

THE    
FOURSQUARE
CHURCH

The Official Foursquare Voice + Tone Guide

PREFACE: THIS ISN'T AS SCARY AS IT LOOKS

Please follow these three easy steps for Foursquare Voice + Tone Guide success.

STEP 1: DON'T BE OVERWHELMED.

Sure, it's large and seems in charge, and you may find that you do not need some of the portions of the guide. But when a situation arises—whether it relates to letters, signage, website content or even social media—this book will do just what the title implies: It will guide you through what you need to know.

STEP 2: USE THE TABLE OF CONTENTS.

Conveniently located on the following pages, the Table of Contents will direct you to the information you need. Then you can quickly close the book before the need to repeat Step 1 arises.

STEP 3: ASK FOR HELP.

Call the Communications Department anytime something is unclear. We're here to help you.

Call us at **213.989.4230** or email us at comm@foursquare.org.

LOOKING FOR THE DESIGN + BRAND STYLE GUIDE?

[Download](#) the Design + Brand Style Guide here.

Inside, you'll find the updated Foursquare logo, as well as CMYK and Pantone colors.

LOOKING FOR THE SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE?

[Download](#) tips to starting and maintaining a social media account.

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PART 1: AN INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE VOICE + TONE GUIDE

- *Partner with us in pursuit of clarity, consistency, unity and professionalism.*

The purpose of The Official Foursquare Voice + Tone Guide is to help maintain consistency and professionalism in our communication as an organization—both internally and publicly. When our central office, district offices and local churches produce written words and images that are consistent, we are able to present a clear, cohesive message with a sense of unity.

This consistency should be found throughout all communication—from a letter to our local church leaders, to an article on foursquare.org, to signage for Foursquare Connection.

When we reference voice and tone, we are referring to how we communicate in writing as representatives of Foursquare. The impression our audience has when reading a letter or email from the central office should be consistent with the impression they have when they see information regarding Foursquare Connection. We want to uphold standards that result in clarity, consistency, unity and professionalism. By these standards we strive to benefit our movement and cultivate a clear, distraction-free mode of communication.

Note: When in doubt regarding issues of style and notation, please consult the most current publication of *The Associated Press Stylebook* for issues not explicitly covered in The Official Foursquare Voice + Tone Guide.

FOURSQUARE: A BRIEF HISTORY

- *What Is The Foursquare Church?*

The Foursquare Church is more than a denomination. We are a Great Commission movement transforming communities through the multiplication of disciples, leaders, churches and movements.

Learn more about who we are by visiting foursquare.org and clicking on our About Us section.

ORGANIZATIONAL DISTINCTIVES

- *Then + Now*

The Foursquare Church, legally named International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, is a worldwide Christian Pentecostal denomination. Founded in Los Angeles in 1923 by Aimee Semple McPherson, The Foursquare Church now comprises tens of thousands of churches and meeting places, which welcome millions of members in more than 140 countries.

The Foursquare Church central office in Los Angeles serves the Foursquare churches located within the United States, and provides resources and assistance to Foursquare churches and missionaries around the world. Specifically, The Foursquare Church manages licensing, membership and finances, and additionally provides accountability, care and resources for our many pastors, leaders and missionaries.

- *The Foursquare Motto: Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever. Hebrews 13:8*

Our motto is displayed in each Foursquare meeting place, proclaiming loudly that the Foursquare movement seeks to experience in the present-day church all the benefits and blessings that crowned the first-century church.

- *Missional Objectives*

The three Missional Objectives are the collective focus of the U.S. Foursquare church. Our churches and districts align to the following Missional Objectives:

- Leadership Development
- Church and Congregation Multiplication
- Church Transformation

* Capitalize the words “Missional Objectives” as well as each of the objectives themselves.

- *Global Distinctives*

The Global Distinctives were established in 2012 by the Global Council, along with other national and international leaders. The Distinctives articulate the values and practices that are to be evidenced in every Foursquare church around the world. Because these were written in cooperation with Foursquare national leaders around the world, they are not to be reworded or altered in any way.

* The words “Global Distinctives” as well as each Distinctive itself should always be capitalized.

The Distinctives and their definitions are as follows:

Kingdom Partnerships

We will work alongside other Christians and churches with whom we can partner in mission. We will be a distinct movement, but will also hold a collegial spirit and maintain a helpful and cooperative posture.

Sound Doctrine

The Declaration of Faith of the Foursquare Church will guide our practice, church polity, and call of believers into the work of the Kingdom. It will be a biblical statement, apply to all members, and be the Declaration of Faith for all churches and all member nations. Its roots are deeply rooted in the sole source of spiritual authority—the Word of God.

Empowering Leadership

According to God’s gifting and calling, we will intentionally prepare and release men and women across generations and cultures into all positions of leadership and areas of ministry.

Family Relationships

We will relate to each other with love in our Global Family. We acknowledge that relationships are the heart of God’s Kingdom and will extend grace to fellow believers through ministry, cooperation and mutual submission in our global church.

Spirit Empowerment

As a Spirit-filled movement, we will consistently minister the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, and teach and encourage believers to fully express the gifts of the Spirit in their daily lives. We totally submit ourselves in obedience to the Spirit’s use of our lives and His miraculous works in our day.

Shared Mission

We will focus our mission and ministry efforts on multiplying disciples, leaders, churches and national movements. Holding to God’s passion for the lost, we will seek a movement of evangelism, mercy ministries, contextualized church planting and mobilizing indigenous believers in ministry among all peoples.

- *Four-Stage Model*

Regardless of country, culture, geography or history, Foursquare churches go through similar and predictable phases on their way to becoming healthy and reproductive. The Four-Stage Development Model, often called simply the Four-Stage Model, identifies the common landmarks that local churches pass on their way to maturity. It provides practical definitions for the various elements that enable a church to function well throughout its development. As the name implies, the Four-Stage Model identifies four phases of progressive maturity.

STAGE 1: DISCIPLES (PIONEER)

STAGE 2: LEADERS (ESTABLISH)

STAGE 3: CHURCHES (EMPOWER)

STAGE 4: MOVEMENTS (SEND)

- * Note that Four-Stage should be hyphenated and capitalized.
- * “The” preceding the Four-Stage Model is not capitalized.
- * It is acceptable to cite the Four-Stage Model on first reference. Four-Stage Development Model is also acceptable.
- * When noting what stage a country is, use a numeral to indicate the stage.

