
  - Cyclical PCC
  - Financial Services
  - General Assembly (GA) – capitalize; also capitalize *Assembly* when used alone and refers to General Assembly; *2023 General Assembly* is preferred over *148th General Assembly*
  - General Assembly Office (GAO)
  - Healing and Reconciliation – capitalize when used in a title of a program or fund; lowercase when referring to the concept
  - International Ministries (IM)
  - Justice Ministries (JM)
  - KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives – not *kairos*; often referred to as “KAIROS”
  - Leading with Care
  - Life and Mission Agency (LMA)
  - Living in Faith Together (LIFT) – formerly Canada Youth
  - Lutheran Church–Canada (LCC)
  - Ministry and Church Vocations (MCV)
  - Pension and Benefits Board
  - Presbyterian Church Building Corporation (PCBC)
  - Presbyterian World Service & Development (PWS&D) – always use the ampersand (&), not the word *and*; when using the tag line “the development and relief agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada” the word *development* should always come before *relief*
  - Presbyterians Sharing – no italics; note plural Presbyterians; do not include ellipsis (...) after the name

- Stewardship & Planned Giving
  - Support Services
  - the Trustee Board of The Presbyterian Church in Canada – always include the word *the* before “Trustee Board”; a capital *T* is not required for *the*
  - United Church of Canada
  - Women’s Missionary Society (WMS)
- ❖ The following is a quick reference of specialized terms and names significant to the PCC and words that are frequently used that might override the first variant in the *Oxford Canadian Dictionary* (OCD), (e.g., the PCC’s preferred spelling is *convener*, but OCD lists *convenor* as the first choice).
- Acts and Proceedings – not italics; or the abbreviation A&P; also referred to as the blue book (lowercase)
  - baptism – lowercase
  - benefiting – not *benefitting*
  - Bible, biblical – as a proper name, *Bible*, capitalize; as an adjective, *biblical*, lowercase
  - Black – capitalize when referring to a Black person or people
  - blue book (see *Acts and Proceedings*)
  - body of Christ – lowercase *body*
  - Book of Common Worship – not italics
  - Book of Forms – not italics
  - Book of Praise – not italics
  - cancelled – not *canceled*
  - catholic – lowercase when referring to the universal church; capitalize when referring to the Roman Catholic Church
  - church – lowercase, except when it is part of the proper name of a local church or national or international denomination (*St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church*, *The Presbyterian Church in Canada*)
  - clerk – lowercase (clerk of Session); capitalize for Clerks of Assembly only
  - colonial/colonization/decolonial – do not capitalize
  - committee – lowercase, except when it is part of the proper name of a committee (*Committee on History*, *International Affairs Committee*)
  - communion, eucharist – lowercase; but capitalize *Lord’s Supper*, *Last Supper*
  - convener – not *convenor*
  - coordinate – no hyphen
  - co-operate – hyphenate
  - counselling – not *counseling*
  - COVID-19 or Covid – not *COVID* or *covid*
  - creation – not *Creation*
  - denomination – lowercase
  - Doctrine of Discovery – capitalize

- email – lowercase, one word, no hyphen
- First Nations – capitalize
- focused – not *focussed*
- fulfill – not *fulfil*
- fund raise (v.) – but *fundraiser* (n.) and *fundraising* (n.)
- God, Christ, Christian – capitalize; however, the pronouns associated with these words are always lowercase (*he, his, you...*); capitalize alternative names for God and Jesus (*Creator, Sustainer, Holy Parent, Trinity, Messiah, Saviour, Prince of Peace...*)
- good news – lowercase
- gospel – lowercase
- grant-receiving – hyphenated, as in *grant-receiving congregation*
- health care (noun), two words; health-care (adjective), hyphenated, as in *health-care worker*
- heaven – lowercase
- HIV and AIDS – not *HIV/AIDS*
- Holy Spirit – capitalize (see also *spirit*)
- home-based – hyphenated, as in *home-based care*
- hymnbook – one word, lowercase
- Indigenous people – not plural; *Indigenous peoples* refers to multiple First Nations; do not capitalize *people*
- interfaith – one word, not hyphenated
- Internet – capitalize
- Inuit – capitalize
- kingdom of God, God’s kingdom/realm/reign – lowercase *kingdom, realm, reign*
- LGBTQI / LGBTQI2+ / 2SLGBTQQA (see p. 41 and p. 44 for use)
- live stream – two words
- *Living Faith* – italics
- Lord/Lord’s Table – always capitalize *Lord*
- Management team
- Métis – capitalize
- minister – lowercase
- minister of Word and Sacraments – lowercase *minister*; capitalize *Word* and *Sacraments*
- moderator – lowercase, except when referring to the moderator of a specific General Assembly or naming the moderator of the General Assembly (*Moderator of the 2023 General Assembly, Moderator Mary Fontaine*)
- multicultural – no hyphen
- national office – not *Church Offices* or *head office* or *national offices*
- okay – not OK
- Old Testament, New Testament – capitalize
- online – lowercase, one word, no hyphen
- percent – one word, not *per cent*
- *The Presbyterian Message* – italics

- practice – not *practise*
- predetermined – no hyphen
- premarital – no hyphen
- presbyterian.ca – do not include *www.* before the website address
- presbytery, presbyterial – lowercase, unless it is part of the proper name of a presbytery (*Presbytery of Cape Breton*)
- program – not *programme*
- psalm – lowercase, except when naming the book of the Bible  
*She recited Psalm 23, the only psalm she had memorized.*
- residential school Survivor – lowercase all words except Survivor
- residential school – lowercase
- resurrection – lowercase
- Reverend (Rev.) – always include *the* before *Reverend*; the abbreviation *the Rev.* may also be used; if the person also has a doctorate, use the abbreviated method (*the Rev. Dr. John Vissers*); use the title with first mention of the person's name, and include the person's first name (do not write *the Rev. Vissers*)  
*We welcomed the Rev. Dr. Pat Dutcher-Walls to our church. Pat said she was happy to join us.*
- sacrament – lowercase
- scripture, scriptural – lowercase
- season (Christmas season, season of Lent) – lowercase *season*, but capitalize *Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter*; lowercase seasons of the year: *spring, summer, fall, winter*
- self-help – hyphenated, as in *self-help group*
- Session (of a congregation) – capitalize
- shalom – lowercase
- skeptic – not *sceptic*
- spirit – capitalize only when used in reference to God or as an abbreviated reference to the Holy Spirit; otherwise lowercase  
*The Spirit of God moved over the face of the waters.*  
*The entire congregation was filled with the Spirit.*  
*Amina immediately sensed the spirit of the group.*
- Sunday school, church school – lowercase all words except *Sunday*
- Survivor – capitalize (residential school Survivor)
- synod, synodical – lowercase, unless it is part of the proper name of a synod (*Synod of British Columbia*)
- television – not *TV*
- *terra nullius* – italics, do not capitalize
- toward – not *towards*
- transgender – not *transgendered*
- water-borne – hyphenated, as in *water-borne diseases*
- web page – lowercase, two words
- website – lowercase, one word, no hyphen
- well-being – noun

- worldwide – lowercase, one word, no hyphen; but World Wide Web
- web – lowercase
- World War I / World War II (or *first world war* / *second world war*), but not WWI / WWII
- Word, Word of God, God's Word – capitalize *Word* only when used in reference to the Bible or to God the Son (as in John 1:1ff).
- worshipped – not *worshiped*

❖ See p. 40 for more information on Language.

## Biblical Citations

- ❖ Capitalize and do not italicize names of the Bible, its books and divisions.
- ❖ Always spell out the name of the book in text. It is also preferred to spell out the name in parenthetical references.

1 Timothy (not *1 Tim.*)

- ❖ Lowercase *book* in *book of Genesis*, or rephrase to avoid using the term.
- ❖ Always use Arabic numerals, not Roman numerals, for book, chapter and verse numbers.

1 Corinthians  
John 2:6–10  
Verse 5 says, “He called on the Lord.”

*Exception:*

Spell out the number at the beginning of a sentence.

