

Guidelines for *Searchlight* Submissions

The following guidelines for *Searchlight* submissions have been adopted by the UCC Publicity Team to promote clarity and consistency throughout the newsletter. They also should be used for website submissions. The usage guidelines are based on the *Associated Press Stylebook*, the writing style authority used in the majority of U.S. newsrooms. Examples are *italicized*.

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Submitting Articles, Deadline, Article Length and Editing Permission

Submitting Articles

It is preferred that articles for *The Searchlight* be submitted to Church Administrator Kathie Bergman by [email](#). If submitted by email, your text can either be attached as a Microsoft Word document (the preferred method) or set out in the body of the email.

If you are unable to submit an article by email, you may mail or deliver your article to:

Kathie Bergman, Church Administrator
Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia
2615 Shepard Blvd.
Columbia, MO 65201-6132

To minimize reformatting in the desktop publishing program used to produce *The Searchlight*:

- Single-space your article, single-space between paragraphs, and start each paragraph with a tab indent – see [Vertical Spacing](#).
- At the end of each sentence, use only one space after the period before the next sentence – see [Sentence-End Spacing](#).
- Use Times Roman or Times New Roman for the font – see [Fonts](#).

Deadline

Articles are due by the third Monday of August through May for the September through June issues of *The Searchlight*.

Article Length

Articles should be as short as possible consistent with conveying the necessary information.

A general guideline is that articles should be no longer than 75 to 200 words (use the word count feature in Microsoft Word to determine how long your article is).

If you believe you need more space, please consult with Kathie Bergman before submitting an article longer than 200 words.

The minister's and president's columns are exceptions to this guideline.

Editing Permission

When you submit an article, you agree to allow editing for clarity and conformity with these guidelines, as well as shortening if necessary to fit the space available.

Abbreviations

The Searchlight is read by some people who are not yet familiar with all of our Unitarian Universalist shorthand language. To help them understand our writings, try to make as few assumptions as possible.

The first time each of the many abbreviations used in our community comes up in an article, the full words should be used (followed by the abbreviation in parentheses): *Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA)*, *Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC)*, *Director of Religious Education (DRE)*

Exception: UUCU is readily understood to refer to our church and does not have to be preceded by the full name of the church.

The same principle applies to non-UU organizations mentioned in articles: *Organization of American States (OAS)*

Punctuation of abbreviations:

If an abbreviation is two letters, use periods: *General Assembly (G.A.)*

If an abbreviation is three or more letters, do not use periods: *Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA)*

Addresses

Use numerals for specific addresses (instead of words, even if less than 10 – see [Numbers](#)): *9 Westwood Ave.*

When used with a numbered address, abbreviate only *Ave.*, *Bld.*, *Rd.* and *St.*: *2615 Shepard Blvd.*

Spell out all other street designations even if used with a numbered address, for example: *Circle*, *Terrace*

Spell out and capitalize Avenue, Boulevard, Road and Street used without a numbered address: *Westwood Avenue*

Lowercase and spell out street designations used to denote an intersection: *The corner of Hitt and Elm streets*

Spell out and capitalize *First* through *Ninth* when used as street names; use figures for *10th* and above: *11 N. Seventh St.*, *15 S. 10th St.*

Abbreviate directions only as a part of a complete address: *11 N. Seventh St. but North Seventh Street, South 10th Street*

Exception: "West Boulevard" is the official name of a Columbia street – never abbreviate "West" when referring to it. North and south designations on the street follow the street name: *809 West Blvd. N.; West Boulevard South*

Use periods in the abbreviation for post office box numbers: *P.O. Box 81*

Only use postal codes for state names in text when setting out a complete address including zip code: *809 West Blvd. N., Columbia, MO 65203; P.O. Box 218, Columbia, MO 65205.* (For all other references to states, see the [State Names](#) guidelines.) Postal codes are:

AK, AL, AZ, AR, CA, CO, CT, DE, FL, GA, HI, ID, IL, IN, IA, KS, KY, LA, OH, ME, MD, MA, MI, MN, MS, MO, MT, NE, NV, NH, NJ, NM, NY, NC, ND, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VT, VA, WA, WV, WI and WY. Also: DC for District of Columbia.

ALL CAPS

Do not use ALL CAPITAL LETTERS for emphasis. They are harder to read, take up too much space, and, most important, cause formatting problems in the desktop publishing program used to produce *The Searchlight*.

Think carefully about what you are writing – then, if you decide emphasis is truly necessary, use **bold face** or *italics* (but not underline).