Example: Papua New Guinea is a Stage 4 country.

Correct Usage

The new missionaries are being sent to a Stage 3 country.

Learn more about the Four-Stage Model at foursquare.org/about/mission.

PART 2: WRITING IN THE FOURSQUARE STYLE

This section will assist you in proper spelling, abbreviation and capitalization of Foursquare entities, including our central office departments, district offices and local churches. Using a consistent style when we communicate about our ministries, affiliates and districts, we help eliminate potential confusion.

Please refer also to the glossary of Christian and Foursquare words (on page 43) for appropriate spelling and capitalization.

REFERENCES TO THE FOURSQUARE CHURCH

- *Organizational Titles and Their Proper Use and Notation*

The legal name of the organization is as follows: International Church of the Foursquare Gospel. We also use a less formal title, both internally and publicly: The Foursquare Church.

International Church of the Foursquare Gospel and The Foursquare Church are both considered official titles for the organization. The following section outlines the proper use of each of these organizational titles, under what circumstances to use each title, and the appropriate spelling and layout of each title.

- *When to Use Each Title*

On corporate legal documents, use the legal name—International Church of the Foursquare Gospel. This includes financial, property, tax and government documents, and any other document of a legal nature. On all other communication, whether internally or publicly, The Foursquare Church is generally used.

- *International Church of the Foursquare Gospel*

International Church of the Foursquare Gospel is the legal name of the organization and should be used in all corporate legal documents.

Adhere to the following guidelines when using this title:

- * Capitalize each word in the title except “of” and “the” in the middle of the title.
- * Do not include punctuation within the title.

WRITING IN THE FOURSQUARE STYLE

- * Do not enclose the title within quotation marks.
- * Do not omit any words from the title.
- * Do not rearrange the order of the words in the title.
- * Do not italicize the title.
- * If a bold font is used, make the entire title bold.
- * When including “the” before the legal name, do not capitalize (unless at the beginning of the sentence).

Correct Usage

International Church of the Foursquare Gospel
the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel

Incorrect Usage

Church of the Foursquare Gospel
Foursquare International

- *Abbreviation: ICFG*

The first reference in a corporate, legal document should be International Church of the Foursquare Gospel (ICFG). In subsequent references, it is permissible to use the abbreviation ICFG if the acronym was placed in parentheses after the initial use of the full name.

When using the abbreviation, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- * Do not place periods between the letters.
- * Do not enclose ICFG within quotation marks.
- * Use only uppercase letters for ICFG; it should not be written in all lowercase letters.
- * Do not italicize ICFG.
- * If a bold font is used, make the entire acronym bold.

Correct Usage

First reference: International Church of the Foursquare Gospel (ICFG)

Secondary references: ICFG

Incorrect Usage

- I.C.F.G.
- “ICFG”
- I•C•F•G•

- *The Foursquare Church Name*

In all non-legal communication, both internally and publicly, we use the title The Foursquare Church.

When referencing The Foursquare Church in a document, use the following guidelines:

- * The first reference to the organization in a document should be The Foursquare Church. In subsequent references, it is acceptable to use Foursquare.
- * Capitalize each word in the title, including “The.”
- * Do not include punctuation within the title.
- * Do not enclose the title within quotation marks.
- * Do not use all lowercase letters or all capital letters .
- * Do not italicize The Foursquare Church.
- * If a bold font is used, make the entire title bold.
- * Do not abbreviate the word “Foursquare.” This applies to all communication, both internal and public.

Correct Usage

- The Foursquare Church
- Foursquare

Incorrect Usage

- foursquare
- THE FOURSQUARE CHURCH
- the Foursquare Church
- 4SQ
- 4square
- 4□
- 4sq
- FourSquare

FOURSQUARE STRUCTURE

The Central Office, District Offices and Local Churches

This section outlines the appropriate methods for referencing the central office, districts and individual Foursquare churches.

- *The Central Office*

Foursquare's central office is located across the street from our founding church, Angelus Temple, in the Echo Park neighborhood of Los Angeles. The full address is as follows:

The Foursquare Church
1910 W Sunset Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90026

- * When referring to the Los Angeles-based Foursquare church offices, the correct form is "central office," lowercase. It is not appropriate to use other names when referring to the central office.

Incorrect Usage

- Headquarters
- NCO (this is a department within the central office)
- National Office
- LA Offices

- *Central Office Departments*

When referencing a central office department, maintain the following standards.

- *General Department Names*

- * Lowercase general references to departments.

Examples: "accounting," "legal" or "missions."

- *Proper Department Names*

- * Capitalize references to specific or official departments, such as Foursquare Communications, Foursquare Missions International or the National Church Office.

Correct Usage

- Harper gave her expense report to her manager in missions and then took it to accounting.
- Harper works for Foursquare Missions International (FMI). She has worked in FMI for five years.

- *District Offices*

The Foursquare Church comprises 11 district offices, led by 11 district supervisors.

Access a full list of contact information, including the names of our district supervisors, at foursquare.org/about/districts.

The following are our 11 Foursquare districts.

- * Please note the correct spelling, hyphenation and capitalization.

Central Pacific District

Distrito Hispano del Suroeste

Gateway District

Heartland District

MidSouth District

North Pacific District

Northeast Atlantic District

Northwest District

Pacific Southwest District

Southeast District

Southern California District (SoCAL District)

- *Local Foursquare Churches + Missional Congregations*

Foursquare churches include Charter, Covenant and District churches. We also recognize four types of missional congregations: a multisite campus, an ethnic congregation, pipeline plant and chaplain congregation.

When referencing our Foursquare churches, use the following guidelines:

- * Churches may choose to use slogan names to identify themselves in the community in lieu of using their legal name.
- * In letters, address the church by their legal name.
- * In articles, include the legal name of the church in parenthesis.
- * Church names should be checked in The Foursquare Hub for accuracy.

Correct Usage

- Angelus Temple was the first Foursquare church.
- New Hope (Huntington Beach Foursquare Church) will hold an extra service this weekend.
- I plan to attend Luz a Las Naciones, a congregation that meets at Bellevue Foursquare Church in Los Angeles.