First Corinthians...

- ❖ Separate chapter number and verse by a colon, no spaces (John 8:15). Within a chapter, use an en dash between verses (John 8:14–15). From one chapter or book to another, use an en dash with a space on both sides (John 8:14 – 9:3).
- ❖ Include in-text references inside the sentence but outside the quotation marks.

“Those who had arrested Jesus...had gathered” (Matthew 26:57).

- ❖ Spell out *verse* or *verses* in text, but abbreviate (*v.* or *vv.*) in parentheses.

Verse 5 says, “He called on the Lord.”  
“So they glorified him...he wiped out his enemies on every side” (vv. 5–6).

- ❖ The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) is the official Bible standard for The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The following notation should be added to the credits page of every Presbyterian Church in Canada publication that contains biblical quotations, unless the author has purposely chosen another translation.

Unless otherwise cited, all biblical references are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, © 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. All rights reserved. Used by permission.



- ❖ Capitalize the names of versions and editions of the Bible. Mark any references other than NRSV with abbreviations of the title in parentheses following the verse(s).

**Bible versions**

ASV	American Standard Version
CEV	Contemporary English Version
GNB	Good News Bible (Good News Translation/Today's English Version)
JB	Jerusalem Bible
KJV	King James Version
The Message	<i>(no abbreviation)</i>
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NEB	New English Bible
NIV	New International Version
NKJV	New King James Version
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
Phillips	J. B. Phillips Modern English Version
RSV	Revised Standard Version
TLB	The Living Bible

# Abbreviations, Contractions and Possessives

## Abbreviations

- ❖ An abbreviation is the short form of a longer word, often condensed to a set of initials. Some abbreviations that reduce to initials are pronounced as initials, and some become words: DVD, RCMP, USA.

- ❖ Always put a period after those abbreviations that are still pronounced in full.

Dr., Rev., Mrs., Ms., Mr., Jr.

- ❖ Never put periods between abbreviations that are pronounced as words in their own right (acronyms).

AIDS, NASA, NATO, scuba

- ❖ Abbreviations that are sounded out as initials require judgement. In general, leave out the periods if possible: HIV, PCC, RCMP, UN. But beware of abbreviations that could be misunderstood; you can write USA without confusing anyone, but US could mean either the *United States* or an emphatic *we*.

- ❖ Abbreviations that may be unfamiliar to some readers should be spelled out at first occurrence. In such instances, the abbreviation follows the spelled-out term in parentheses. You do not need to add the abbreviation in parentheses if you are not referring to it again.

Presbyterian World Service & Development (PWS&D) has launched an urgent appeal. Donations may be made to PWS&D in several ways.

- ❖ In general, avoid using Latinate abbreviations in text. It is often better to spell out what is intended. When using these abbreviations, be sure you know the meaning (*e.g.* and *i.e.* do not mean the same thing; see p. 50). Set Latinate abbreviations in roman, not italics.

cf. = compare

e.g. = for example

etc. = and so on/and so forth

f. and ff. = and following

i.e. = that is

vs. = versus

*Note:*

The abbreviations *e.g.* and *i.e.* are always followed by a comma in text.

Try learning a winter sport, e.g., skiing or snowboarding.

He returned to his home country, i.e., India.

- ❖ In biblical or page-number citations where *f* or *ff* is used, close up the space between the numeral and *ff*. In these instances, the period may be omitted.

John 5:12ff

- ❖ **Provinces**

- Use standard postal abbreviations in addresses.

AB, BC, MB, NB, NL, NT, NS, NU, ON, PE, QC, SK, YT

50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, ON M3C 1J7

- For Canadian provinces and territories listed within text, you can write out the full province name, use the abbreviations listed below, or use postal abbreviations. Use abbreviations only after the name of a community. Be consistent within a document.

Alta.	N.B.	N.S.	P.E.I.	Yukon
B.C.	N.L.	Nunavut	Que.	
Man.	N.W.T.	Ont.	Sask.	

- Use a comma to separate the name of a province from a city name.

The conference was held in Saskatoon, Sask.

- For large, well-known cities, the province name may be omitted. It may also be desirable to omit province names when numerous city names appear close together.

- ❖ **Units of measure**

- Do not use a period with abbreviations of units of measure.

3 kg, 200 km, 16°C, 60 km/h

*Exception:*  
m.p.h.

## **Contractions**

- ❖ A contraction is a shortening of two words that reflects common speech patterns: it's (it is), isn't (is not), won't (will not), can't (can not). For this reason, the use of contractions is especially common when writing or reproducing dialogue. However, the use of contractions is permissible in all text where a colloquial style is appropriate for the publication.

## Possessives

- ❖ Almost all singular nouns become possessive by adding apostrophe *s*, including singular nouns that end in *s*.

the man's hat, Imani's purse, the witness's testimony

*Note:*

Do not add apostrophe *s* to names that end in *s*, such as Jesus, Moses, Socrates and Ulysses; use Jesus', Moses', Socrates' and Ulysses'.

- ❖ Most plural nouns already have an *s* on the end, so you simply add an apostrophe after the *s*. For plural nouns that do not end in an *s*, add apostrophe *s*.

citizens' rights, kittens' toys, elders' meeting  
children's time, men's breakfast, people's choice

- ❖ Where the usage is more descriptive than possessive, omit the apostrophe.

a board of directors meeting

- ❖ Use a single apostrophe for joint possession, separate apostrophes for separate possession.

Jeong and Susan's store  
Nanuk's and Marie's shoes

- ❖ A group of words used to express a single idea takes an apostrophe on the last word only.

the government of Canada's policy, their mother-in-law's car

- ❖ Do not use an apostrophe when creating the possessive form of the pronoun *it*.

Each toy came in its own little box.

- ❖ In general, inanimate objects take an *of* phrase rather than an apostrophe.

the colour of the coat, *not* the coat's colour  
the time of the meeting, *not* the meeting's time

# Numbers and Letters

## Numbers

- ❖ In general, apply the spell-out rule: spell out zero and whole numbers from one to nine in full. Use Arabic numerals for 10 and above.

There were nine walnuts and 11 pistachios in the bowl.

- ❖ In numbers of four or more digits, use a comma between groups of three digits, counting from the right.

1,000; 50,000; 2,450,000

For addresses, page numbers or years, do not insert commas.

1422 Yonge Street; page 1037 of the report; born in 2005

- ❖ The spell-out rule varies with large numbers, as follows:
  - Always spell out the words *hundreds* and *thousands* (i.e., when the words are used in their plural form).

People gathered in the hundreds and thousands.  
The project cost the company tens of thousands of dollars.

- Spell out numbers in casual usage or for figures of speech.

One picture is worth a thousand words.  
Ten commandments

- Otherwise always use numerals.

1,000; 50,000; 950,000

- Use the spell-out rule with *million* and *billion*.

six million, 15 billion

- ❖ Do not start a sentence with a numeral. If it's a simple number, spell it out. If the number is complex, a year or time of day, rewrite the sentence to avoid having to start with a number.

Twenty exceptions tend to test any rule.

- ❖ In a colloquial or folk saying, it is permissible to spell out numerals, even if doing so conflicts with the general rules outlined here.

Four and twenty blackbirds baked in a pie.  
The years of a man's life are four score and twenty.

- ❖ Apply the spell-out rule for ordinals (numbers that show position or order in a sequence). Ordinals should be set in the same size and font as the body text. Do not use superscript.

eighth century, 18th century  
fifth position, 50th position  
Canada finished 27th in the international marathon.  
Canada finished seventh in women's hockey.

Many software programs automatically convert an ordinal into superscript. This setting can be easily adjusted. In Microsoft Word, on a PC, go to Word Options > Proofing > Auto Correct Options > Auto Format. Uncheck the box for ordinals. On a Mac, go to Preferences > AutoCorrect > AutoFormat as You Type. Uncheck the box for ordinals.

- ❖ If you abbreviate a number (such as a decade or year), use an apostrophe to indicate the missing numbers.

