

Guidelines for the *Times-Gazette* Articles

The ministry of the *Times-Gazette* articles is to serve as an outreach of the Church and encouragement to the readers. Therefore, some thought needs to be put into the words used and the audience you are addressing.

1. This is a column that is read by long-time believers as well as the unchurched. Focus your articles on gospel messages that will be uplifting and inspiring, yet thought-provoking. Remember you are writing for those who may have never been in church as well as those who are in church weekly. **Challenge the church-goer but don't put off the unchurched.**
2. **The article is written for the general public, not those learned in theology. A rule of journalism is to write to the sixth-grade level.** Like other professions, in ministry, we have our own vocabulary – which is fine when communicating with others who are familiar with that vocabulary. However, **the general public quite often does not understand the “churchy” words we use.** Keep this in mind when selecting your words and terms.
3. **It is fine to mention your church and the activities/events happening there, but this column is not to be an advertisement for your church over others in the community. The goal of these articles is to glorify God in a broad, non-denominational way.**
4. This should go without saying but plagiarism is against the law. It is perfectly acceptable to quote another author but you must give credit to the original author. Don't try to pass someone else's material off as your own. Also, when giving Bible verses, please list the book, chapter and verse and the translation in parentheses. Example: John 1:3 (MSG)
5. Finally, **please stay away from controversial topics.** If in doubt about your subject matter, refer to the “ACMA Statement of Common Beliefs” found in the ACMA policy manual. The column is a wonderful opportunity for the ministerial community to reach out to the unchurched in all our communities and share with them the love of Jesus Christ. If the newspaper is faced with angry readers, it is possible for the ACMA to lose this opportunity to reach out to thousands. Don't be the reason this valuable tool is lost to an entire community.

Final Instructions: The word limit for each article is 500 words and all articles are due no later than noon on the Wednesday before your article is to run. There are no exceptions. If you miss your deadline, you must wait until your next scheduled time. If you are unable to meet your scheduled date, please contact the current president as soon as possible; do *not* contact the newspaper. **If you are sending the article electronically, the T-G prefers that the entire article be within the body of the email rather than as an attachment. The email address is: religion@times-gazette.com**