

# What is Archival Historical Material?

## *Resources for Preserving and Proclaiming the Story of Christ's Church*



The following is a brief general checklist of the items that are normally of value to the archivist–historian and researcher. Resources fitting any of these categories should typically be preserved, labeled and filed. This list is meant to be a starting point and a list of suggestions. Please contact the synod archivist for answers to any specific questions that you may have.

1. **Council and Congregational/Voters Meeting Minutes** – These ought to be “religiously” preserved.

2. **Sacred Acts** – All records of baptisms, confirmations, marriages, and funerals need to be preserved.

3. **Correspondence** – All official correspondence dealing with policies, functions, personnel, plans and programs of an organization should be included.

4. **Reports** – Any reports issued by committees, called workers, councilmen, or staff members relating to the work or to surveys and activities, plans and projections, including annual reports, should be placed into the archives.

5. **Financial Records** – Regardless of form, basic financial reports (balance sheets, income/expense statements, audit reports) should be retained. Once financial statements have been audited, supporting documentation such as invoices, disbursement vouchers, cancelled checks, deposit slips, bank statements, payroll records, offering envelopes and other donor records need not be permanently retained. Donor records and payroll records should be retained for up to six years to support tax–related inquiries, after which they may be destroyed.

6. **Newsletters** – Newsletters and similar communications should be preserved.

6. **Policy Statements** – Directives and regulations issued by or to executives or other personnel that explain and describe policies and procedures are archival in nature.

7. **Audiovisual Materials** – Pictures of personnel, executives, boards, buildings, properties, confirmations, and other special events, etc., are important and should be clearly identified and dated. Films, slides, audio and video recordings and similar materials from special events should be preserved.

8. **Orders of Service** – Service folders for special events, such as installations, funerals, groundbreaking and cornerstone–laying services, dedications, anniversaries and other special events should be retained.

10. **Physical Objects** – Items such as worship regalia, resources, and paraphernalia used in the service of the organization, in mission activities, in church and school, etc., may be helpful in depicting the life and work of an organization and its cultural context.

11. **Miscellaneous** – Any documents, manuscripts, ledgers, books, pamphlets, etc., that describe or document the work of the organization are also important and should be considered for retention