That happened in the '60s; the summer of '98

*Exception:*

Saoirse and her youth group attended CY18 at Brock University.

- ❖ If you make a number plural, do not insert an apostrophe after the number.

That happened in the 1960s.

## **Fractions and Percentages**

- ❖ The preference is to use metric measurements in PCC resources.
- ❖ Spell out amounts less than one, using hyphens between the words.

two-thirds; four-fifths; one-quarter

- ❖ For decimal fractions, use numerals regardless of the size of the number.

two parents and 2.3 children

- ❖ When dealing with percentages, you may either spell out the word *percent* or use a percent sign. If you spell out the word *percent*, apply the spell-out rule to the number.

six percent, 53 percent

If you use a percent sign, always use a numeral with it, regardless of the number size.

6%, 53%

## **Currency**

- ❖ If a currency symbol is used, the numeral is also used, regardless of the size of the number.

\$8; \$17.50; \$7,000; \$3 million; \$75 million

*Note:*

Whenever possible, convert amounts to Canadian dollars. The C\$ is usually only necessary on first reference. Use US\$ for U.S. dollar figures.

- ❖ If the currency or unit of currency is spelled out, apply the spell-out rule to the number.

eight cents, eight dollars, three million dollars, 75 million dollars

- ❖ Add decimal points for cents; do not add them if there are no cents involved. If the price involves cents only, do not use either a dollar sign or a cents sign; write out the word *cents*.

The GST on that came to \$7.89.

The tickets cost \$18 per person.

The oranges cost 27 cents each.

*Exception:*

In a series where one number must include decimal points, include decimals in all the numbers in the series.

They earned \$6.00 more than her earnings of \$55.90.

## Units of Measure

- ❖ When dealing with units of measure, you may either spell out the unit or use an abbreviation.

two kilometres	200 kilometres
three degrees	15 degrees

If you abbreviate the unit of measure, always use numerals regardless of the size of the number.

2 km	200 km
3°C	15°C

## Dates

- ❖ For months used with a specific date, abbreviate only *Jan.*, *Feb.*, *Aug.*, *Sept.*, *Oct.*, *Nov.* and *Dec.* Spell out all months without a specific date.

Oct. 1, 1999, was a Friday.  
Saturday, Jan. 15, 2020.  
January 2020 was wet.

- ❖ Use these forms without periods in a table:

Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr, May, Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov, Dec

- ❖ Avoid using *Sun.*, *Mon.*, *Tues.*, etc. in a table.

Sun, Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

- ❖ Use commas to separate day, month and year, and again after the year, but not when only the month and year are stated.

January 21, 1997, in St. Paul  
January 1997

- ❖ Do not use *th*, *st*, *nd* with dates.

January 16 *not* January 16th  
March 1 *not* March 1st  
April 2 *not* April 2nd



- ❖ When using the all-numeral style of writing dates, put the month first followed by the day and then the year (MM/DD/YY).

01/22/15 (January 22, 2015)  
09/03/2017 (September 3, 2017)

- ❖ “AD” is acceptable in all references for “anno Domini” (Latin for *year of the Lord*) and “BC” is acceptable for “before Christ.” AD precedes the year; BC follows it.

AD 410, 300 BC *but* 12th century AD

## Time

- ❖ For time of day, any of the following styles are permissible.

nine o'clock  
9:57 a.m.  
6 p.m.

Use lowercase with periods for the abbreviations for morning and evening. Restrict the use of *o'clock* to rounded hours, usually written out in full.

### *Note:*

Never write *9:15 a.m. in the morning* or *11:10 p.m. at night*, as this is redundant. Use one or the other (*9:15 a.m.*, *11:10 at night*).

- ❖ For a span of time, include zeros for even hours and include *a.m.* or *p.m.* only once, as needed.

6:00 – 6:30 a.m.  
9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
6:45 to 7:15 p.m.

- ❖ Hours and minutes should be separated by a colon, with no space following. This distinguishes time from decimal points.

Pi equals 3.14159.  
Pie will be served at 6:30 p.m.

- ❖ There are six time zones in Canada. Capitalizations and abbreviations are as follows.

#### **Standard Time zones**

Newfoundland standard time (NST)  
Atlantic standard time (AST)  
eastern standard time (EST)  
central standard time (CST)  
mountain standard time (MST)  
Pacific standard time (PST)

#### **Daylight Saving Time zones**

Newfoundland daylight time (NDT)  
Atlantic daylight time (ADT)  
eastern daylight time (EDT)  
central daylight time (CDT)  
mountain daylight time (MDT)  
Pacific daylight time (PDT)

- ❖ Daylight Saving Time begins on the second Sunday in March and ends on the first Sunday in November. Winter/Standard Time runs from the first Sunday in November to the second Sunday in March. Spell out time zones when they are not accompanied by a clock reading.

Newfoundland daylight time  
11 a.m. (NDT)

- ❖ Capitalize Newfoundland, Atlantic and Pacific time zones when spelled out. Other time zones—eastern, mountain and central—are lowercase.

There is a three-hour time difference between Atlantic standard time and mountain standard time.

## **Page Citations**

- ❖ Always use numerals and include in-text page number citations inside the sentence but outside the quotation marks. Use *p.* to cite a single page (*p. 88*) and *pp.* to cite multiple pages (*pp. 88–92*).

“In God’s service true freedom is to be found” (p. 7).

## **Telephone Numbers**

- ❖ Use hyphens, not parentheses, brackets or periods, to separate the groupings of numbers in a telephone number.

416-441-1111, 1-800-619-7301

*Note:*

Always use “ext.” to signify a phone extension.

1-800-619-7301 ext. 243

## Letters

- ❖ When referring to a letter as an alphabetical character in print or online, style it in italics and use capital or lowercase forms as appropriate. An apostrophe is used for the plural form.

“When you wrote *ballot*, you included three *l*’s.”

But the apostrophe is generally not necessary when using capitals, except when “s” alone would be confusing.

The two *V*s look like a *W*.

*Note:*

For idioms (“mind your p’s and q’s”), grade letters in educational contexts and musical pitches (“This song is in D”), italics are not generally used.

She got eight A’s and two B’s on her last report card.

# Formatting

## Italics

- ❖ Non-English words and phrases and transliterations that are commonly used and understood in English should be set in roman type, not italics. Generally, if the word or phrase is listed in the *Oxford Canadian Dictionary* in roman type, do not italicize it. Use italics for unfamiliar non-English words or phrases that are not listed in the *Oxford Canadian Dictionary* or that appear in italics in the listing.

ad hoc, á la carte, en masse, raison d'être  
*objet d'art, nec tamen consumebatur*

- ❖ Use italics for titles of books, periodicals, movies, plays and television series.
- ❖ Use italics for emphasis.

She is a *remarkably* intelligent person.

- ❖ Use italics or quotation marks, not both, to draw attention to a specific word or words.

*Inventor* refers to one who invents.  
“Inventor” refers to one who invents.

- ❖ When discussing translations of non-English terms, use italics for the non-English word and put the English translation in quotation marks.

The Greek word *logos* translates as “word.”

- ❖ If text is already set in italics, then revert to roman type to set apart the word or phrase.

*She is a remarkably intelligent person.*

- ❖ All punctuation marks should appear in the same font—roman or italic—as the main text surrounding it, not simply the preceding word. Punctuation should be set in italics only when it belongs to a title or an exclamation. This includes question marks, exclamation points, colons, semicolons, parentheses and quotation marks.

Have you read *Wuthering Heights*?  
*Blade Runner* was inspired by the novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*?  
She hasn't been home in *three years*!  
Suddenly he yelled, “*Ouch!*”  
Charlotte Brontë's first published novel (*Jane Eyre*) is her best-known work.

- ❖ See “Specialized Names and Terms” (p. 19) for particular uses of italics within The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

## **Bold**

- ❖ Use bold only for titles and subheadings within a document.
- ❖ Do not use bold for emphasis. Use italics.