Article Content

Articles should include who, what, when, where, why and how (as applicable). Try to write articles focused on the readers – tell them how your information affects or benefits them.

Write all submissions using complete sentences. Do not use sentence fragments.

Stories naming individuals involved in events that have happened or will happen do not require explicit permission. Otherwise, mention of any non-public individual, such as another member of the congregation, should be made only with the consent of the individual.

Material sent in should be written by you – not cut and pasted from another source.

Colons

As noted under [Commas](#), use a colon instead of a comma to introduce a quotation of more than one sentence.

The most common use of the colon is to introduce lists, tabulations, texts, etc.

Capitalize the first word after a colon only if it is a proper noun or the beginning of a complete sentence: *He promised this: The class will double in size this year.*

Do not capitalize the first word after a colon if it does not start a complete sentence or is not a proper noun: *Bring these items to the craft session: paper, pencils, crayons and paste.*

Colons go outside of quotation marks unless they are part of the quotation.

Commas

Use commas to separate elements in a series, but do not put a comma before the conjunction in a simple series: *The country's flag is green, white and blue.*

However, put a comma before the conjunction if an element of the series requires it for clarity: *He had orange juice, toast, and ham and eggs for breakfast.*

Also use a comma before the conjunction in a complex series consisting of longer clauses: *The points to consider are whether the speaker is familiar with the material, whether he has adequately prepared, and whether he has the proper attitude.*

Use a comma to introduce a one-sentence quote: She said, "He is a wonderful speaker."

But use a colon to introduce quotations of more than one sentence: She said: "He was a fantastic speaker. I hope that he returns soon to speak to our group again."

Use a comma instead of a period at the end of a quote followed by the attribution: *"He is a wonderful speaker," she said.*

Use a comma to separate city and state names: *Columbia, Mo.*

Dates

Use Arabic numbers without st, nd, rd or th: *Feb. 7, 2012* (not *Feb. 7th, 2012*).

Capitalize the names of months in all uses.

When a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct. Nov. and Dec., but spell out March, April, May, June, and July: *Jan. 29, March 18*

When a month is used without a specific date, always spell out the name of the month: *The event will be scheduled in February.*

When referring to only a month and year, do not separate them with a comma: *March 2013*

When a phrase includes a month, day and/or year, set them off with commas: *March 10, 2013; Saturday, March 10*

Exclamation Points

Do not overuse exclamation points. They should be reserved to give emphasis to only one or two points in an article.

Fonts

Please use only Times Roman or Times New Roman as the font when you submit an article because this is the base font used in *The Searchlight*. Following this guideline will minimize the amount of reformatting necessary to include your article in the newsletter.

If you have some very special reason for wanting to use another font, please consult with Kathie Bergman before doing so.

Under no circumstances should more than two fonts be used in an article.

Numbers

Do not use Roman numerals unless they are part of an official title.

General Guideline: Spell out numbers from one through nine and use Arabic numerals for 10 and more: *one, five, 10, 15*

Exceptions to General Guideline:

Start of a Sentence: Spell out a numeral which begins a sentence unless the numeral represents a year: *Eighteen members signed up but 1976 was a very good year.*

Casual usage: Spell out casual expressions: *Thanks a million. A thousand times no.*

Use Arabic numerals for:

Addresses: *5 Danforth Dr.*

Ages: *5 years old*

Chapters: *Chapter 4*

Clothing and other sizes: *size 7*

Decimal units: *1.2*

Dimensions: *3 feet by 5 feet*

Distance: *5 miles*

Money: *8 cents, \$5*

Page numbers: *page 2*

Percentages: *7%*

Ratios and proportions: *5:1*

Recipes: *4 tablespoons*

Room numbers: *Room 4*

Route numbers: *Interstate 70, Highway 63*

Speeds: *5 m.p.h.*

Weights: *3 pounds*

Photographs and Graphics

Photographs and graphics to accompany your article must be submitted in electronic format by [email](#) or on a CD. Space constraints may prevent the use of submitted photographs and graphics.

If an adult individual participated in an event which is pictured, explicit permission from the individual is not required to use the photo. However, photos of any non-public adult individual, such as another member of the congregation, should be published only with the consent of the pictured individual if the photo does not depict participation in an event.

Photos of minor children may be published only with the consent of their parents or guardians. Director of Religious Education Lisa Fritsche maintains a file of photo consents granted by parents and guardians.

Quotation Marks

The period and comma always go inside the closing quotation mark: *She said, "He is a wonderful speaker."* *"He is a wonderful speaker," she said.*

The dash, semicolon, question mark and exclamation point go inside the closing quotation mark if part of the quotation; otherwise, they go outside.

