



concordia historical institute

Department of Archives and History of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
804 Seminary Place, Saint Louis, Missouri 63105-3014 • 314-505-7900
concordiahistoricalinstitute.org

RETRIEVE + RECORD + REFLECT + RECALL

“HOW DO I PREPARE A CONGREGATIONAL CHRONOLOGY?”

It is recommended that the congregational archivist maintain a chronology of the local parish by recording the most important events, both secular and religious. Such a record would be useful for the observance of anniversaries and to study the trends and developments of the parish.

I. What Are Some of the Secular Events to be Included?

- A. Local government, elections, transitions, death of leaders
- B. Notes on the erection of significant and highly important new buildings and facilities in the community
- C. Catastrophes, crises, and other events that materially affected the community and parish, including earthquakes, tornadoes and other natural disasters, also social and political crises
- D. Unusual weather developments, particularly if it affected the work of the parish and materially contributed to a stepping up or down of the parish’s program, worship services
- E. Significant changes taking place in the community’s schools and in other community institutions
- F. Important events affecting or conducted by other churches in the community
- G. Health and welfare—public housing, social reform, epidemics
- H. Scientific, industrial, and economic developments of significance

I. Sports, popular entertainment, society and fashion

II. What Are Some of the Religious Events to be Included?

- A. Changes in congregational officers, including names and dates of transition
- B. Calls extended to pastors and teachers, and notices of acceptance or rejection
- C. Beginnings or milestones during programs conducted by the congregation, such as building programs, stewardship programs
- D. Significant actions by voters’ assembly, program boards and church council
- E. Occasions in the life of the congregation marked by special services (e.g., dedications, installations, ground breakings, confirmations)
- F. Any first or last in the life of the congregation
- G. Statistical milestones achieved (e.g., most number of people gathered for one worship service; five-hundredth baptism; day school enrollment at all time high)
- H. Purchase of major equipment or property by the congregation and also sale of same
- I. Events in congregation’s educational ministry (e.g., graduation, opening of school, vacation bible school, staff changes, textbook purchases)
- J. Events that answer these questions:
 1. When did we start doing this?
 2. When did we stop doing this?
 3. What are the dates?