



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Living in God's amazing grace

ARCHIVES OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

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Congregational Archives Access Policy— Sample Wording

The records of the congregation are those created or received by staff and members of _____ Lutheran Church in the course of business of the congregation and are not owned by individuals. Therefore, the historical records should be made available for research to anyone in the congregation. Some records series may not be available due to privacy considerations or if the records are in poor condition. Outside use is subject to the availability of the archivist, archives committee members or designates.

1. Historical records maintained as the archives of the congregation are unique and are intended to be available for current administrative use and for historical research.
2. The records must be used on the premises of the congregation. The archivist, an archives committee member or designate should be present when the archival materials are being used. Materials may not be loaned for individual use. A copy of the access policy should be given to all archives users.
3. The archivist or archives committee may determine that certain records have restricted access due to concern for the privacy of individuals. As records are received into archival custody, such restrictions are to be determined and record containers marked accordingly.
4. Records that are in fragile condition will be marked as such and will not be made available for research.
5. A pastor may donate copies of sermons or other items for the historical record at his/her discretion, but access to his/her materials is up to the pastor. No confidential materials of a pastor are included in the archives.
6. The researcher should sit at a desk or use a table surface so that there is enough room to use records carefully. The records should be returned to secure storage immediately after use.
7. No food, beverages or other liquids are to be in the work area. No smoking is allowed in the archives storage or work areas. *

* [More detailed “reading room rules” could be compiled and provided as a handout and posted in the user area.]