

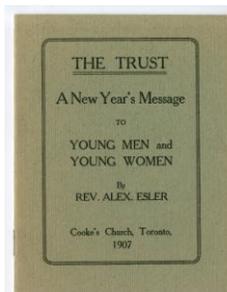


~ Scanning Your Congregation's Records ~

It is recommended that microfilming and/or digitizing your records be done professionally as a way of backing up your congregation's important and historical records. This can be done quickly, and for a relatively low cost, through the Presbyterian Church Archives (see our "Microfilming/Digitizing Fact Sheet" for more information). That being said, you may be in a situation where you are thinking of scanning and digitizing your records on your own. This can be a worthwhile project. However it can also be a more challenging and time-consuming one as well. To help ensure your project is as successful as possible, we have provided the following guidelines that we hope will be of some help.

Guidelines for Scanning

- Gather together the records you wish to scan and make a list. This will help guide your scanning project.
- It is logical to start with the oldest record, however, we encourage you to start with something relatively new. As you begin the project, you may find that you have to re-scan your work one or more times until you find a process that works for you and ensures the best possible product. By using a newer, less fragile book or register you will save wear and tear on the older items in your collection.
- Records should be scanned at the very least at 300dpi (anything lower than this and the image quality becomes poor)
- When scanning a page, don't crop the edges, rather scan a little extra space or border around the page so that the digital version will readily show that the whole page has been copied.
- Computer technology is constantly changing. To help ensure your digitized records don't become obsolete in 5 or 10 years, we encourage you to digitize them using the PDF/A file format, which is an "archival" version of the widely used PDF format.
- Create a separate file for each individual book, register or document; in other words a Session Minute book containing 100 pages should ideally be digitized as one, multi-page file rather than divided into 4 or 5 smaller files. This will help prevent sections of the book from becoming "lost".
- Please use a standard naming convention for the files that will clearly express what the file contains, for example:
 - St Andrews Church – Anytown Ontario – Marriage Register 1912-1946
 - St Andrews Church – Anytown Ontario – Property Deed 1887
 - St Andrews Church – Anytown Ontario – Annual Report 1945



Other considerations when scanning and digitizing your congregation's records:

- Keep a "back-up" copy of the scanned files on a USB stick, or back-up drive, and store it offsite in a safe and secure location separate from the originals. If anything should then happen to the originals, ie. a fire at your church, you can be assured that the digital copy will still exist.
- One possible location we suggest is a safety deposit box.
- Remember that some of these documents such as church registers and historic membership rolls contain personal information. Please ensure that the digital copy you make is kept in a safe and secure location at all times, and that no one unauthorized will have access to it.



For more information please contact Ms. Kim Arnold (Archivist) or Mr. Bob Anger (Assistant Archivist) at 416-441-1111, or toll-free at 1-800-619-7301, or by email at karnold@presbyterian.ca or banger@presbyterian.ca.