FOURSQUARE'S ANNUAL CONVENTION

Foursquare Connection is the annual convention of the U.S. Foursquare Church. Convention is where Foursquare business matters are voted on by licensed ministers and voting delegates. In addition, the event includes speakers, worship and training opportunities.

- * On first reference, use Foursquare Connection, along with the year of the event, e.g., Foursquare Connection 2018.
- * On second reference, Connection, Connection 2018 or convention may be used.

Note: Before 2009, the event was simply called convention. However, in 2009, the event was renamed Foursquare Connection.

- * When referencing events that took place before 2009, use convention, lowercase.

Correct Usage

- Foursquare Connection 2017 took place in Washington, D.C. Connection is our annual international convention.
- I haven't attended convention since 2007. I look forward to attending Foursquare Connection 2018 in Seattle.
- *Foursquare Connection Voice + Tone Guide*

Each year, a Foursquare Connection Voice + Tone Guide is created and includes best practices for the theme, the theme Bible verse and other helpful information.

>>Email comm@foursquare.org for a copy of the most recent guide.

FOURSQUARE NATIONAL MINISTRIES + DEPARTMENTS

* Please note the proper capitalization and spelling of our ministries. Acceptable abbreviations or casual names appropriate for second reference are listed in parentheses.

Center for Spiritual Renewal East (CSR East)
Center for Spiritual Renewal West (CSR West)
CrossPointe Foursquare Conference Center (CrossPointe)
Echo Park Evangelistic Association (EPEA)
Emerging Leader Network (ELN)
ForeRunners
Foursquare Affinity Networks
Foursquare Association
Foursquare Chaplains International (FCI, Chaplains)
Foursquare Disaster Relief (FDR)
Foursquare Education and Training
Foursquare Financial Solutions (FFS)
Foursquare Financial Solutions Loan Fund (FFSLF)
Foursquare Foundation (FF)
Foursquare Leadership Care
Foursquare Media
Foursquare Missions Press (FMP)
Foursquare Missions International (FMI)
GO Teams
The King's University
The King's Seminary
Life Pacific College (LPC)
LPC-Ignite
Ministry Training Institutes
National Church Office (NCO)
NextGen Ministries
Urban and Multicultural Ministries (UMC)
Women in Ministry Leadership (WIML)

- *Life Pacific College*

The name of Foursquare's Bible college has changed forms through the years.

- * In general, it should be referred to in text by its current name: Life Pacific College (LPC on subsequent references), with a note that it is also known as LIFE Bible College.

Note: Life Pacific College will become Life Pacific University on July 1, 2019.

Correct Usage

Emily will be attending Life Pacific College next year.

- *Historical References to Life Pacific College*

- * When references to the school are between 1952 and November 2002: LIFE Bible College (now known as Life Pacific College).
- * When references to the school are before 1952: L.I.F.E. Bible College (now known as Life Pacific College)

Correct Usage

Alice Meade graduated from LIFE Bible College (now known as Life Pacific College) in 1998.

- *Historical Foursquare Bible College Campuses*

- * Mt. Vernon Bible College was located in Mount Vernon, Ohio, from 1957-1988. Note "Mt." is abbreviated when referencing the school.

Note: Life Bible College East was located in Christiansburg, Va., from 1988-2003. The location is now CrossPointe Foursquare Conference Center.

PART 3: GRAMMAR, SPELLING + ABBREVIATIONS

Familiarize yourself with The Foursquare Church's grammar, style and spelling guidelines.

GENERAL POLICY ON ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations may be appropriate on second reference, but don't assume your audience is familiar with an abbreviation. Foursquare is a growing movement, and we should always look to introduce our new friends to Foursquare by writing out items fully on first reference, with the abbreviation next to the item in parentheses.

Correct Usage

- International Church of the Foursquare Gospel (ICFG)
- Foursquare Missions International (FMI)
- Foursquare Disaster Relief (FDR)

ABBREVIATING THE NAME OF THE FOURSQUARE CHURCH

Avoid abbreviating, especially when referring to The Foursquare Church in public communication.

Correct Usage

- the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel (ICFG)
- The Foursquare Church
- Foursquare (second reference)

Incorrect Usage

- FSQ
- 4sq

ABBREVIATING MINISTRY NAMES

We abbreviate ministry names on second reference only, noting the forthcoming abbreviation in parentheses upon first introducing the ministry. A list of ministry abbreviations can be found on page 17.

Correct Usage

Foursquare Missions International (FMI) will send that document. FMI is responsible for the implementation.

BIBLE REFERENCES

We abbreviate the books of the Bible in the parenthetical citation of a referenced verse, and NKJV is our standard version. Other versions are welcome if cited appropriately. Please note that the books of the Bible are not abbreviated when used outside parenthetical citation. See page 45 for a full list of how to abbreviate the books of the Bible.

THAT OR WHO

When referring to a person, use “who” not “that.”

Correct Usage

She is the woman who went to church.

Incorrect Usage

She is the woman that went to church.

DATES AND DAYS

- * When the event is happening in the current year, we don’t usually reference the year. However, if there is a chance of confusion, it’s best to include the year. For instance, we always include the year in regard to the annual Foursquare Connection so people easily know the specific event being referenced.
- * Months with more than one syllable may be abbreviated. We just make sure all months are abbreviated, or not, within the same document or series of documents.
- * Do not abbreviate days (Tuesday not Tues.).
- * Use a dash or hyphen (roughly the width of a letter) to separate the days indicating the length of the event. No space is needed.

Correct Usage

Our district conference will be held March 1-5, 2020. The annual workshops begin on Tuesday, March 2.

TIMES

When writing times, don't include ":00" if the event starts on the hour. If the time begins and ends within the morning, or begins and ends after noon, "a.m." or "p.m." is placed after the ending time.

We do not place a space between the periods in a.m. or p.m., and we do not capitalize AM and PM. Noon and Midnight may be capitalized when a list of event times is outlined.

Correct Usage

- 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (a.m. and p.m. included because the event begins in the morning and ends in the afternoon)
- 3 to 4 p.m. (p.m. listed after the second time because the event takes place entirely in the afternoon)
- 6 to 7:30 p.m. (not necessary to say 6:00)

PHONE

We separate phone numbers with periods instead of dashes. Use lowercase "ext." for extension. Include an extension whenever appropriate.

