

**Lutheran Church of Australia
Queensland District**

Congregational Administration Check List

Version 1.0



**God gives many gifts to the Church for the mission of the Gospel,
and one of those is the gift of administration or leadership (Romans 12:8).**

The importance of this gift is most obvious when it is left unattended,

and part of our faithful response to God's generosity

will be to ensure that this does not happen among us!

Lutheran Church of Australia Queensland District



Michael Turner
District Executive Officer

Greetings in Christ!

Congregation and Preaching Place Administration Checklist.

In recent years there has been a significant change of Key Office Holders in Congregations and Parishes. Because of this, some knowledge of what is expected of Congregations and Preaching Places in support of good administrative practices has been lost.

At a recent meeting of the LCA District Administrators, an Administration Checklist was developed that aims to assist Key Office Holders' understanding of what is required of their parish or congregation or preaching place, at least in terms of sound administration.

The list is not necessarily exhaustive and some requirements may not be entirely relevant to every congregation, depending on your District. You will see that there are blank pages after each item, where Key Office Holders may wish to add Congregation-specific items. Feel free also to personalise the list for your Congregation.

This is the first time that all District Administrators have been able to come together to pool collective experiences on administrative requirements for congregations. We seek to learn, so if you believe that the list can be improved in any way, or if it is missing anything, please go to the feedback response form at https://creator.zoho.com/keith.stiller/lcaqd-checklist/form-perma/Response_Form/ so that subsequent versions may be changed to suit.

The District Administrators will next be meeting in Melbourne in early February 2013 and they do meet twice annually so any comments about the documents, suggested additional and amendments should be addressed to https://creator.zoho.com/keith.stiller/lcaqd-checklist/form-perma/Response_Form/

How to use the list.

The LCA District Administrators have suggested a number of activities be completed.

Some are mandatory, for example, submitting LAMP statistics by 28 February each year. Some are suggested as Best Practice.



It's not all your job! Whilst the person completing the activity may be a member of staff or a volunteer, it is suggested the person responsible for overseeing the activity to completion may be Pastor (P) Chairperson (C), Treasurer (T) or Secretary (S).

For example it is not suggested that the Chairperson complete every task with a C, but it is the Chairperson's responsibility to ensure that those tasks are completed.

Preaching Places are (with some exceptions) part of a Congregation and so their administrative requirements are included in Congregations' administrative duties.

The list has been deliberately developed as a table with blank pages so that Congregations may adapt the document to meet local needs and perhaps even put a check list completion box against various activities.

To understand the list, please see figure 1:

LAMP Entries

Item Spec	Description	Ex
1 P 28 Feb M PP incl.	LAMP Statistics	Co wit res are LC

In this example, the person responsible for ensuring the completion of the item is *P*, the Pastor.

Underneath the *P* is 28 Feb, which is the date it is due by.

This task is mandatory, as indicated by the *M*.

Any Preaching Places attached to the Congregation must be included in the final product of the task, as indicated by *PP incl.*

The meanings of each letter can be found at the top of each page.

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District Administrators and support staff are here to help, so please call or email as required.

I recommended the attached checklist for your use.

Yours faithfully

Michael Turner

District Executive Officer

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Congregational Administration Check List

The Administration Check List below is intended to assist Congregation Key Office Holders in ensuring sound administration in support of sound mission is achieved.

LAMP Entries

Item Spec	Description	Explanation	Notes
1 P 28 Feb M PP incl.	LAMP Statistics	Congregation Pastors, in accordance with their call document are responsible for ensuring that statistics are maintained in accordance with LCA policy.	<p>Instructions for completing LAMP statistics are on the LAMP site.</p> <p>Access to LAMP can be obtained through contacting your local District Administrator.</p> <p>It is recommended that Key Office Holders check statistics are being kept up to date in a running tally on a monthly basis so that the effort to put them in for the year is a simple 30 minute exercise.</p> <p>Questions about how to enter statistics can usually be answered by administration staff in each District.</p>
2 S 30 Sep BP PP sep.	Key Office Holder details	Conduct an audit of Key Office Holder details as recorded in LAMP.	<p>Should be audited / updated immediately after AGM and as required through the year.</p> <p>Details may be published in the LCA year book.</p>
3 C Annual BP PP sep.	Membership Record	Conduct an audit of the membership of the Congregation.	<p>Membership details to be correctly recorded.</p> <p>Note: Communing Member 18+ directly impacts on LCA levy and entitlement of Congregation to Synod Delegates.</p>
4 S Annual M PP incl.	AGM date	Ensure that the AGM date is correctly entered in LAMP.	