When there is a quotation within a quotation, start and end the main quotation with double quotation marks and set off the interior quotation with single quotation marks: *She said, "I quote from his sermon, 'God is love,' but I'm not sure what that means."*

Sentence-End Spacing

Use only one space (rather than two) between sentences. There are two reasons:

1. The old practice of using two spaces between sentences was appropriate for typewriters using mono-spaced fonts to provide visual separation, but is inappropriate and unnecessary with modern proportional-spaced fonts.

2. More important, using two spaces between sentences creates formatting problems in the desktop publishing program used to produce *The Searchlight*.

If you cannot remember to forego using two spaces between sentences while you are typing your article, please do a search-and-replace operation to replace all occurrences of two spaces with one space before submitting your article.

State Names

Spell out state names in text when not immediately preceded by a city or other locale: *Columbia is in the center of Missouri.*

Abbreviate most state names in text when immediately preceded by a city or other locale, and put one comma between the city and state name and another comma after the state name unless the state name ends the sentence: *Columbia, Mo., is the home of the main campus of the University of Missouri.*

Abbreviate the following states (and District of Columbia) as shown:

Ala., Ariz., Ark., Calif., Colo., Conn., Del., D.C., Fla., Ga., Ill., Kan., Ky., La., Md., Mass., Mich., Minn., Miss., Mo., Mont., Neb., Nev., N.H., N.J., N.M., N.Y., N.C., N.D., Okla., Ore., Pa., R.I., S.C., S.D., Tenn., Vt., Va., Wash., W.Va., Wis., Wyo.

But, do not abbreviate these states (the two states not part of the contiguous United States and the continental states that have five or fewer letters):

Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas, Utah

Do not use postal codes for states in text except in complete addresses including zip codes – see [Addresses](#).

Use *New York state* if necessary to distinguish from *New York City*. Use *state of Washington* or *Washington state* if necessary to distinguish from Washington, D.C. (but note Washington State is a university in *Washington state*).

Telephone Numbers

Use numerals for telephone numbers.

Area Codes:

Do not include the area code if it is 573: 442-1865

Include the area code if it is not 573: 660-228-1866

If the area code is used, do not set it off with parentheses – instead, use a hyphen as shown in the example.

If an extension number is needed, use a comma to separate the main number from the extension: 442-1865, ext. 2; 660-228-1866, ext. 17

Times

Use numerals except for *noon* and *midnight*.

Do not use 12 a.m. or 12 p.m. because these can be confusing.

Do not use "o'clock."

Use these forms: *a.m.*, *p.m.* (preceded by a space)

Do not use: am, pm, A.M., P.M., AM, PM

Use a colon to separate hours from minutes: 3:30 *p.m.*

Do not use a colon followed by "00" for even-hour times: 3 *p.m.*

Avoid redundancies such as: 9 *a.m. in the morning*; 3 *p.m. in the afternoon*

When expressing a time range, use a from-to construction instead of a from-hyphen construction: *from 7:30 to 9 p.m.* (not from 7:30-9 p.m.)

However: If "from" is not used, a hyphen construction is acceptable:
The event will be held 7:30-9 p.m.

If a time range is entirely in the a.m. or p.m., only one a.m. or p.m. designation is needed: 7:30-9 *p.m.* but 11 *a.m.-2:30 p.m.*

Titles

Generally, do not capitalize titles unless they are used directly before a person's name.

Lowercase and spell out titles when not used with a person's name: *The president called the meeting to order.*

Lowercase and spell out titles when used in a sentence construction that sets them off from a name by a comma: *The president-elect, James Smith, declined to serve as president.*

Capitalize formal titles when used directly before the person's name: *Board President Maria Oropallo*

Capitalize and abbreviate formal titles when used directly before the person's name and there is a well recognized abbreviation: *Sen. Kurt Schafer, Rep. Steven Webber, Gov. Jay Nixon, Rev. Molly Housh Gordon*

Do not capitalize informal titles that denote occupation: *astronaut John Glenn, movie star Nicole Kidman*

UUCC Organizational References

On first reference in an article to a committee, team or other body within the church, use the full name and capitalize it: *Board of Trustees; Membership Team*

On subsequent references, lowercase and shorten the term used: *The board will meet next Wednesday. The team organized a training session.*

Vertical Spacing

Start each paragraph with a tab indent, and single-space your article.

Start each new paragraph on the line immediately below the previous paragraph (*i.e.*, do not double-space between paragraphs).

Following this guideline will minimize the amount of reformatting necessary to include your article in *The Searchlight*.