Correct Usage

213.989.4230 or 888.635.4234 ext. 1234

ACADEMIC DEGREES

When applicable, we include an individual's degree(s) to establish his or her credentials. The preferred method for including an individual's credentials is to write it out in a phrase. We prefer not to use abbreviations.

When in doubt, as with all other style questions, consult the most current publication of *The Associated Press Stylebook* for any issue not explicitly referenced in *The Official Foursquare Voice + Tone Guide*.

Correct Usage

Brielle Asher, who has a doctorate in psychology, will address the convention body on pastoral health.

- * Academic degrees do not need to be capitalized except in specific reference to the title of a degree received from a specific school or organization whose name is listed.

Correct Usage

- Emily Drewby just received a bachelor’s degree. (lowercase “bachelor’s degree”)
- Emily Drewby just received a Bachelor of Arts from University of Phoenix. (specific degree is capitalized)

* Abbreviations such as B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. can be used when another method of identifying an individual’s degree would make the preferred method lengthy and cumbersome. Place the abbreviation after the person’s full name and offset the academic abbreviation with commas.

* Do not combine a courtesy title for an academic degree and an abbreviation for the degree in the same reference. Use Dr. in the first reference as a formal title for medical doctors only.

Incorrect Usage

Dr. Brielle Asher, Ph.D., will be speaking tonight.

Correct Usage

Brielle Asher, Ph.D., will be speaking tonight.

HONORARY DEGREES

We recognize honorary doctorates awarded by The Foursquare Church or a Foursquare entity. It is left to the individual’s discretion to incorporate the title of doctor into his or her name.

We generally do not cite honorary doctorates awarded by outside agencies, especially when referencing individuals outside The Foursquare Church. While Foursquare pastors and executives may choose to include an honorary degree in personal communication, we don’t include them in other forms of Foursquare communication.

PERSONAL TITLES

When using an individual’s formal title, the following guidelines are appropriate to follow:

- * Capitalize the formal title when used directly before an individual’s name.
- * Do not capitalize titles when they are not used directly with an individual’s name. Do not capitalize titles when they are set apart from the name by a comma.

Correct Usage

- Foursquare President Alice Medora issued a statement.
- Alice Medora, president of The Foursquare Church, issued a statement.
- Pastor Kaiya Miller is a district supervisor.
- Foursquare District Supervisor Kaiya Miller is also a senior pastor.

ETHNICITY, GENDER + AGE

The Foursquare Church is a diverse body, and we want to be respectful to all ethnic groups, genders and age groups that compose our churches and leadership. We strive to use terminology that maintains consistency and is sensitive to the diverse community that Foursquare comprises.

- *Ethnicity*

All people are to be referred to with the utmost dignity and respect. When reference to a people group or person requires naming a specific race or nationality, use the appropriate formal title of that group. With specific questions or when in doubt, please reference the “nationalities and races” or the “race” section of *The Associated Press Stylebook*.

Note: The terms “multicultural” and “multiethnic” denote a variety of cultures and ethnicities; everyone is from some culture and ethnicity. The terms are not to be used to describe a specific person from a race to which you do not belong. Likewise, the term “ethnic” is not to be used to describe a minority group or groups.

- *Gender*

Women and men alike can hold any position within Foursquare. A senior pastor may be male or female; the same goes for president, board chair, worship pastor, youth ministries leader or children’s pastor.

- * Take care not to use stereotypes such as “senior pastors and their wives” or “looking for a mom to lead children’s ministry.” Never assume a role is male or female in your writing; instead, identify unspecified groups in more inclusive terms.

- *Age*

NextGen

This is a broad term that includes children and students from infant through traditional college age.

Children’s Ministry

While not an exact designation, children’s ministry usually encompasses nursery-age children through fifth or sixth grade.

Student Ministry

Student ministries is preferred over youth ministries, and includes middle school through high school students.

Young Adults Ministry

This includes college-age students through approximately 25 years of age. This term is preferred over “college ministry” because it is more inclusive for post-high school students who choose not to attend college.

Middle-Age

This term is relative and should generally be avoided. Instead use a more specific age range.

Senior Citizen

This term is relative and should generally be avoided. Instead use a more specific age range.

Retired Ministers

Within Foursquare, our retired pastors are called ForeRunners. Do not call ministers of retirement age ForeRunners unless they are shown as officially retired according to The Foursquare Hub.

ACTIVE VOICE

We use active voice over passive voice most of the time. Active voice is easier to read, more engaging and heightens the reader’s response.

Examples:

- Active writing: Penny James attended the convention.
- Passive writing: The convention was attended by Penny James.

CAPITALIZATION

We avoid using all capital letters, as it gives the impression of YELLING at the reader.

- * Capitalize only proper nouns, such as California, Tammy or Angelus Temple.
- * Religious words, such as church, kingdom, worship, temple, state and heaven, are not capitalized. See the list on page 43 for additional examples of capitalization.
- * We capitalize nouns and pronouns referencing God (Father, Holy Spirit, He, Him).
- * We capitalize nouns referring to the Bible (Scripture) when referring to the entire Bible. When referring to a specific passage, such as “a scripture,” use lowercase.

INTRODUCING DIRECT QUOTES

Use a comma to introduce a one-sentence quotation. Use a colon for more than one sentence.

Correct Usage

Noah replied, “I will be attending the event.” Isaac argued: “Why should I have to go? I don’t want to.”

CITIES + STATES

Use commas to offset a state when listed with a city. Follow The Associated Press Stylebook for state abbreviations, not state abbreviations used by the U.S. Postal Service. Note that select dateline cities do not include the state.

Correct Usage

- Join us in Anaheim, Calif., in May.
- We plan to visit Seattle after Foursquare Connection 2018.

FIGURES

Use commas in numbers over 999. This does not apply to addresses (1910 W Sunset Blvd.), phone numbers, room numbers or years.

Spell out numbers one through nine; use a numeral for 10 and above. However, numerals are always used in reference to a person’s age, e.g., Owen is 9. Peyton is 16.

Correct Usage

We can fit 100 people in room seven on the third floor. The 11th floor will host 1,500 people over the age of 7.

PUNCTUATION

- *Direct Address*

* Use a comma to set apart a person's name when you are addressing him or her.