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Item Spec	Description	Explanation	Notes
5 S Annual M PP incl.	Publications	Conduct an audit to correctly calculate the number and type of publications required by the Congregation and that those details are entered in LAMP.	This has financial implications for the LCA.
6 P Annual M PP sep.	Statistician	Conduct an audit to ensure the Congregation has appointed a statistician to record births, deaths, marriages, attendance and other detail.	Statistician details are recorded in LAMP. Statistician is trained and has access to record details in LAMP. Pastor is able to certify the statistician is able to carry out duties.



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Key Document review

Item <i>Spec</i>	Description	Explanation	Notes
7 C Annual PP incl.	Constitution and By-Laws	A review of your Congregation or Parish Constitution and By-Laws to ensure it is current and broadly consistent with the national model constitution.	<p>The model constitution can be found on various National and District Web Sites.</p> <p>Do you know where your constitution is held? Has it been correctly approved?</p> <p>Is the master or copy held in the District Office for safekeeping?</p> <p>Do you have a standard agenda item in your council meetings to review the constitution annually?</p> <p>Most Districts have a Constitutions Committee you can consult with.</p> <p>District Administrators can also provide some assistance on request.</p>
8 C PP incl.	Land Titles	An audit to check land titles are held in a safe and secure location.	<p>Except in NSW where properties are held in a property trust.</p> <p>Some congregations own land, some congregations are the beneficial users of land held in the name of the district or trust.</p> <p>Do you know where the titles are?</p> <p>Are your titles now paperless, existing only on a state government database?</p> <p>Losing a title can be very expensive.</p> <p>Speak to District Administrators for help.</p>



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Professional Standards

Item Spec	Description	Explanation	Notes
9 C Annual M PP incl.	Child Safe	Conduct an audit to ensure all Child Safe requirements are being complied with including Blue Card, Exemption Card, Police Check, Training Requirements.	Note: LCA Policy applies and Professional Standards Unit procedures also apply. Policy on this topic may be found on District Web Sites and also the PSU web site. Note: Compliance with policy in this area also benefits all by keeping our national insurance premiums lower.
10 C Annual M PP incl.	Safe Place	Conduct an audit to ensure all Safe Place requirements are being complied with including Blue Card, Exemption Card, Police Check and Training Requirements.	Note: LCA Policy applies and Professional Standards Unit procedures also apply. Check the National, District and PSU web sites for more details as required. Compliance in this area also has insurance premium implications.
11 C Annual M PP incl.	Privacy Policy Audit	Conduct an audit of Congregation compliance with Privacy policy	
12 C Annual M PP incl.	HRM (Personnel) policy	Conduct an audit of HRM (Personnel) policies to ensure compliance with a wide range of employment and conditions of employment policies.	Note: Policies to be found on LCA and District Websites.
13 C Annual M PP incl.	Volunteers and Volunteer Policy	An audit to ensure your Congregation is appropriately screening volunteers and that they receive a role description.	Are your volunteers properly appointed and inducted? For those in child related support roles are background checks followed? Policies and material are on the District Web Site.
14 C Annual M PP incl.	Prevention of Risk of Harm from Known Sex Offenders	Conduct an audit to ensure that your congregation is complying with an approved risk assessment and management plan for any known sex offenders in the	Procedure and Policy (when published) will be on the District web site.



