

How to Write for Follen Friday Update

Follen Friday Updates include short notices (**150 words maximum**) to inform Follen members and friends of events at Follen and in the wider community.

Submit items using the [form](#) on Follen's website. **The deadline is 9 am Friday.**

Items are grouped in these categories:

- Worship and Music
- Follen Community Events
- Children and Youth
- Actions and Activities
- In the Broader Community
- Calendar (always a link to the full online calendar)

Word Limit

Busy parishioners want to scan the update quickly. Short, precise items and a scannable format give people a frustration-free way to stay informed. Limit your items to 150 words total (but shorter is better!).

A simple and complete update item includes:

- What this is
- When and where
- Why you should be interested
- Link to more information

Publication Limit

All items submitted for publication will run a maximum of three editions.

Using the Online Form

The online text [form](#) is extremely simple. Draft your item in a word processor to check the word count, then copy and paste into the form.

Subject

Readers scan headlines to see what interests them. Be direct and active. Puns, word play, hints, etc., are less likely to work.

Which might you read?

- Help! Volunteer Shortage May Curtail Fair Offerings or All Hands on Deck for the Fair!
- Don't Miss a Great Concert or Follen Soloists to Perform Gershwin February 14

Note: you can often omit words such as "a," "an," "the," "on," etc., without losing clarity.

Body Copy

Cover the basics: Be sure to include who, what, where, and when.

Include a next step. If readers are interested, what should they do next?

Rely on links. Does your action team have a page on follen.org? Write a longer version of your item, including what you wanted to say but couldn't fit in, and post it there. (Communications Administrator [Cindy Gallagher](#) can help you.)

Tip: Instead of the enigmatic “Click [here](#) for more information,” say “Learn more on the [Sunday’s Bread page](#)”

Style Guide Helpers

Here are a few items from the Follen style guide that will help the staff assemble the update:

Spacing

- Use one space between sentences.

Dates and times

- Times of day: use am or pm. Omit minutes when not needed. *Examples:* 7–9 pm or from 7:30 to 9 pm, but not 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm.
- Keep dates simple: February 14, not 14th February or the 14th of February; October 2014, not October, 2014 or October of 2014.

Numbers

- Spell out one through nine. Use numerals for 10 and higher. *But:* 9 Every St., page 4, we’re #1
- Phone numbers: 781-862-3805 (no parentheses)
- Use the symbol for percent, including in running text.

Acronyms

Spell out titles in first use, followed by acronyms: Social Justice Action Team (SJAT). You may use an acronym in a headline and followed by the spelled-out version in the body of the item.

Examples:

Save the Date! The Membership Committee is hosting a WELCOME Breakfast on Sunday, September 28, at 9:15 am in the Community Center. EVERYONE who attends Follen is invited! RSVP to [Catherine Collins](#).

Open House at "The Parsonage" Claire and Ben would love to have you come by for an informal social gathering at their home at 20 Spring St. in Lexington, September 27, 1–4 pm. All are welcome, children expected! No need to RSVP. Contact [Claire](#) with questions. Note: park on Grassland St. or Hudson Rd. Two accessible parking spaces available in front of the house.