Correct Usage

Pastor Al, please be sure to attend this event.

- *Commas*

Commas can be tricky, so consult *The Associated Press Stylebook* or the punctuation section of *Webster's New World College Dictionary* when in doubt.

The following are a few of the most common uses of the comma, according to The Associated Press.

Series

In lists of three items or more, eliminate the comma before the final item in a series unless the comma is needed to avoid confusion.

Example where a comma before the "and" is not necessary:

Hazel went to church to learn, worship and fellowship.

Examples where the comma eliminates confusion:

Those present included patrolmen, detectives, and search and rescue personnel. (Search and rescue is one entity that contains "and." The comma makes the intent clearer.)

You have to consider if they are healthy enough to travel, if they are over 21, and if they have up-to-date passports. (The comma is used in a series of fairly "complex" phrases.)

Clauses and Phrases

Nonessential clauses and nonessential phrases are set off by commas; essential clauses and essential phrases are not. In other words, if the information is imperative to the meaning of the sentence, it should not be set off by commas. However, if removing the clause or phrase would not change the meaning of the sentence, it should be set off by commas.

Example of nonessential clause:

My husband, John, is a carpenter. (I have only one husband, so including his name is “nonessential” to understanding the content of the sentence, and commas must be used.)

Example of essential clause:

My daughter Harper is in kindergarten. (This construction indicates that I have more than one daughter; the name is “essential” and is included without commas to clarify which child is in kindergarten.)

- *Apostrophes*

Apostrophes indicate possession. (example: Alice’s phone) or a contraction (example: We’ll go to the store.). The plural form of a word does not require an apostrophe.

Examples:

- Churches (plural, several churches); church’s (singular possessive, belongs to the church)
- Phones, URLs and 1990s (all plural)
- The Smiths (plural, several Smiths); Mr. Smith’s (singular possessive, something belongs to him); The Smiths’ cat (plural possessive, the cat belongs to the Smiths).
- Your (belongs to someone), You’re (contraction of “you are”) Ask yourself if you would add “you are” to a sentence.
- Its (belongs to an entity), It’s (contraction of “it is”)

- *Exclamation Points*

Construct sentences with active verbs that promote excitement instead of using an exclamation point. When is it necessary to use exclamation points, we use them sparingly, and never use more than one at the end of a sentence.

Correct Usage

Foursquare Connection 2018 will radically change your life. (Note: This strongly worded sentence doesn’t require an exclamation point.)

Incorrect Usage

Join us at Foursquare Connection 2018!!!! (Note: Never use multiple exclamation points.)

- *Periods*

Use just one space after periods at the end of a sentence. A double-space after each sentence is not necessary, and is not standard practice. In addition, do not use periods at the end of incomplete sentences that are part of a bulleted list or title.

Correct Usage

We will make three stops while in California:

1. Groceries in Brea
2. Garden supplies in Fullerton
3. Glasses in Long Beach

- *Punctuation With Quotes*

Periods and commas generally go inside the quotation marks. The dash, semicolon, question mark and exclamation point go within the quotation marks only when they apply to the quoted matter. They go outside the quotation marks when the punctuation applies to the whole sentence.

Correct Usage

- “My life has been changed,” he said. “Would you like to hear my story?”
- Who wrote the song “Majesty”?

HEADLINES

Headlines should often include a compelling call to action. Think about how you want the reader to respond to the presented material, and try to build the requested response into the headline.

- * In a headline, follow AP style and capitalize the principal words, including prepositions and conjunctions of four or more letters.
- * Do not capitalize articles with fewer than four letters, such as the, an and a, unless they are the first or last word in the title.
- * Verbs, such as “is,” are always capitalized regardless of letter count when in a title or headline.

SUBHEADS

If your headline doesn't have a call to action, make sure the subhead does. When the headline does have a call to action, tell the reader a little more about the purpose of your communication in the subhead.

- * Generally, we capitalize only the first word in subheads.

PROFESSIONAL LETTER WRITING

- *Letterhead Guidelines*

Letters printed on Foursquare letterhead represent The Foursquare Church as an organization. The Foursquare Church logo is versatile so that departments can print letterhead with their own contact information along the lower edge as well as an individual's name on the upper right side.

[Download Letterhead](#)

To encourage consistency between departments, we ask that you adhere to the following guidelines.

- The Gotham font family should be used.
 - The contact information that appears along the lower edge of the letterhead should include department name (in a bold font), followed by the address, phone number, fax number and email address without bold formatting. A website can also be included.
 - The contact information appears in a three-line format. It is as follows:
 - » Line 1: Department or office title (in bold font)
 - » Line 2: Offices of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel
 - » Line 3: Contact information
- *Letterhead Inclusion of Sender's Name, Title + Department*
- The letterhead template allows for the sender's name, along with title and department, to appear on the upper right side. When adding the sender's name to the letterhead, please adhere to the following guidelines:
- The sender's name should appear in the upper right corner of the page. It should begin 1-¼ inches from the top edge, and the left side should be 2 inches from the right edge.
 - Retain at least ½ inch of white space between the text and the right edge.

- The sender's name, title and department can appear in a two-line or three-line format.
- If a secondary title is used on line three, a comma should be inserted after the primary title.
- The signature can appear in your email client's default font.
- Line one of the signature should appear in 11-point font.
- All subsequent lines should be 9 point and placed in italics.

Two-Line Format

Line 1: Name

Line 2: Title

Example:

John Smith

President

Three-Line Format

Line 1: Name

Line 2: Title

Line 3: Department, Ministry or Secondary Title (if necessary due to length, line three can wrap to line four)

Example:

Dr. Joseph Jones

Development Coordinator

Foursquare Missions

Rev. John Smith

Vice President

Director of Global Operations and Accounting

- *Business Letters*

Whenever possible, confine business letters to one page. We recommend block style, and all elements should be placed on the left, with a double-space between each element (with the exception of the complimentary close and the sender's typed name). The text of the letter is single-spaced.

Sender's Address

When using printed letterhead from The Foursquare Church, providing the sender's address is not necessary. However, when business letters are written on plain

stationery, the sender should provide the address to which responses should be sent. The sender's name should not be included in this section, as it will follow the closing.

Date

This should be the date that the letter will be mailed. It should be placed at the left.