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Item Spec	Description	Explanation	Notes
		congregation.	
15 C Annual M PP incl.	Prevention of abuse and Harassment	An audit to ensure the congregation and its leadership are aware of the policy and complying with its intent.	See District webs site for more information. Links to Guidelines for Ethical Standards of Behaviour and General Complaints Policy (to be published)



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Financial Contribution to District and National Funds

Item Specs	Description	Explanation	Notes
16 <i>T</i> <i>Annual</i> <i>M</i> <i>PP incl.</i>	Budget Giving Advice	Notice given to District Office of contribution to District Budget.	Note: In WA and Qld a target giving notice is advised to Congregations. By Sep NSW By Nov SA By Nov WA By Oct Qld
17 <i>T</i> <i>Annual</i> <i>BP</i> <i>PP incl.</i>	Auto debit or Bpay or Lutheran ePay from Feb 2013	An audit to ensure that the Congregation contributions to District are being met through Auto debit (preferred) or B Pay methods and match the amount committed to District.	Note: Contact District Administrators or Financial staff for further assistance and district preference.
18 <i>T</i> <i>Annual</i> <i>M</i> <i>PP incl.</i>	LCA Levy.	Payment to the LCA of the LCA Levy in accordance with the Communing 18+ number entered in LAMP and the levy amount as advised in the LCA Pastors Salary and Allowances document.	Note: SA pay levy based on Communing 16+.



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Financial Management

Item Specs	Description	Explanation	Notes
19 C Annual M PP incl.	Financial Audit	Audit of the financial state of affairs of the Congregation.	Note: LCA Policy applies and Professional Standards Unit procedures apply to this topic. Check your District Web Site or the National Web site for more detail. It is not unknown for audits to reveal evidence of mal-administration and theft. For more information contact your District Administrator.
20 C Annual BP PP sep.	Financial Process Audit	An audit of the processes used by the Congregation to receive offerings and other contributions/income, count and bank the income and authorise expenditure from church accounts.	Note: Guidance is provided in Insurance publications and Professional Standards Unit advice.
21 S Annual/ Monthly M PP incl.	Copyright License Audit	An audit to ensure that the Congregation is registered with the CCLI and that usage of copyright material is reported.	Further information available through LCA National Office



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Synod Protocol

Item Specs	Description	Explanation	Notes
22 C Annual BP PP incl.	Synod Resolutions	Congregations intending to submit a resolution to Synod must meet to discuss and agree to the resolution and submit it to District Office three months prior to Synod.	District Administrators can provide details of local processes to follow. District Constitutions and By-Laws will also include details about the process to follow. Queensland Congregations should check the District web Site under Governance Tab for examples of synod resolutions.
23 C Annual M PP incl.	Synod Delegates	Check that delegates to Conventions of Synod are chosen, registered and paid for prior to Synod.	Delegate numbers are in accordance with entitlements as shown in District By-Laws and the Communing 18+ figure reported in LAMP. (Except SA where 16+ is reported) Congregations are encouraged to always send delegates.
24 C Annual M PP incl.	Apology to Synod	Congregations unable to fill their delegate entitlement to Synod must have tendered a written apology to the District President, three weeks prior to Synod.	Congregations must still pay for a delegate entitlement. Some Districts now allow for Congregations to register an apology online. Protocol dictates that apologies tendered will be shown in the minutes of the Convention of Synod.
25 C Annual BP PP incl.	Nominations for Standing Committees for election at Convention of Synod	Congregations have sought from their membership persons to nominate for Standing Committees of the District, three months prior to Synod.	Some Districts have Nominations Committees tasked to assist in filling vacancies. Best practice is for Congregations to contact the Nominations Committee to offer assistance.



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Item Specs	Description	Explanation	Notes
26 C As <i>needed</i> BP PP incl.	National General Synod	Congregations have sought from their membership persons to attend the National General Synod (held every three years). Nominations have been submitted three months prior to Synod.	