He sure eats a *lot* of ice cream.

## **Underlining**

- ❖ Avoid underlining text. Underlining may be used as an indication to the designer that the underlined text is to appear in italics, but avoid this method unless it is the only option.
- ❖ Do not underline website addresses. Online, web addresses appear as coloured text with an underline only on the rollover (when the user rolls their mouse pointer over them).

## **Fonts and Font Sizes**

- ❖ Using a variety of fonts in both print and electronic documents is not advised as it can make text difficult to read. Some digital platforms may not convert the font correctly.
- ❖ Avoid using all caps and overly large fonts as this can come across as shouting. A font size of 12pt is considered standard.
- ❖ It is recommended that font choices for most materials be limited to Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri and Cambria. These fonts are the default options on many email and word processing programs.
- ❖ Designed resources, such as booklets and brochures, may use a wider variety of fonts.
- ❖ Calibri and Arial are sans-serif fonts and are therefore considered easier to read online.
- ❖ For letters and formal documents, Times New Roman, 12pt, should be considered the default font and font size.

## Quotations

- ❖ Reproduce quotations exactly, even though spelling and style may differ from this style guide. If something within the quotation is in error, place the word “[*sic*]” in italics and brackets immediately after the error. It is permissible, however, to change initial letters to capital or lowercase as the syntax demands. It is also permissible to change the final punctuation to fit the text. (In legal and scholarly works, any change in capitalization is indicated by brackets: [*R*]evolution. Avoid this method.)
- ❖ Put quotation marks around unfamiliar terms on first reference.

Calvin held a “Spring Fling” fundraising event in support of a local women’s shelter. The Spring Fling generated \$4,000 in sales.

- ❖ Put quotation marks around words used ironically.

The “friendly” soccer game ended with two players injured.

### Prose

- ❖ As a general guideline, set off as a “block quotation” prose quotations of three or more lines. Set first line flush left, and do not use a hanging indent. Do not use quotation marks around a block quotation. If there are quotations within the excerpt, use double quotation marks (and single within those, if necessary). Insert a blank line space before and after.
- ❖ Quotations of fewer than three lines in length should be embedded within the text. Place quotation marks around the entire quotation, and punctuate according to the style outlined above.

### Poetry/Song Lyrics

- ❖ When quoting a single line from a poem or song, run the line into the body text and enclose the line in quotation marks.

Dylan Thomas remembered his childhood: “About the lilting house and happy as the grass was green.”

- ❖ If running one or two lines into the text, use a slash (/), with a single space on either side, to mark the end of one line and the beginning of another.

Andrew Marvell’s praise of John Milton, “Thou hast not missed one thought that could befit, / And all that was improper dost omit.”

- ❖ Set off three or more lines of poetry (or song lyrics) as an excerpt. Reproduce faithfully all line indentions, spelling, capitalization and punctuation. If line width does not permit this, then use a short indent for run-on lines.

The time will come when,  
    with elation,  
You will greet yourself arriving  
    at your own door...

# Language

## Inclusive Language

- ❖ “Justice opposes prejudice in every form” (*Living Faith* 8.4.6). Acknowledging this, great care should be taken to avoid language that is demeaning or that stereotypes others on the basis of race, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or any other of the prohibited grounds of discrimination.
- ❖ The language we use not only reflects our thinking but also shapes it. It is the policy of the national office of The Presbyterian Church in Canada that inclusive language is to be used in reports, presentations, worship resources and official communications. Language should be used in ways that express the dignity and worth of God’s beloved people and creation, and the grace and hope of Jesus Christ.

## Language Related to Gender and Sexual Orientation

- ❖ When referring to people broadly as a group, avoid using gender-exclusive words and pronouns. The full diversity of gender and sexual orientation cannot be reflected by words that imply that there are only two genders—male and female—or that acknowledge only the intimate relationships between a man and a woman. Such words deny the experience and reality of individuals, and perpetuate an incomplete, binary view of human sexuality.
- ❖ The following are some strategies for using gender-inclusive language:
  - Use the position title, such as minister, member, adherent, clerk of Session, committee chair. Position titles can be used in the place of pronouns, even if this means the position title is used more than once in a sentence.
  - For family relationships, use words that are not gender-specific, such as child, sibling, spouse, sibling (replaces niece or nephew).
  - Avoid using phrases that imply that there are only two genders. Instead of “opposite gender” use “another gender” or “other genders.”
  - When referring to individuals whose identified pronouns are not known or when the gender of a generic or hypothetical person is irrelevant within the context, use the singular “they” to avoid making assumptions about an individual’s gender.
  - Avoid using combinations such as “he or she,” “she or he,” “he/she.” The formal usage of “one” should be avoided.



- ❖ When referring to a group, program or service that is gender-specific, use language that is accurate and specific.
- ❖ When referring to specific people, use the name, pronouns and titles (i.e., Mr., Ms., they, etc.) they use to refer to themselves.
- ❖ **LGBTQI2+** is an acronym that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex and Two-Spirit. It is one of many acronyms that is commonly used to describe groups of people who do not identify as straight and/or cisgender. Different versions of the acronym are used and acceptable in various contexts. Some examples:

LGBT

LGBTQ+ *Shorter variations are more common in spoken communication or international contexts*

LGBTQI

*Commonly used in reports of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, starting in 2017*

2SLGBTQQA

*As used by the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*

Most of the time, these acronyms are used to group together people with a variety of gender identities and sexual orientations. This is why the + is often used, although many versions of the acronym are intended to be as expansive even when they do not include the +. Sometimes though, a version of the acronym is used because it is limited and specific. When choosing which version of the acronym to use, ensure that it is representative of the groups about which you are writing. When using a direct quotation, maintain the acronym used in the original text of the quotation.

- ❖ Avoid the terms “homosexual” and “homosexuality.” These are generally considered to be outdated clinical terms that have been used to stereotype and pathologize people based on their sexual orientation. Instead, use specific, identity-first terms to describe people’s sexual orientation (i.e., gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, etc.). When it is necessary or appropriate to describe a specific person’s sexual orientation or gender identity, ask how they describe themselves and use that language.
- ❖ For further information, review the PCC’s *Definitions of Commonly Used Words in Discussions about Sexuality* ([presbyterian.ca/downloads/61802](http://presbyterian.ca/downloads/61802)). GLAAD’s glossaries and media reference guides are another good source for writing about gender, sexuality and LGBTQI2+ people in ways that are fair, accurate and inclusive ([glaad.org/reference](http://glaad.org/reference)).

## Language Related to Indigenous People, Residential Schools and Reconciliation

### ❖ Language usage

- As a rule, and if no more appropriate legal or self-named references have been identified, use the term “Indigenous people” as an umbrella term for the first peoples of a given place. In Canada, this term is generally inclusive of First Nations, Inuit and Métis (i.e., Section 35 of the Canadian constitution uses the term “Aboriginal peoples” when defining the rights of First Nations, Inuit and Métis).
- Avoid using the word “Indian” in reference to Indigenous people unless it is in the context of the *Indian Act*. Some Indigenous people choose to refer to themselves as Indians; however, many consider it to be derogatory.
- Capitalize Indigenous, Aboriginal, First Nations, Métis and Inuit. Do not capitalize “people” or “peoples” unless they are used in a title.
- Be aware that some terms are different in different geographic areas. For example, “reserve” is a Canadian term while in America similar tracts of land are called “reservations.” Likewise, “Native American” is used in the U.S. and “Aborigines” is used in Australia, but neither is used in Canada.
- Avoid using possessive phrases like “Canada’s Indigenous peoples” or “our Indigenous peoples” as that has connotations of ownership. An alternative is “Indigenous people in Canada” (not “Indigenous people of Canada”).
- Wherever possible, try to describe an Indigenous person or group based on their self-identified name (e.g., Anishinabe, Mi’kmaq, Nehiyaw/Cree, etc.).
- “Indigenous peoples” (plural) is a collective term that recognizes the existence of Indigenous communities, groups and nations that are culturally, politically and geographically distinct from one another. It is typically used in the context of Indigenous rights, sovereignty and self-determination. In other cases, it is appropriate to refer to “Indigenous people” (singular) as an umbrella for each individual who is Indigenous. When trying to decide which to use, ask yourself whether you are talking about groups of people (Indigenous peoples) or individuals (Indigenous people).

