



## West Cohasset Chapel Writing Style Guide

### **Introduction**

This style guide was developed in August 2011 by the Personnel Committee at West Cohasset Chapel (WCC). This guide is intended to give standards to all official WCC documents, whether in print form or electronic.

### **Common Style Issues**

*Percentages.* Write all percentages like this: 76%.

*Decimals.* Anytime you use decimals in writing, use the numerals: 2.06 acres.

*Numbers.* Write out numbers ten and under. Any number over ten should use the numeral—11 and 12 would be examples.

*Dates.* All dates written within the text of a document must be written out: Wednesday, March 30, 2011. Always refer to the day and the date.

All dates used within figures and tables must be written in numerical form: 3/30/11.

*Places.* Always refer to places within documents by their city and state: Grand Rapids, MN (never use periods when abbreviating states).

*Harvard Comma.* Never use the Harvard comma in lists of three or more items. Here is an example of how commas should be used in a series: Al, Steve, Wayne and Patrick were having troubles with the comma.

*Date Created.* Always include the date a document was created (or last edited) on the bottom in a footer. Do it like this: “Date Created: August 23, 2011” or “Last Edited: October 2011”.

### **Web Page Standards**

Never use personal phone numbers or personal e-mail addresses on the website.

### **Letter/E-Mail (Correspondence) Standards**

All letters should be written using full block letter format.

All letters/e-mails must include an introduction, gracious greeting, main message, gracious ending and conclusion. Here is an example:

Dear Pat,

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thank you for helping the West Cohasset Chapel staff with the creation of the Writing Style Guide. You are very thoughtful, and we appreciate your time and efforts.

God bless you,

Erica Bostaph

### **Worship Folder Standards**

Always include the address for events, not just “at Tom’s house”.

Always use first and last names.

Include a source for a map.

There should never be more than 3 different fonts throughout the main text of a worship folder.

All fonts in a worship folder must be easily readable (examples are Calibri, Arial, and Times New Roman).

### **Format Standards**

All reports written at WCC must be left-justified, with single-spaced text and blank lines between paragraphs (never indent paragraphs).

*Text.* All reports will be written using Calibri font and 12 point text.

*Business Letters.* All business letters will be written using full-block format: single spaced text, no indents for paragraphs and blank line between paragraphs.

*Paragraph Length.* As a general rule, all paragraphs written in single-spaced format may be no longer than the “rule of thumb” allows—think thumb and index finger held parallel. In other words, paragraphs should be no longer than two inches.

All text written inside of tables will be left justified, Calibri 12 point.

*Headings.* Use headings in reports whenever it will help the reader follow the writing.

Level One headings will be placed directly over the text (no spaces between the heading and the text), left justified, and will be 12 point, Calibri bold.

Level Two headings will appear directly in the text, will be 12 point, in italics and end with a period.

Top of Page Titles will always be written in Calibri, 20 point, bold, and be centered. Never use all caps on Titles.

Top of Page Sub-Titles should be Calibri, 18 point, bold, and be centered. Never use all caps on Sub-Titles.

## **Page Numbering and Ordering**

*Page Numbers.* Page numbers on all reports will appear in the upper right hand corner. They will be in Calibri 12 point, will appear in the header and must be in this format: Page 1 of 6.

## **Specific Standards**

*Dollar Amounts.* When referring to dollar amounts in both tables and in text, do not include cents. Here is an example of the correct way to refer to numbers: \$10, 650. An exception to this rule is when an exact figure is required.

*Acronyms.* When using acronyms in the text, always write out the entire word the first time using it, followed by the acronym in parentheses. Every time the acronym is used after that in the same report, the acronym may be used alone. Here is an example: I forgot to include the Mathias Length Theorem (MLT) in my report. Forgetting the MLT cost me ten points.

Acronyms should be all capitals with no periods after the letters. Here are some examples in the correct style: MLT, PPPA, KISS, ITTS.

## **Writing and Editing Checklist**

Before any document is published to the web, or printed for circulation, all writers need to use the following checklist. This is a good way to make sure your project is ready for publication.

- Have you read through and edited the document for content?
- Have you read through and edited for grammatical errors?
- Have you run spellcheck?
- Have you used the proper format?
- Have you checked for sentence structure?
- Have you used the correct page number system?
- Have you used correct font and point size?
- Have you used heading correctly?
- Have you used “Last Revised” date on footer?