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Pastors' Conference Protocol

Item	Description	Explanation	Notes
27 <i>T</i> <i>Six months</i> <i>M</i> <i>PP incl.</i>	Pastors Conference	Pastors are registered to attend and are paid for.	Pastors' attendance is required as detailed in the Pastors Salary and Allowances document.
28 <i>T</i> <i>Six months</i> <i>M</i> <i>PP incl.</i>	Apology to Pastors Conference	Congregations unable to have the Pastor attend a Pastor Conference submit apology to District President NLT three weeks prior to the Conference.	Apology to be in writing. Letter or email.



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Reports to District

Item Specs	Description	Explanation	Notes
29 S Annual M PP incl.	AGM Report	Copy of the reports to the Congregation AGM and AGM Minutes submitted to District Office.	As AGMs are conducted.
30 C Annual Y PP incl.	Professional Development Plan	Congregations and Pastors review the Professional Development Plan for the year.	Submit the Plan to the Director Ministry and Mission (or District President as appropriate). Note. In the LCA Pastors Salary and Allowances Document this is described as Continuing Education
31 District Annual BP PP incl.	Marriage License	Audit that Pastors Marriage Celebrant details are correctly recorded on the Register.	For further information contact District President assistants.
32 C Annual M PP incl.	Policy compliance report to District	Completion of an on-line report to District by 28 February certifying compliance with District policies for the previous year.	Report to be developed as a simple on-line report



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Pay and Financial Activity Reporting

Item Specs	Description	Explanation	Notes
33 <i>C</i> <i>Six months</i> <i>M</i> <i>PP incl.</i>	Pay Rates	An audit to ensure that correct pay rates are being applied.	<p>We know that adjustments to Pastors Salaries typically take effect from 1 January of each year however pay rates for other staff may vary according to awards, employment anniversary, age and other factors.</p> <p>Award details are typically found on State Government web sites.</p> <p>Additional support and advice may often be available from your auditor or accountant.</p> <p>District Administrators or District Payroll staff can often assist.</p> <p>It may be better to outsource your payroll function to a District Payroll section and let them carry the administration burden.</p>
34 <i>T</i> <i>Annual</i> <i>M</i> <i>PP incl.</i>	GST	An audit to check if your congregation is part of the LCA GST Group and if the congregation is claiming back GST.	<p>If this has not been done for some time the amount can be considerable.</p> <p>Further information is available from your District Administrator.</p> <p>Check your District web site for guidance that may already have been posted.</p>
35 <i>C</i> <i>Jan/July</i> <i>M</i> <i>PP incl.</i>	PAYG Tax	An audit to ensure correct PAYG tax rates is being applied.	<p>We live in an environment where tax rates are commonly adjusted. Are your staff paying the right tax? Check with your accountant or auditor. Check the ATO web site.</p> <p>District Administrators can provide advice.</p>
36 <i>C</i> <i>Quart.</i> <i>BP</i> <i>PP incl.</i>	Payslips	Audit of Pastors payslip to ensure salary, allowances, leave entitlements and other relevant information has been correctly recorded.	



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Item Specs	Description	Explanation	Notes
37 C Quart. BP PP incl.	Leave Record	Audit of Annual and Sick Leave.	Ensure leave has been correctly recorded and approved. Check the leave balances are not in excess of LCA policy. Note: The LCA Pastors Salary and Allowances Document describes leave entitlements.
38 C Annual M	Super - annuation Rates	An audit to ensure that your staff is paying superannuation at the right level	Superannuation rates are set to change on an annual basis for the next few years on 1 July. Talk to your accountant or auditor or payroll officer.
39 C Monthly Quart. Annual M PP incl.	BAS	An audit to ensure your BAS is being submitted on time and is correct.	Check that BAS is correctly applied.