❖ **Terms to know (and some to avoid)**

**Indigenous** – Is a collective name for the original inhabitants or caretakers of a territory (where they may or may not still reside) and their descendants. It is continuing to grow in popularity in Canada and it is the international standard set by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

**Aboriginal** – Is a term specifically used in Canada and enshrined in Section 35 of the constitution as encompassing First Nations, Inuit and Métis. It is becoming less common. If you choose to use the word “Aboriginal,” remember it is an adjective, not a noun (i.e., you would refer to “Aboriginal people” instead of “Aboriginals”).

**First Nations** – This term came into common usage in Canada in the 1970s as an alternative to “Indian band.” While it is widely used, it does not have a legal definition in Canada. It can be used for many Indigenous peoples in Canada but does not apply to Inuit or Métis.

**Indian** – “Indian” is the legal term for a person who is registered under the *Indian Act*. Many people find it to be offensive and inaccurate. Avoid using this term unless you are writing about the *Indian Act*, Indian status or you are providing a direct quotation.

**Band** – Is a term that is used in the *Indian Act* to describe “a body of Indians for whose collective use and benefit lands have been set apart or money is held by the Crown, or declared to be a band for the purposes of the *Indian Act*.”<sup>1</sup> It is not used often outside the context of the *Indian Act*. Unless you are naming a specific band, “band” does not need to be capitalized, nor does “band council.” An alternative to “Indigenous bands” would be “Indigenous communities” or “First Nations,” depending on the context.

**Status Indians and Non-status Indians** – A person is a status Indian if they are registered under the *Indian Act*. People who are non-status “generally speaking have two distinct qualities: (1) they lack status under the Indian Act; and (2) they have Indian heritage; in other words, they have lost their status or whose ancestors were never registered or who lost their status under former or current provisions of the Indian Act.”<sup>2</sup>

**Tribe/tribal** – These terms are decreasing in popular use because they can be associated with the stereotype that Indigenous peoples are primitive. Unless a group self-identifies as a tribe or uses these words to talk about their community, avoid using these terms.

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<sup>1</sup> Communication Branch, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. 2002. *Words First: An Evolving Terminology Relating to Aboriginal Peoples in Canada*. publications.gc.ca/collections/Collection/R2-236-2002E.pdf. Pg. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. *Indigenous Peoples: A Guide to Terminology*. ictinc.ca/indigenous-peoples-a-guide-to-terminology

**Inuit** – Inuit are Indigenous people whose primary homeland is in northern Canada (known as Inuit Nunangat; see [itk.ca/about-canadian-inuit/#nunangat](http://itk.ca/about-canadian-inuit/#nunangat) for more information).

- In Inuktitut (the Inuit language), “Inuit” translates to “the people” so it is redundant to say “Inuit people”
- “Inuk” refers to one person (single noun), “Inuuk” refers to two and “Inuit” is for three or more (plural noun)
- “Inuit” can also be used as an adjective (e.g., *Sheila Watt-Cloutier is an Inuit activist*)

**Eskimo** – This is an outdated and derogatory term for Inuit and must not be used. The only occasional exception to this is the Yupik People of Alaska and Siberia, who do not consider themselves to be Inuit and prefer to be known as the Yup'ik, Yupiit or Eskimo. Since it is a well-known derogatory word, to avoid confusion, even when speaking of the Yupik people, unless using a quote, the term Eskimo should be avoided.

**Métis** – People who are Métis have mixed Indigenous and European ancestry, and many would agree that to be Métis, one must be able to trace their ancestry to a historically or culturally Métis community (e.g., the Red River Métis in Manitoba). Because the definition of Métis is contested, do not assume that someone identifies as Métis simply because some of their ancestors are Indigenous and some are not (e.g., someone might identify as Cree and Norwegian or Ojibwe and German).

**The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** – Often shortened to “The UN Declaration” or more colloquially as “UNDRIP.” It should be capitalized but does not need to be italicized.

**The National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls** – Often shortened to “The National Inquiry” following one use of the full title. Some related terms and acronyms:

- **Calls for Justice** – The National Inquiry’s final report included 231 Calls for Justice. A common mistake is to refer to them as “Calls to Justice” because the term closely resembles the TRC’s Calls to Action.
- **MMIWG** stands for missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (when written in full, it does not need to be capitalized except in titles).
- **2SLGBTQQA** stands for Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex and asexual. The National Inquiry chose to explicitly include Indigenous 2SLGBTQQA people in its mandate to study all forms of violence against Indigenous women and girls. Therefore, it is appropriate and encouraged to include 2SLGBTQQA people when writing about violence against Indigenous women and girls (e.g., *We pray for people gathering for Sisters in Spirit vigils, remembering the missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQA people*).

**The Truth and Reconciliation Commission** – Often shortened to “TRC” following one use of the full title.

- The TRC issued 94 Calls to Action in 2015. “Calls to Action” should be capitalized. In General Assembly reports, references to particular Calls to Action are written as “Call to Action No. 43,” for example.

**Turtle Island** – This term is occasionally used to describe North America without using colonial names and is based on some Indigenous creation stories. However, since there are many different creation stories for different nations, it does not resonate with all Indigenous peoples. Consider the context before deciding to use this term.

#### ❖ Residential schools terminology

- Do not capitalize “residential schools,” except in a title (e.g., *It is estimated that over 180,000 children attended Indian residential schools; The Presbyterian Church in Canada is a party of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement*). It is common to refer to the schools simply as “residential schools.” The same style considerations apply to “industrial schools.”
- Capitalize “Survivors” (e.g., *We are grateful to residential school Survivors for their testimonies*).

#### ❖ Presbyterian terminology

- National Indigenous Ministries Council can be shortened to NIMC.
- Healing and Reconciliation can be shortened to H&R when used in a title of a program or fund (e.g., the H&R Seed Fund). However, the shortened version would not be used in a sentence (e.g., “The Presbyterian Church in Canada is committed to H&R with Indigenous people” is incorrect). When referring to the concept, and not the title of a program or fund, capitals are not necessary (e.g., “The Presbyterian Church in Canada is committed to healing and reconciliation with Indigenous people”).

#### ❖ Sources/learn more

- Âpihtawikosisân:  
[apihtawikosisan.com/2012/01/a-rose-by-any-other-name-is-a-mihkokwaniy](http://apihtawikosisan.com/2012/01/a-rose-by-any-other-name-is-a-mihkokwaniy)
- Indigenous Corporate Training Inc.:  
[ictinc.ca/indigenous-peoples-a-guide-to-terminology](http://ictinc.ca/indigenous-peoples-a-guide-to-terminology)
- Indigenous Foundation:  
[indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/terminology](http://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/terminology)

## Expansive Language for God

- ❖ Metaphors used in reference to God should be expansive, encompassing the rich variety of ways God is described in the scriptures. While the term “Father” is often employed as a metaphor and title for God in worship, it is not the most frequently used image of God in the Bible. Among the other frequently used images for God in the Bible are Creator, Light, Strength, Power, Healing One, Tower of Strength, Shepherd, Deliverer, Loving Kindness, Potter, Dwelling Place, Redeemer, Radiant, God of Peace, Living God, Lawgiver, Consuming Fire, Almighty. Aside from Father, King and Lord, there are many other non-gender-specific biblical images that can be used when referring to God, such as Guide, Judge, Healer, Advocate, Friend and Saviour. Great care should be taken to not use images, titles and metaphors for God that are reflective of human systems of oppression. For example, referring to God as master could invoke images of slavery in the minds of readers and listeners.
- ❖ The use of masculine pronouns when referring to God should be avoided in writing resources where possible so that an image of God that is exclusively male is not cultivated. In many cases, the word *God* or some other image for God can be substituted for the masculine pronoun. Otherwise, rewrite the sentence to avoid the masculine pronoun.