Inside Address

This section should contain the name of the person to whom the letter is being sent; the person's title, if it is known; the name of the business entity the person represents, if applicable; the full address to which the letter will be sent. The inside address should look identical to the address on the envelope.

Salutation

The salutation, or greeting, begins with "Dear" and is always followed by a colon, never by a comma or any other punctuation mark. The salutation should include general titles—Mr., Ms., Dr. or Rev. Do not use Mrs. or Miss unless you know that a woman prefers to be addressed in that manner. If you do not know the name of the person to whom a letter is being sent, use the following: "Dear Madam or Sir" or "Dear Sir or Madam." Do not use "To Whom It May Concern."

Introductory Paragraph

The first paragraph of a letter should give the reason that the letter has been sent. It should be short and to the point, and it should clearly establish the context for the letter.

Body

The paragraph, or paragraphs, in the body of the letter should clearly and succinctly explain the situation that prompted the letter's being sent. The content should include specific details, and precise information and descriptions.

Closing Paragraph

The final paragraph should inform the recipient of action steps that are required, if that is applicable. If no action is required, the sender should indicate that in the final paragraph.

Complimentary Close

Fairly formal standard closings are always acceptable: Sincerely, Sincerely yours, Respectfully yours. In the church setting, "ecclesiastical" closings may also be used; however, they should not be extremely long and should communicate an appropriate sentiment (e.g., Serving together, Yours in God's grace,). Note that only the first word of the complimentary close should be capitalized, unless subsequent words would

require capitalization in normal usage. The complimentary close is always followed by a comma.

Signature

The sender's name should be signed in blue or black ink between the complimentary close and the sender's typed name. The space should be four lines deep (created by tapping the "Enter/Return" key four times).

Typed Name

The sender's name should be typed as it is to appear in return correspondence. This may include the sender's title and the department or church represented by the sender.

Reference Notations

Additional information regarding the preparer of the letter, recipients of copies of the letter, and enclosed materials should be designated in the following ways and in the order in which they are listed:

JD:wcb

The capital letters are the first and last initials of the writer or sender of the letter; the lowercase letters are the first, middle and last initials of the preparer of the letter. If the writer/sender prepares his or her own letter, this reference item is not necessary.

Enclosure

The item or items enclosed with the correspondence should be included in this reference item.

It is acceptable to designate enclosed material in the following ways:

- Enc.: Return label
- Enclosure: Reimbursement check
- Enclosures: Reimbursement check, survey form

Copy

This reference item allows the sender to name the person, or persons, to whom a copy of the correspondence is sent. If more than one person receives a copy, the names should be listed in the same way that multiple enclosures are listed.

It is also acceptable to write out the word "copy":

- copy: Finn Sebastian
- Copy: Finn Sebastian
- Cc: Finn Sebastian
- c: Finn Sebastian

Multi-Page Letters

If your letter is more than one page, use letterhead for the first page of the letter only. Use plain white paper for the subsequent pages.

If you would like to include a header on subsequent pages, type the addressee's name, the date and the page number in the upper-left hand corner of the page. This should be aligned with the left margin and appear 1 inch from the top of the page.

Continue the letter four lines below the addressee's name, date and page number.

Example:

Alice Meade
August 16, 2018
Page 2

Sample Letter Format

August 16, 2018

(1 line)

Alice Meade

Manufacturing Plus

15909 64th Ave SW

Seattle, WA 98030

(1 line)

Subject: Widget Order No. 12345

(1 line)

Dear Mrs. Meade:

(1 line)

I am writing concerning the widgets we are processing for you, per order No. 12345. In reviewing the paperwork, I noticed that you did not designate a widget color. Would you prefer green or red widgets?

(1 line)

Please send the color preference as soon as possible. We will then process your order promptly, and I will call you when it has shipped. Thank you for your continued business.

(1 line)

Sincerely,

(4 lines)

Evan Abe, Widget Maker

(1 line)

JS/lbc

(1 line)

Enc.: 1 (Copy of the order)

(1 line)

c: Paige Dakota

WRITING CHECKLIST + PROOFING

- *The Basics of a Print Piece*

When distributing a piece for public communication, we consistently include the following:

- A prominently placed call to action (Note: Providing the necessary basics of Who, What, Where, When, Why and How will make your piece as effective and informative as possible.)
- Information that answers the questions your reader will be asking: “How does this apply to me?” and “Why do I need to know this?”
- The complete address, phone number (toll-free or a specific number with an extension), email address and applicable website address
- The Foursquare Church logo

- *Before You Go to Print*

Copy without proper proofreading and editing can communicate incorrect information to readers. It is important to triple-check your documents before they are printed or published online. Because we all make mistakes, it’s a good rule of thumb to have at least two sets of proofreading eyes on each document before it is printed or published to the web. Following are some specific tips on what to look for when proofing your documents.

Names

Double-check the spellings of all names, locations, job or pastoral titles, and church names. Do not rely on memory or assume information has not changed.

Dates

Cross reference dates and days of the week with a calendar.

Contact Information

Copy and paste all websites used into your browser to ensure that site addresses are correct. Check that all phone numbers, addresses and email addresses are also correct and current so that your audience is not led astray.

Think About Your Audience

Does the copy answer the question, “How does this apply to me?” Will your audience clearly understand the information? Do they know how to respond? Do they have all the information they need to respond properly?

Basics

Ensure that the copy includes the necessary basics: Who, What, Where, When, Why and How (call to action). The call to action must include appropriate contact information that is easy to find and use (e.g., complete address, phone with extension, email and website addresses).

Consistency

When you have finished writing your piece, review your document or campaign (which might include a series of documents) for consistency within itself. Are all phone numbers listed in the same format? Are headings capitalized consistently? Are times and dates listed in a consistent format?

Information

It’s always a good idea to double-check the accuracy of names, phone numbers and websites to ensure that your audience is able to contact the appropriate person. An extra check for accuracy can save your audience from confusion—and save a lot of money in reprinting costs later.

Spelling

It’s critical. A single misspelling can convey incorrect or inappropriate information. Do not rely on your computer’s spelling and grammar checkers exclusively, though they can be helpful for an initial check.

Terminology

Remember that pastors and congregation members may not keep up with abbreviations or Foursquare’s central office lingo. Explain things clearly—even if it seems overly simplified—in an effort to communicate clearly with everyone.

