

REGISTERS OF PASTORAL ACTS

BAPTISMS | CONFIRMATIONS | MARRIAGES | BURIALS

Registers of Pastoral Acts are one of the most important records produced by LCANZ congregations. They are the records that can give an individual their identity through documenting their faith journey and the recording of vital personal and family information. They are also of great historical value to family researchers – the legacy of the individual they document.

If your congregation has registers that fit any of the following criteria, please transfer them to Lutheran Archives:

- Full with entries
- Are no longer being used for new entries
- Have a commencement date in the 19th century or the early 20th century
- Are in fragile condition

Preservation

As registers are often large and unwieldy, they are not to be scanned on a standard photocopier machine. This will risk damaging them. Instead:

- **Deposit the original register** with Lutheran Archives
 - We hold many original registers, stored to archival standards. For very large or very fragile volumes, this can include procuring a custom-made acid-free archival box.
 - Congregation can fund the preservation of their registers in custom-made boxes with a donation of \$30 per volume.
- Lutheran Archives will then **digitise the register to preservation standard**
 - Our overhead scanner is designed for large and/or fragile documents
 - This allows us to produce scans of preservation quality

Access

Access for the public through Lutheran Archives:

- Once digitised, Lutheran Archives **creates a printed access copy**, to make the records readily accessible to staff and individuals without risking damage to the originals
- Registers are **indexed into our database** so that records of pastoral acts are searchable by name (this is the primary tool used by family history researchers)
- **PRIVACY NOTE:** Recent records (created within the last 40 years) are not made publicly accessible, to protect the privacy of the individuals concerned.

We will provide you with a PDF digital copy, along with the index, to use within your congregation.



Creation of a new register

- Now that you have deposited your old register, you need a current register to continue recording the pastoral acts within your congregation and parish.
- Handwritten in a book is best. It doesn't need to be a fancy tome – although you can if you wish.
- Consider this a part of the ministry to an individual by taking the time to accurately and fully record – by hand – a person's details of the Pastoral Act
- Handwritten records cannot easily be altered, deleted, or become corrupt: this is why we recommend this path.
- Ensure you include all relevant details in your record.

Title page information

- Location and name of congregation
- Register dates: when commenced and when register ends
- Pastors who serve the congregation during this time, along with their dates of service
- Events recorded in the register and the date range:
 - Baptisms
 - Confirmations
 - Marriages
 - Burials
 - Other (eg family membership)

General notes

- If a register is used across the parish, please ensure that each entry includes the specific location of the event.
- It can be good practice to include the name/position of the person making the entry (eg entered by Pastor Schwarz, date) although not essential

Membership lists

Many congregations keep annual lists of members (or members directories). It can be useful to have one 'master list' kept in the register for an individual or family, showing their membership being essential to the life of the congregation. Along with personal details, you could record the details of entry into the congregation, perhaps any major positions they held in the congregation (eg Sunday school teacher: years X), and when they died or left the congregation: and to where they transferred to. This should not replace other methods of maintaining membership details but can complement those records.