God is good; his love endures forever.

*becomes*

God is good; God’s love endures forever.

In his Holy Word, God says that he has redeemed us and called us by name.

*may be rewritten as*

In scripture, God says, “I have redeemed you; I have called you by name.”

Isaiah records that God redeems us and calls us by name.

## Imagery Related to Indigenous People

- ❖ To respect the rights of Indigenous peoples, it is critical for all institutions, including the church, to identify and stop any practices that ignore, diminish or misrepresent Indigenous peoples, histories, spirituality, language, art forms, cultures and traditions. When pictures and imagery are used, it must be done with contextually appropriate informed care, consent and compensation. This is especially important because the church’s relationship with Indigenous peoples has been marked by colonization and racist beliefs that underscored a purported superiority of a Christianized, western European worldview.
- ❖ **Images, context and trauma**
  - As with all images (that have not been purchased through a stock image service), images used must only be used with the informed consent of the person who took the image as well as any people who are in it. Some images can trigger trauma responses, such as pictures from residential schools. Think about whether an image is necessary

to the context it is being considered for use in, and, if necessary, what precautions should be taken for the viewer's safety and well-being (for instance, include a content warning and trauma-response service information, if appropriate).

- Pictures or images that show ceremony or ceremonial objects (smudging, dancing) may be appropriate in some contexts but not in others. Permission should always be sought before a photograph is taken of any ceremonial object or activity, as it is not always appropriate to do so.
- Even if permission to take the photo has been given, additional permission to use the photo must be given for each specific context you wish to use the photo in. Consent may be given for the use of a picture or image in a specific context, where it is appropriate. Still, it should be avoided in other contexts (keeping in mind that what is appropriate must be determined by the Indigenous person, organization or community connected to the picture or image). For example, a picture of a residential school memorial may be used, with permission, about the opening of a memorial, but images of memorials should not be used when speaking about unmarked graves or the church's role in residential schools.

#### ❖ **Some examples of problematic images and what to avoid**

- Appropriation or inappropriate use of Indigenous images or images that are mistakenly construed as Indigenous (e.g., dreamcatchers, teepees, totems or feathers).
- Use of Indigenous art forms or stylizing text to mimic an Indigenous form of art (e.g., stock images, clipart).
- Even unintentional misuse of Indigenous images or symbols is offensive and dismissive of their value to Indigenous people. It can perpetuate misinformation and reinforce stereotypes.

#### ❖ **Guidance**

- If you would like to use an image or photo by an Indigenous creator, artist or organization, ask the creator/artist/organization for permission, explaining in detail how the image will be used. Do not reuse the image in a different context unless you consult with and obtain permission from the creator or artist first.
- Ask what the artist considers appropriate compensation for the use of a picture or image.
- When in doubt, do not use pictures or images.

# Word Usage

## Split Infinitives

- ❖ Avoid splitting infinitives (*to wait, to go, to listen*) with adverbs when it is not necessary.

I asked you to wait patiently for me.

*not*

I asked you to patiently wait for me.

However, it is acceptable to use split infinitives where rephrasing to avoid them would render the sentence awkward or change its meaning.

Learning how to truly listen involves a lot more than simply developing a few skills.

Learning how truly to listen involves a lot more than simply developing a few skills.  
(*This version is awkward.*)

Learning how to listen truly involves a lot more than simply developing a few skills.  
(*This version changes the meaning of the sentence.*)

## Ending a Sentence with a Preposition

- ❖ Most of us were taught to never end a sentence with a preposition, but this is an unnecessary restriction. Ending a sentence with a preposition often sounds more natural and may even improve the clarity of the sentence. It also depends on the author's style.

This is the moment we've been waiting for.

Showing integrity is something to be proud of.

This experience will give you something to talk about.

*not necessary*

This is the moment for which we've been waiting.

Showing integrity is something of which to be proud.

This experience will give you something about which to talk.

## Simplifying Text

- ❖ Avoid using unnecessarily complicated words or phrases in favour of simpler, well-established terms.

use	<i>not</i>	utilize
before	<i>not</i>	prior to
later	<i>not</i>	subsequently
amid	<i>not</i>	amidst
among	<i>not</i>	amongst
prevent	<i>not</i>	preclude



- ❖ Be careful not to use the plural form of certain words when the singular should be used.

a criterion	<i>not</i>	a criteria
a phenomenon	<i>not</i>	a phenomena

- ❖ Avoid redundant phrases.

collaborate	<i>not</i>	collaborate together
unanimous	<i>not</i>	completely unanimous
end	<i>not</i>	end result
bonus	<i>not</i>	extra bonus
at present/now/at this time	<i>not</i>	at the present time
notice	<i>not</i>	advance notice
outcome	<i>not</i>	final outcome
because	<i>not</i>	due to the fact that
to	<i>not</i>	in order to

- ❖ Avoid extraneous prepositions.

That's too small *of* a shirt for you.

## Commonly Misused Words

- ❖ The following words are commonly misused. For a more extensive list of commonly misused words, refer to the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

**affect/effect** – *Affect* is a verb meaning to influence or have an effect on; *effect* is a noun meaning the result or consequence of an action.

**altar/alter** – The *altar* is the table used for sacramental purposes; to *alter* something is to change it.

**compliment/complement** – A *compliment* means a kind word, or praise. To *complement* means to match, correspond or complete. An editor *compliments* a writer on a good job; the editor's skills *complement* those of the writer.

**counsellor/councillor** – A *counsellor* is an advisor or person who gives guidance. A *councillor* is a member of a council.

**discreet/discrete** – *Discreet* is to be circumspect or tactful, as in keeping a *discreet* silence; *discrete* means separate or distinct, as in having three *discrete* chores to do. Keep in mind that *discreet* can have connotations of secretive or surreptitious behaviour.

**ensure/insure** – You *ensure* that you have enough gas in your car to get to work, but you *insure* your car against collision damage.

**ex-patriot/expatriate** – Using the text *ex-patriot* would refer to someone who is no longer patriotic. An *expatriate* is someone who lives outside their native country.

**farther/further** – Use *farther* for a physical distance and *further* for a figurative distance. The *farther* I get from home, the *further* I sink into depression.

**hoard/horde** – *Hoard* refers to treasure. *Horde* connotes to a throng, mob or rabble.

**i.e./e.g.** – *i.e.* means “that is”; *e.g.* means “for example.” Always put a comma after either of the abbreviations.

**immigrate/emigrate** – To *immigrate* is to come as a permanent resident to a country, leaving a home country; to *emigrate* is to leave a home country to go live in another. A person who left India to come live in Canada is an *immigrant* here, and an *emigrant* there.

**imply/infer** – The writer or speaker *implies*; the reader or listener *infers*. If I were to *imply* that you should read this style guide, you might *infer* that there were mistakes in your recent publication.

**its/it’s** – *Its* is a possessive; *it’s* is the contraction of “it is.”

**lay/lie** – *Lay* means to put or to place; it is something done to something else. *Lay* the book on the table. (Past tense: *laid*. He *laid* the book on the table. Past participle: *laid*. He had *laid* the book on the table.) *Lie* means to recline or be at rest. *Lie* down for a nap. (Past tense: *lay*. She *lay* down for a nap. Past participle: *lain*. She had *lain* down for a nap.)

**less/fewer** – Use *less* to refer to amounts, and *fewer* to refer to countable things. There would be *less* traffic congestion if *fewer* people drove to work.

**pour/pore** – You *pour* water; readers *pore* over a manuscript.

**principal/principle** – *Principal* is the first in order of importance (*the country’s principal cities*) or in reference to money it means the original sum invested or lent (*principal investment*). A *principle* is a fundamental truth or defining concept.

**prophecy/prophecy** – *Prophecy* is the verb; *prophecy* is the noun. Many pundits have *propheesied* Apple’s demise, but their *prophecies* have not materialized.