Tone

Does your document accurately represent the intended meaning? Does it capture the spirit of what you are trying to communicate? Does it keep your audience in mind? If you don’t understand something, or if you stumble over some wording, assume others will, too.

Outsider

Ask someone who isn't familiar with the information you are trying to communicate to read your document. Ask that person to identify mistakes, questions and areas of confusion.

Tips for Proofing

- Print out your document and edit it on paper. You might catch additional errors on paper that you missed on your computer screen.
- Use a blank sheet of paper to cover up the lines below the one you are reading. This technique keeps you from skipping over possible mistakes.
- Read the document out loud. You might hear a problem that you didn't notice while reading it silently.
- If you are prone to a certain mistake, such as typing "it's" when you mean to type "its," use the search function to double-check those potential errors. Remember, a computer spell check won't catch mistakes that aren't misspelled.
- Spellcheck may flag items that are often misused, such as "it's and its" or "their and there." However, the suggestion is not always correct. Be sure to read the suggestion before deciding whether your information needs to be updated.
- Read the document backwards word by word.
- Ask someone else to read your work.

PART 4: DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

EMAIL

- *Emailing Multiple Recipients*

Use the following guidelines when sending an email to multiple people:

- List all primary recipients in the “To:” field.
Example: When inviting attendees to a meeting, put them in the “To:” field.
- List all secondary recipients in the “Cc:” (courtesy copy) field.
Example: People who are not required to attend a meeting but should be informed the meeting is taking place.
- When emailing a group or using a distribution list, type the names or list in the “Bcc:” field; type the sender’s name in the “To:” field. This protects the privacy of the emailed individuals and prevents “reply to all” emails.
- It is best not to “reply to all,” unless necessary or requested by the sender.

* Email addresses are written in lowercase letters. Do not underline email addresses. Email is one word, no hyphen (not e-mail).

Correct Usage

name@foursquare.org

- *Email Signatures*

Email signatures are essentially a “digital business card” and should clearly communicate contact information in a professional manner.

* Please refrain from using large or script fonts, or adding background color to emails.

Because email signatures are your digital business card, they should correspond with Foursquare’s printed business cards. We use fonts, sizes and colors for email signatures that are similar to our business cards. The following will guide you as you create your own email signature:

- “Calibri,” the preferred font, is available on all computers and is a web-safe font. It best resembles the font used on Foursquare’s business cards.
- Use a 10-point font in black.
- The email signature should be left aligned.

- If you would like to include the Foursquare logo in your signature, see the directions below.
- The signature is the last item to appear on an email.

Example Email Signature

(double line separates signature from body of email)

Line 1: Name (in bold)

Line 2: Title, department

Line 3: Physical address

Line 4: Phone number 213.989.XXXX (using periods to separate numbers)

Line 5: Optional website

Example of Signature in Calibri

Tammy Sevcov

Manager, Foursquare Communications

1910 W Sunset Blvd. Suite 300 | Los Angeles, CA 90026

phone 213.989.4230

foursquare.org

Prefer to have a logo that includes the Foursquare logo?

[Download the Design + Brand Guide and turn to page 11.](#)

WEBSITES

- * Use “website,” lowercase, one word (not web site).
- * Internet is capitalized.
- * Use lowercase for all web addresses.
- * When used as a call to action, websites should be in bold.
- * Generally, websites should not be underlined. To remove autoformatting of a hyperlink. Right click and select “hyperlink” then “remove hyperlink.”

Correct Usage

Visit **foursquare.org** today and find a church. (Note: The text is requesting that the reader visits foursquare.org, so it is in bold.)

I found everything I needed at foursquare.org. (Note: The website is used in passing, so it is not in bold.)

- *foursquare.org*

This is our official website for those who might not be familiar with The Foursquare Church. Think of foursquare.org as a friendly handshake (or perhaps a fist bump). It informs people who we are, without using insider language. The website also offers a clear path to find a local Foursquare church, or to get involved in church planting, missions work, disaster relief and more. If someone is curious about Foursquare, this is a great place to send them.

- * foursquare.org is written in lowercase.

- * foursquare.org, when used as a call to action, should be in bold.

Correct Usage

- I really enjoyed the new article on foursquare.org.
- For more information, go to **foursquare.org**.

Incorrect Usage:

- I really enjoyed the new article on **foursquare.org**.
- I really enjoyed the new article on Foursquare.org.
- For more information, go to foursquare.org.

- *foursquareleader.org*

Credentialed ministers and church staff can visit foursquareleader.org to access resources and forms, update their credentialing, and register for Foursquare Connection. Leaders can acquire information on how to plant a church, donate to missionaries or to disaster relief causes, comment on current Foursquare business matters and find helpful church resources. This space isn't just for senior pastors—it's a website designed for anyone leading at a local Foursquare church, including those who aren't yet credentialed.

- * foursquareleader.org is written in lowercase.

- *The Foursquare Hub*

Not to be forgotten, The Foursquare Hub is our database for all Foursquare churches, congregations and credentialed ministers. It is also the location where local churches file monthly reports. The Foursquare Hub powers the church locator on foursquare.org as well as foursquareleader.org.

>>Access The Foursquare Hub at **thehub.foursquare.org**

- foursquare.org/resources

Find tons of helpful church resources and articles on foursquare.org/resources. Whether you want a word of encouragement from our president, a devotional from an area missionary, or need to order a Foursquare flag for your local church, you'll find everything you need quickly.

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS + ACCOUNTS

The Foursquare Church actively moderates its own accounts each day to represent the movement as a whole.

Foursquare districts and local churches can maintain their own social media accounts on platforms of their choosing. It is up to your church's leadership to decide on which platforms to establish a presence and maintain audience engagement.

To learn more about managing a social media account, how to properly use hashtags, handles and more, please download the [Foursquare Social Media Guide](#).

- *Official Foursquare Accounts*

These social media accounts represent The Foursquare Church. They are managed by Foursquare's Communications Department, based at the central office in Los Angeles.

Facebook: [@WeAreFoursquare](#)

Twitter: [@WeAreFoursquare](#)

Instagram: [@WeAreFoursquare](#)

Pinterest: [/wearefoursquare](#)

Vimeo: [/foursquare](#)

These may be included in your church's or district's materials, as needed and at your discretion, to point people back to the bigger picture of our global movement.