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Item Specs	Description	Explanation	Notes
<p>40 T Due various times M PP incl.</p>	<p>Work Cover Return or Workers Compensation (State Variations exist)</p>	<p>Advice to District Office of the number of employees, wages received and hours worked (not applicable to all Districts) District implementation of work cover arrangements vary depending on state legislation.</p>	<p>Check State Government and District web sites for more details. Check with District Administrators or Payroll officers for more information.</p> <p>All volunteers, whether office holders or providing other services e.g. cleaning or flowers, are covered by the Church's insurance should they be injured whilst undertaking these activities.</p> <p>Workcover legislation was designed to ensure that a worker was not disadvantaged by being injured at work, hence salary is continued and medical and any rehab expenses met to bring the worker back to work as soon as possible. Volunteers are not paid so Workcover does not apply to them and they can make a claim on the Church's insurance for injury.</p> <p>Workcover would be involved if there was a serious incident – usually involving loss of life or significant injury – to determine if the Church was conducting its activities in a safe manner. Hence the need for Risk assessments, safety plans, building inspections, fire alarms and extinguishers and electrical tagging.</p> <p>If the Church was not conducting its activities in a safe manner the Church may be fined.</p>



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Training

Item <i>Specs</i>	Description	Explanation	Notes
41 C Annual BP PP incl.	Key Office Holder Training Day	An audit to check that Congregation Key Office Holders have attended a Training Day.	Are Key Office Holders scheduled to attend District sponsored training days and Professional Standards training days? Has an in-house training day been scheduled?
42 C Annual M PP incl.	Professional Standards, Child Safe, Safe Place Training Day	An audit to confirm a training day for relevant congregation members to complete Professional standards training, safe place training and/or child safe training has been scheduled with District Office.	Some District web sites display training days and provide a facility to book attendance on-line. Enquiries to District Administrators.



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Workplace Health & Safety

Item Specs	Description	Explanation	Notes
43 C Annual M PP incl.	Work Health and Safety Audit	An audit of the Church and Hall and other buildings premises.	Note: There is LCA Policy and Federal and State Legislation to comply with. A national policy is being developed. Districts will also have local policy on this topic. Congregation Council meetings should have a standing agenda item for each meeting on Work Health and Safety
44 C Annual M PP incl.	WH&S Officer	An audit to ensure a WH&S officer has been appointed, trained and is carrying out duties.	WH&S officer details recorded on LAMP. This is a demonstrator of compliance with the law, policy and insurance. More details from District Administrators.
45 C Annual M PP incl.	Safety Management On-Line (SMO)	This is the LCA on-line risk management tool for congregation activities including activities for children and young people.	Is your WH&S Officer a co-ordinator who has access to the SMO web site? If not, contact the District Professional Standards Officer (07-3512 7237) for access to the site. For training in how to use the site contact the District Professional Standards Officer. Further information is on the District web site under the professional Standards tab.



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Property Management

Item <i>Specs</i>	Description	Explanation	Notes
46 C Annual M PP incl.	Insurance Questionnaire	LCA Insurance Questionnaire completed and submitted	
47 C Annual M PP incl.	Property Insurance	Audit of Property and Insurance Requirements. Payment of Insurance to LCA Insurance.	
48 T TBA M PP incl.	Valuation of Assets	Valuation of the Assets of the Congregation.	(Suggested best practice is to annually review all cash and non-cash assets to determine whether best practice stewardship requirements are being met). Local policy may need to be developed. District Administrators recommend that over \$2,000 of asset item value per item be recorded.
49 C Annual M PP incl.	Manse	An inspection of the manse is completed for repair and maintenance requirements and WH&S issues.	Budget for manse repairs and maintenance is updated. Is it time to upgrade the manse? Check District web sites for Manse inspection checklists. Is asbestos present? Has the Pastor been given 14 days notice of an impending inspection? More details available from District Administrators.
50 C Annual M PP incl.	Asbestos Audit	Audit of all buildings for Asbestos.	Note: Not all buildings contain asbestos. Update of Asbestos register. Note: LCA Policy and Federal and State Legislation to comply with. Information about this requirement is also found on State Government websites.