**reign/rein/rain** – A monarch *reigns*. You use *reins* to *rein* in a horse, or, perhaps, an economy. *Rain* falls from clouds.

**sight/site/cite** – A *sight* is something worth seeing; a *site* is a place or location. *Cite* means to quote a passage or summon to court.

**there/their/they’re** – *There* refers to a place; *their* is a possessive; *they’re* is the contraction of “they are.”

**whose/who’s** – *Whose* is a possessive; *who’s* is the contraction of “who is.”

**your/you’re** – *Your* is a possessive; *you’re* is the contraction of “you are.”

## Troubleshooting

❖ The following words/phrases can be particularly problematic.

### *a while vs. awhile*

“A while” is a time meaning “a length of time” and is a noun. “Awhile” means “for a time” and is an adverb. You can replace “a while” with another article-noun combination, such as “a year.”

I slept for a while.

You can replace “awhile” with another adverb such as “briefly” and the sentence still makes sense.

I slept awhile before dinner.

### ***affect vs. effect***

Generally, “affect” is a verb and means “to influence” (*The rain affected my hairdo*) or “to act in a way that you don’t feel” (*Jessica affected an air of superiority*). The word “effect” is a noun that means “a result.”

The effect was eye-popping.

The sound effects were incredible.

The weather had no effect on the performance.

### ***amount vs. number***

Use *number* when referring to things that can be counted individually, and *amount* when referring to mass or volume or things that can’t be quantified. You can count the *number* of tires on a truck, and measure the *amount* of air in them.

amount of water, money, time, noise, work, joy...

number of drops, coins, hours, birds, students, calls...

### ***bad vs. badly***

“Badly” is an adverb (*She handled the news badly*). “Bad” is most familiar as an adjective but it can also be an adverb and therefore cause confusion. In adjectival form, “bad” provides detail about the noun it modifies (*I have a bad feeling about this*). As an adverb, “bad” modifies the preceding verb (*Now I don’t feel so bad about it*).

#### *Quick tip:*

Test which adverbial form to use by replacing “badly” with a synonym, such as “poorly” (*She handled the news poorly*). If it sounds correct, you can use it. If you replaced “badly” with “poor,” the sentence wouldn’t make sense (*She handled the news poor*).

The same works for “bad” if you try it with another synonym. “Now I don’t feel so *terribly* about it” or “Now I don’t feel so *terrible* about it.” The correct word would be “bad.”

### ***I vs. me***

*I* is the subject of the sentence, the doer; *me* is the object of the sentence, having something done to me. Mistakes are most often made when talking about more than one person. To check which to use, listen if the sentence sounds right with a single pronoun. You wouldn’t write “Me is going home,” so don’t write “Me and Tom are going home.” You wouldn’t write, “Come with I,” so don’t write, “Come with Tom and I.” The pronoun “I” can never be possessive. You wouldn’t say “That is I’s jacket,” so don’t write “Tom and I’s house.”

Prepositions (such as *above*, *about*, *across*, *beneath* and *between*) can confuse things. Pronouns become objects of the prepositions they follow and that is why a sentence like “Just between you and me” is correct.

### ***more than vs. over***

Generally, “more than” is preferred with numerals; “over” is preferred with spatial relationships.

He made more than \$100 in sales.

She jumped over the hole.

### ***that vs. which***

Use *that* and *which* when referring to places, objects and animals. *That* introduces a clause that defines its antecedent (restrictive/essential clause); don’t set off the clause with commas.

This is the house that Jack built.

*Which* introduces a non-restrictive clause—one that adds information but is not necessary to understanding the meaning of the main clause; a non-restrictive/non-essential clause is always set off by commas.

Jack’s house, which he built himself, is much admired by his neighbours.

### ***who vs. whom***

*Who* is a subject and the pronoun used for reference to human beings and animals with names.

Who is coming to the party?

The person who called me was my friend.

*Whom* is used when someone is the object of a verb or preposition.

With whom do you wish to speak?

The person to whom the car was given drove it to the store.

### ***Quick tip:***

Try substituting *he* (subject) and *him* (object) to determine which pronoun makes more sense. For example, “Who/whom were you yelling at?”

I was yelling at *he*.

I was yelling at *him*.

The correct choice is “him” (which ends in *m*, like “whom”) so the question should be, “Whom were you yelling at?”

“Who/whom won the award in 2013?”

*He* won the award.

*Him* won the award.

The correct choice is “he” so the question should be, “Who won the award in 2013?”

# Writing for the Web

People rarely read text presented on the web word for word: they tend to scan through a page and select individual words and sentences. The correct use of bullet points, headings and summary paragraphs throughout a piece of content will ensure that the maximum number of site visitors will read and better understand the information presented.

- Use plain language.
- Use short sentences that convey a single idea.
- Keep text concise and simple.
- Include the main idea in the first paragraph and use following text to expand the main point.
- Avoid using colons and semicolons within a sentence.
- Avoid the use of italics, as it can be difficult to read on screens.
- Underlined text should not be used as this can be understood as a link.
- Always avoid using extraneous, complicated and overly long words.
- Always include summaries or highlights for longer sections.
- Use concepts and terminology consistently.
- Standards of English that are suitable for printed documents are not always suitable for the web. Text should be simpler and easier to digest, ensuring that users can fully understand the information presented.
- Use spell-check as a first defence against mistakes. All content (both online and in an attachment) must use the correct grammar and spelling.
- Avoid having the same information on more than one page. Instead of re-entering information, provide a link back to the original.
- It is not necessary to include “http://” or “www.” for web addresses except for less familiar forms such as “ftp://”. When a company uses its web address as its corporate name, capitalize the first letter (*Amazon.com*). The Presbyterian Church in Canada’s website should be referenced as “presbyterian.ca.”
- Use bulleted lists to make long segments of text easier to read, and to call attention to certain text and help the reader better understand information.
- Dates must be written in the order month, day, year (*Sept. 20, 2023*). Do not use “st” “th” or “rd” as in *21st* or *3rd*.
- Phone numbers should use hyphens (*1-416-441-1111 ext. 243*). Do not use periods or parentheses to separate numbers. Always include the country code for international phone numbers.

## **Link Management**

- ❖ Links that direct to websites outside the PCC site should open in a new window, when possible.
- ❖ Email addresses should appear as a link over regular text.
- ❖ When text references another page on the site, a link should be available to that page.
- ❖ A broken link appears as strikethrough text. Notify the Communications Office if a broken link is found.

## **Posting and Publishing PCC Content**

- ❖ It is the responsibility of each department to maintain their section of the PCC website and ensure content is up to date and accurate. It is each department's job to notify the Communications Office of content they would like updated, added or removed.

## Footnotes, Endnotes and Bibliographies

### *Note:*

For reports presented to the General Assembly, the General Assembly Office discourages the use of endnotes, preferring instead that references to scripture, Acts and Proceedings or the Book of Forms be embedded directly in the text.

Footnotes and endnotes tell readers exactly where you found specific information. Insert a footnote or an endnote when you use a direct quote, paraphrase information or need to add further explanation to your text.

A bibliography is an alphabetical list of all the material you consulted, even if you did not cite it in your text.

### Footnotes and Endnotes

- ❖ Footnotes are placed in the footer section of a page, while endnotes can go at the end of each chapter or at the end of the book or resource in a section of their own.
- ❖ If a book includes both endnotes and a bibliography, and the endnotes are placed in a section of their own at the back of the book, they must precede the bibliography.
- ❖ Text is typically set two point sizes smaller than body text.
- ❖ Restart numbering with each chapter or section. For footnote/endnote numbers, use the same font and point size as the endnote text, but set as *superscript* (see first example below).

### Sample Footnotes and Endnotes

The style for both footnotes and endnotes is the same. Here is the preferred style. (Examples are based on *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Consult *The Chicago Manual of Style* for full presentation.)

#### ❖ **Book with one author**

<sup>1</sup> Robert L. Lugen, *Great Preachers: Past and Present* (New York: Pocket Books, 1992), 27.