- *Handle Display in Print*

* When referencing a social media handle in print (bulletin, signage, in-service slide, etc.), the handle should be bolded to differentiate between the handle itself and surrounding content.

Example

Tag [@WeAreFoursquare](#) in your photos from Easter weekend.

- * When referencing platforms where handles may be less recognizable than URLs, a forward slash is acceptable in place of the @ symbol. URLs are in lower case.

Correct Usage

/wearefoursquare

Example: Follow The Foursquare Church at **facebook.com/wearefoursquare**.

Example: Follow us! **f/wearefoursquare**

- *Hashtags*

On social media, a hashtag is a strategic way to group photos about a similar topic that are posted by many different contributors. On social platforms, a hashtag becomes a link for easy viewing of your digital photo album, of sorts, in real time.

- * A hashtag always starts with a pound or hash (#) symbol, and it contains no spaces.
- * It contains only letters and numbers. There can be no additional symbols or special characters.
- * It often contains keywords that relate to your church, district or organization.
- * For easy readability, capitalize the first letter of each new word in a hashtag.

Correct Usage

#WeAreFoursquare

Incorrect Usage

- #wearefoursquare
- #foursquare#1
- #lovefoursquare4ever&ever!

- *Hashtag Display in Print*

When referencing a hashtag in print (bulletin, signage, in-service slide, etc.), the hashtag should be italicized to differentiate between the hashtag itself and surrounding content.

Example: Share your photos from Easter weekend with *#WeAreFoursquare*.

Note: Social media platforms online do not support italics. Instead, your hashtag will appear as a link, often in a different color from surrounding text.

- *Foursquare Social Media Guide*

To learn more about things to consider if your ministry or church would like to start managing social media, please download the [Foursquare Social Media Guide](#).

PART 5: GLOSSARY

In addition to specific ministry names listed previously, there are many words that should be written consistently across any outside communication. Please note the proper spelling and capitalization used below. In general, only proper nouns are capitalized.

FOURSQUARE TERMINOLOGY

Angelus Temple (not *Angeles*—a common misspelling)

Association member

Baptizer With the Holy Spirit (When used as a name of Jesus, capitalize.)

baptism with the Holy Spirit (When referring to a believer who has been baptized in or with the

Holy Spirit, do not capitalize “baptism.”)

baptized with the Holy Spirit

Bible

biblical

the board

board of directors

body of Christ

cabinet

Canvas

central office

charismatic

Charter church

church

committee

Covenant church

cross

denomination

districts

divine healing

emerging church

evangelism

executive committee

executive council

executive team

Four-Stage Model

GLOSSARY

The Foursquare Church
The Foursquare Hub (The Hub on second reference is acceptable)
FoursquareLink
Global Distinctives
God
gospel
He (capitalized when referring to God)
heaven
Healer (when using as a name of Jesus)
hell
Holy Spirit
International Church of the Foursquare Gospel
Jesus
judgment
kingdom (always lower case)
Missional Objectives
missional congregations
missions committee
name of Jesus
NextGen
parsonage
The Parsonage of Aimee Semple McPherson
Pentecostal movement
President John Smith or John Smith, president (Titles are capitalized only when put before a name.)
rapture
redemption
salvation
Savior (when referring to Jesus)
Scripture/scripture/scriptural (Capitalize Scripture when referring to the entire Bible; use lowercase scripture when referring to a verse. In general, if you can substitute “passage” for “scripture,” it is not capitalized.)
second coming of Christ
simple church
Soon-Coming King
Spirit-filled
Spirit-filled life
Word of God

- *Bible Talk*

- * We abbreviate the books of the Bible on most references (see Bible Abbreviations below).
- * The New King James Version (NKJV) is the default version of the Communications Department.
- * We include verses in NKJV unless otherwise specified by the writer.
- * Whether using NKJV or another version, always cite the version after the verse.

- *Bible Abbreviations*

Below are biblical book abbreviations we use in correspondence and print, according to *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. These are appropriate to use on first reference and should be used consistently throughout a document or campaign.

- *Old Testament*

Gen. Genesis

Exod. Exodus

Lev. Leviticus

Num. Numbers

Deut. Deuteronomy

Josh. Joshua

Judg. Judges

Ruth Ruth

1 Sam. 1 Samuel

2 Sam. 2 Samuel

1 Kings 1 Kings

2 Kings 2 Kings

1 Chron. 1 Chronicles

2 Chron. 2 Chronicles

Ezra Ezra

Neh. Nehemiah

Esth. Esther

Job Job

Ps. Psalms

Prov. Proverbs

Eccles. Ecclesiastes

Song Sol. Song of Solomon
Isa. Isaiah
Jer. Jeremiah
Lam. Lamentations
Ezek. Ezekiel
Dan. Daniel
Hos. Hosea
Joel Joel
Amos Amos
Obad. Obadiah
Jon. Jonah
Mic. Micah
Nah. Nahum
Hab. Habakkuk
Zeph. Zephaniah
Hag. Haggai
Zech. Zechariah
Mal. Malachi

- *New Testament*

Matt. Matthew
Mark Mark
Luke Luke
John John
Acts Acts
Rom. Romans
1 Cor. 1 Corinthians
2 Cor. 2 Corinthians
Gal. Galatians
Eph. Ephesians
Phil. Philippians
Col. Colossians
1 Thess. 1 Thessalonians
2 Thess. 2 Thessalonians
1 Tim. 1 Timothy
2 Tim. 2 Timothy

GLOSSARY

Tit. Titus
Philem. Philemon
Heb. Hebrews
Jas. James
1 Pet. 1 Peter
2 Pet. 2 Peter
1 John 1 John
2 John 2 John
3 John 3 John
Jude Jude
Rev. Revelation

PART 6: RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

Refer to the following helpful resource material when writing and editing.

- *Dictionaries*

Merriam-Webster Dictionary (merriam-webster.com)

- *English/Grammar*

The Associated Press Stylebook

Virtually all magazines and newspapers in the United States use *The Associated Press Stylebook* as their rulebook for writing and editing. It is the standard for Foursquare's publications and websites. Copies of *The Associated Press Stylebook* are available for purchase online at ap.org.