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Item Specs	Description	Explanation	Notes
51 C Annual M PP incl.	Fire Systems Audit	Audit of fire systems in your buildings.	Check that emergency exit signs are displayed. Check emergency evacuation procedures are displayed. More details are usually available on State Government web sites. This has insurance implications.
52 C Annual M PP incl.	Land Tax (SA, NSW, Tas, Qld only)	An audit to ensure that property your church, manse, school, kindergarten, aged care facility is exempt from paying land tax (Not applicable some Districts)	This requirement varies from State to State. It is worth checking with the relevant state government web site for details. State government databases are not always perfect. Just because you may not have paid land tax in one year does not mean it will not be levied on you in the next year. In Districts such as Queensland where most property is actually in the name of the District it may be worthwhile checking details with the District Administrator.
53 T Annual BP PP incl.	Council Rates	An audit to check if properties are exempt from Council Rates	Varies according to State and Territory law.



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Signage and Listings

Item	Description	Explanation	Notes
54 S Annual BP PP incl.	White Pages Listing	An audit of the Listing details of the Congregation in the White Pages (Book) and White Pages On-Line.	If your listing is not correct contact your District Administrator.
55 S Annual BP PP incl.	Yellow Pages	An audit of the Listing details of the Congregation in the Yellow Pages (Book) and Yellow Pages On-Line.	
56 C Annual M PP incl.	Signage Audit	An audit of the Signs displayed for the Congregation.	<p>Are the correct details displayed? Are they readable? Is the condition of the sign good? Is the LCA Logo displayed?</p> <p>Policy on signs can be found on District web sites.</p> <p>Details available from District Administrators.</p>



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Telecommunications, Postage and Internet

Item	Description	Explanation	Notes
57 <i>T</i> <i>Annual</i> <i>BP</i> <i>PP incl.</i>	Tele-communications Services Plan Review	An audit to check that your mobile, fixed and data services are aligned with the LCA Telecommunications Plan.	To check you are on the LCA Telecommunications plan have your Account Number, Service Number and a copy of your invoice and call Telstra 1800 730 065
58 <i>T</i> <i>Annual</i> <i>PP incl.</i>	Tele - communications Services Plan Review	An audit to check that your mobile, fixed and data services are on the most cost effective available plan.	Call Church Services on 1300 CHURCH (248 724)
59 <i>C</i> <i>Annual</i> <i>BP</i> <i>PP incl.</i>	Web Site Review	An audit of your web site.	Is it protected? Is it backed up? Are the latest security patches installed? Are privacy issues managed?
60 <i>S</i> <i>Annual</i> <i>BP</i> <i>PP incl.</i>	Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	ICT systems checked.	Anti-Virus up to date? Backups occurring? Licenses are up to date? Passwords changed regularly? Check LCA and District Web Sites for National and District ICT policy. Some national policy has been recently developed that has implications for all congregations.
61 <i>S</i> <i>Annual</i> <i>BP</i> <i>PP incl.</i>	Postage and Logistics	An audit to check you have an account with Australia Post	Call Church Services on 1300 CHURCH (248 724) Are you enjoying the discount rate available for Churches in the LCA for mail and parcels?



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Please use this page for your own notes or checklists.



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Congregation and Parish Email Addresses

Item Specs	Description	Explanation	Notes
62 C Annual BP PP incl.	Congregation/ Parish email address diversion	Conduct an audit to ensure that the Congregation or Parish email listed on LAMP is diverted to an active email address.	NOTE: The information about your congregation that is available on www.lca.org.au is sourced of the congregation's LAMP information. It is therefore important that the email is being diverted to an active address in order to be contactable to new members.
63 C Annual BP PP incl.	Key Office Holder email addresses	Create email addresses for the Congregation or Parish Key Office Holders.	<p>Much information is transferred electronically in the current Internet age.</p> <p>It is good practice, therefore, to have Office Holder email addresses available for incoming Key Office holders to use, in case they do not have their own.</p> <p>There are many free email providers of varying quality.</p> <p>The suggested format for an email is, for example, "chairperson.stlukescrownsnest@gmail.com".</p> <p>Gmail lets you setup automatic forwarding at no cost – here is a link on how to do it: http://support.google.com/mail/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=10957.</p> <p>District Administrators and staff will be able to help you in this process.</p>



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Congregation Administration Checklist