*Note:* The endnote number in this example is for illustrative purposes only.

#### ❖ **Book with two authors**

Bernie Friesen and Susan Gilligan, *How America Survived* (Sonoma, CA: Historical Press, 1997), 280–282.

#### ❖ **Book with three or more authors**

Bernie Friesen et al., *How America Rebuilt Itself* (Detroit: Freedom Press, 1959), 389.

- ❖ **Book with an editor**  
Henry F. Gilbert, ed., *Airplanes from the Past* (Detroit: Wayne Publishing, 1979), 65.
- ❖ **Book with two editors**  
Arthur J. Magida and Stuart M. Matlins, eds., *How to Be a Perfect Stranger Vol. 1* (Kelowna, BC: Northstone, 1999), 250.
- ❖ **Book with more than two editors**  
Marilyn Perry et al., eds., *Worship for All Ages* (Kelowna, BC: Wood Lake Books, 2005), 19.
- ❖ **Book with an anonymous or unknown author**  
*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 10th ed. (Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 1993).
- ❖ **Later-edition book**  
David A. Keller, *Acquiring Language*, 3rd ed. (New York: Bantam Books, 1997), 25.
- ❖ **Multivolume book**  
Edward Bosell, *A History of Minnesota*, vol. 2 (St. Paul, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 89.
- ❖ **Magazine/journal article**  
Susan Commers, "Lowering Your Expectations," *Parenting*, December 15, 1997, 25.
- ❖ **Specialized journal article**  
Mary Davis, "Procrastination Analyzed," *Therapist Today* 8, no. 4 (1997): 25–26.
- ❖ **Newspaper article**  
Tony Ramons, "Computing Taxes," *Minneapolis Tribune*, December 1, 1997, sec. A, p. 7.
- ❖ **Websites**  
Do not underline or italicize websites. Do not include "http://" or "www." in the web address except for less familiar forms such as "ftp://". When a company uses its web address as its corporate name, capitalize the first letter (Amazon.com).  
  
presbyterian.ca/worship
- ❖ For two or more citations from same source, use *ibid.* (roman type).
- ❖ For any source already cited in your notes, but not the source immediately before, use the author's name and a shortened form (Lugen, *Great Preachers*, 29).



## Bibliographies

- ❖ Note the differences between bibliographic and endnote forms.
- ❖ Bibliographic text is typically set two point sizes smaller than body text and is always the same size as endnote text, if any.
- ❖ For successive works by the same author, use an em dash followed by a space in place of the author's name after the first appearance.
- ❖ For lesser-known cities, cite province/state abbreviations.

## Sample Bibliographic Entries

- ❖ **Book with one author**  
Lugen, Robert L. *Great Preachers: Past and Present*. New York: Pocket Books, 1992.
- ❖ **Book with two authors**  
Friesen, Bernie, and Susan Gilligan. *How America Survived*. Sonoma, CA: Historical Press, 1997.
- ❖ **Book with three or more authors**  
Friesen, Bernie, et al. *How America Rebuilt Itself*. Detroit: Freedom Press, 1959.
- ❖ **Book with an editor**  
Gilbert, Henry F., ed. *Airplanes from the Past*. Detroit: Wayne Publishing, 1979.
- ❖ **Book with two editors**  
Magida, Arthur J. and Stuart M. Matlins, eds. *How to Be a Perfect Stranger Vol. 1*. Kelowna, BC: Northstone, 1999.
- ❖ **Book with more than two editors**  
Perry, Marilyn et al., eds., *Worship for All Ages*. Kelowna, BC: Wood Lake Books, 2005.
- ❖ **Book with no author**  
*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*. 10th ed. Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 1993.
- ❖ **Later-edition book**  
Keller, David A. *Acquiring Language*. 3rd ed. New York: Bantam Books, 1997.
- ❖ **Multivolume book**  
Boswell, Edward. *A History of Minnesota*. Vol. 2. St. Paul, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1998.
- ❖ **Popular magazine/journal article**  
Commers, Susan. "Lowering Your Expectations." *Parenting*, December 15, 1997.

❖ **Specialized journal article**

Davis, Mary. "Procrastination Analyzed." *Therapist Today* 8, no. 4 (1997).

❖ **Websites**

Do not underline or italicize websites.

[presbyterian.ca/worship](http://presbyterian.ca/worship)

# PCC Branding and Logos

## The Presbyterian Church in Canada Logo

The “burning bush” and “nec tamen consumebatur” are the official symbol and motto of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The burning bush logo is used by the national office for both print and electronic resources and information. It is available for congregations, groups and bodies of The Presbyterian Church in Canada to use for church-related materials, such as church signs, bulletins, websites, newsletters, etc. The logo is also available for collaborative and cooperative ecumenical ventures. It is available for download at [presbyterian.ca/logo](http://presbyterian.ca/logo).

### ❖ PCC Logo Specifications

➤ **Font:** Martel (Available for free from Google Fonts)

➤ **Colours**

#### **CMYK values (for print resources)**

Red – C:12 M:100 Y:95 K:2

Blue – C:100 M:86 Y:28 K:14

#### **RGB values (for digital designs)**

Red – R:209 G:32 B:43

Blue – R:30 G:60 B:113

## Presbyterians Sharing Logo

Presbyterians Sharing is the national church fund that supports mission and ministry in Canada and around the world. Presbyterians share in a wide range of ministries. Together, we build strong congregations, serve vulnerable people, walk with Indigenous people, seek justice and share God’s love around the world.

### ❖ Presbyterians Sharing Logo Design

The Presbyterians Sharing Logo is a purple circle made up of 8 fish. The fish was chosen because of the early church’s use of the fish as a symbol of Christ and the Christian faith and church. It also recalls both the miracle of sharing (loaves and fishes) and the commission to be “fishers of people.” The 8 fish represent the eight synods in the PCC. Theologically, the number 8 refers to the 8th day (day of resurrection), which invokes the “new creation”—the reconciliation and renewal of all things. The circle represents gathering, inclusion, unity, wholeness and the perfect everlasting nature of God. The fish are gathered together to signify our

working together in collaboration. The colour purple invokes the colour of majesty and reminds us both of Christ's rule but also the kingdom we are to build on earth. The design includes two variations of the cross—the Greek cross (+) and the St. Andrew's cross (x).

#### ❖ **Presbyterians Sharing Logo Specifications**

- **Font:** Martel (Available for free from Google Fonts)
- **Colour**

**CMYK values (for print resources)**

Purple – C:70 M:100 Y:0 K:0

**RGB values (for digital designs)**

Purple – R:111 G:45 B:145

### **Presbyterian World Service & Development (PWS&D) Logo**

Presbyterian World Service & Development is the development and relief agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. For over 65 years, our church has been actively working to serve marginalized and vulnerable people through Presbyterian World Service & Development. While the global context has evolved since PWS&D was first formed, what has not changed is a commitment to Christ's message of love through justice, poverty reduction and support in times of disaster.

#### ❖ **PWS&D Logo Specifications**

- **Font:** Ivy Presto Display
- **Colour**

**CMYK values (for print resources)**

Green – C:88 M:42 Y:69 K:32

**RGB values (for digital design)**

Green – R:17 G:92 B:78

## **Guidelines for logo use**

- There are several options available for each logo. Using one of the approved configurations will help ensure consistency in communication and representation of the PCC. Download the various versions from [presbyterian.ca/logos](http://presbyterian.ca/logos).
- White is the best background on which to reproduce the colour logo.
- If colour reproduction is not available or the colour logo is not suitable on a particular background or photo, the logo should be reproduced in solid black or white. Black and white logos are available from the Communications Office.

### **❖ Errors to Avoid**

- Don't squeeze or stretch the logo.
- When using the name with the logo, use the approved artwork; don't typeset the name in a different font or colour.
- Don't change the logo colours.
- Don't use the logos in grey-scale; use the solid black artwork.
- Don't use the colour logos on a dark background or on a colour that conflicts.
- Don't place the logos on a busy photograph or pattern.