

# **Fact sheet: *brief guidelines for Methodist parishes or organisations on creating, appraising and archiving records***

## **Methodist Church of New Zealand Archives National Archive of the Methodist Church of New Zealand**

**Contact:** Archivist, Methodist Church of New Zealand Archives  
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**Telephone:** (03) 366 6049

**Email:** [archives@methodist.org.nz](mailto:archives@methodist.org.nz)

**Web:** <http://www.methodist.org.nz/archives>

**Hours:** By appointment only. Closed weekends, public holidays, Christmas-New Year and Easter Tuesday

Holds Connexional Office administrative archives, records of national Methodist Conference, national committees, departments, divisions and boards, architectural plans and specifications of buildings and churches, photographs.

Baptism and marriage registers for most Methodist parishes in New Zealand. District, parish and church archives for Northland, Auckland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty Taranaki, Wanganui, Hawkes Bay, Manawatu, Wellington, Nelson, Marlborough, West Coast and Canterbury.

## **Other repositories holding Methodist Church Parish records:**

### **Hocken Collections**

**Contact:** Anzac Ave/Parry Street  
P O Box 56, Dunedin

**Telephone:** phone (03) 479 1100

**Web:** <http://hakena.otago.ac.nz>

*Holds Methodist Church of New Zealand parish records for Otago and Southland.*

## **Creating records**

The types of record groups created by parishes or groups within the Methodist Church can include a variety of file types:

- Minutes
- Subject files
- Financial records
- Publications including newsletters or bulletins
- Correspondence
- Annual reports
- Constitutions, deeds and agreements
- Photographs
- Historical memorabilia

At the time the files are created, it is a good idea to be clear about which files need to be kept permanently as an historical record of the parish's activities. It is also helpful to use the same file titles and same filing system for computer files as well as paper records.

Create subject files with unambiguous names, rather than file all documents by year. File names can also include a note of what files should be kept permanently (i.e. archived) or discarded after a period of time.

## **Appraisal criteria for files**

### **What should be archived or kept permanently?**

- Administrative value – is the record important for continuing administrative, financial or legal reasons?
- Historical value – does the record have enduring value for its evidential or historical information, for example, are these founding documents?
- Age – is the record important because of its age?
- Uniqueness – is it the only surviving record, or salvaged from a disaster?

## **Keep permanently in most cases:**

Account books associated with specific project/founding documents  
Annual audited balance sheet  
Annual reports  
Architectural plans  
Architectural specifications  
Baptism registers  
Cash books associated with specific project/founding documents  
Celebration memorabilia e.g. programmes, invitations  
Commemorative scrapbooks  
Correspondence on special subjects  
Cradle rolls  
Jubilee records and memorabilia  
Land stories  
Ledgers associated with specific project/founding documents  
Legal documents  
Marriage registers  
Membership rolls  
Membership lists  
Minutes/minute books  
Newsletters  
Newspaper cuttings  
Orders of service – anniversaries or special occasions  
Parish histories  
Photographs  
Policy documents  
Programmes  
Property files for historic properties  
Publications published by the parish  
Pulpit notices especially Christmas and Easter/special occasions  
Scrapbooks  
Subject files  
Sunday School rolls

## **Discard in most cases:**

Correspondence general and routine  
Draft versions of documents  
Duplicates  
Pulpit notices  
Visitor's books (daily)  
Prayer requests  
Removal forms  
Marriage license butts (unless register destroyed)

## **Unless it fits the appraisal criteria above, in which case keep the record**

Some financial records have to be kept in case of audit by Inland Revenue Department:

### **After 7 years discard:**

Account books  
Applications for funds or grants  
Bank passbooks  
Bank statements  
Cash books  
Cheque stubs or cheque books  
Deposit slips  
Ledgers (general)  
Receipts  
Receipt books  
Wages books

Send funeral service sheets to New Zealand Society of Genealogists



## Methodist Church Archivist's archival recommendations

- Write on the outside of the file if it is to be archived and at what date, plus any special notes about its historical value – remember the Archives staff may not be aware of this.
- Methodist Church of New Zealand Conference Archives Policy clearly states that records created by the Methodist Church are owned by the Methodist Church of New Zealand, and should not be placed in any other repository, other than those approved by the Church.
- Transfer the records to be kept permanently in the Methodist Church of New Zealand Archives or designated repository, about every 5-7 years, not on a yearly basis. Contact the Archivist first, and include a list of the records or files you are transferring to the Archives with the documents.
- Treasurers should retain all financial records (if required for tax purposes) for 7 years unless accounts are being processed by the Administration Division Accounts Section. Ensure the annual audited balance sheet is included in the minute book, or annual report. After 7 years destroy financial records that are not to be kept permanently.
- **Print out** documents to be archived – the Methodist Archives currently has no facilities to store or access documents in an electronic format.
- The Methodist Church of New Zealand Archives in holds district/parish/church archives. Otago and Southland district/parish/church records are preserved in the Hocken Collections, Dunedin.
- All district or synod records should transferred to the Methodist Archives once they are ready to be archived.
- Baptism and marriage registers should be transferred as soon as they are full. The Methodist Archives holds most baptism and marriage registers. Arrangements can be made for copies to be held by the Parish if necessary. Please let the Archivist know if registers have been included in any local indexing projects.

## Details of holdings

Lists of parish records held in the Methodist Archives are posted on the Methodist Church website [www.methodist.org.nz](http://www.methodist.org.nz) under Archives Collection. They are regularly updated.

## Preservation of records in your care

It is best to keep any records held by your parish or organisation, in containers such as boxes. Acid-free folders and boxes can be purchased from Conservation Supplies [www.conservationsupplies.co.nz](http://www.conservationsupplies.co.nz)

## Advice

Please do not hesitate to telephone or email the Archivist if you are unsure about what to do, need advice on preservation, disaster preparedness planning or any other archives-related matters.

## Recommended reading

*Preserving our story. Keeping the archives of women's organisations* by Ellen Ellis, 1994.

*Managing and preserving community archives*, available free from the National Preservation Office, National Library of New Zealand, Box 1467, Wellington 6140. [www.natlib.govt.nz](http://www.natlib.govt.nz)