



An Extended Guide · No. 1922

Microsoft Publisher Has Been Retired — Rescuing Old Newsletters & Flyers

Convert your .pub files and
pick a replacement, step by step

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! The headline, plainly

Microsoft Publisher has been retired. As of October 1, 2026 it's no longer part of Microsoft 365, and subscribers can't open or edit .pub files in Publisher anymore. If you've made church bulletins or club newsletters in it, this guide gets your old files out safely and sets you up with a replacement.

Publisher is gone — let's rescue your work

For years, Microsoft Publisher was the go-to for bulletins, flyers, and newsletters. Microsoft has now retired it. The important thing isn't the retirement — it's making sure your existing .pub files don't get stranded. Let's handle that calmly.

I'm Bill, from Bill's Home Tech in Portage County. A lot of the folks I help keep a church or club going on Publisher, so this one hits home. We'll save your old files, then pick a replacement that fits how you actually work.

There's no need to panic. Your .pub files aren't destroyed — but the program that opens them is going away, so the move is to convert them while it's still easy. That's what we'll do.

The whole guide, on one page

If you remember only these points, your newsletters are safe.

- ❑ As of October 1, 2026, Publisher is no longer included with Microsoft 365.
- ❑ The older boxed Publisher that came with Office 2021 loses support on October 13, 2026.
- ❑ Your .pub files still exist — but you'll want to convert them before Publisher disappears from your computer.
- ❑ Convert each important file to PDF (to keep a fixed copy) and to Word (to keep editing it).
- ❑ For future bulletins and flyers, Word, PowerPoint, or free tools can take over.
- ❑ Do the conversions now, while you still have a working Publisher open.

✓ Convert while you still can

The single most important move is to open your .pub files and save them in another format now, before Publisher is gone. After that, the pressure's off.

What exactly is happening, and when

Let's put the dates and facts on the table so there's no confusion.

What	When
Removed from Microsoft 365	Oct 1, 2026
Boxed Publisher (with Office 2021) support ends	Oct 13, 2026

If you have Publisher through a Microsoft 365 subscription, from October 1, 2026 it's no longer provided, and you can no longer open or edit .pub files in Publisher. If you have the one-time Publisher that came with Office 2021, it stops being supported on October 13, 2026 along with the rest of that Office.

★ **Not sure which Publisher you have?**

Open Publisher (while you still can) and check File > Account, or tell me how you got Office. Text me at (330) 200-8042 and I'll tell you exactly where you stand and how long you've got.

Your .pub files aren't lost — yet

The retirement is about the program, not your documents. But there's a catch worth understanding.

A .pub file is just a file sitting on your computer; retiring Publisher doesn't delete it. The problem is that .pub is a format almost nothing else opens neatly. Once Publisher is gone, those files become hard to get into — like having a document in a language no remaining program speaks fluently.

That's why the move is to convert them now, while Publisher still works, into formats everything can open: PDF and Word. Do that, and the retirement becomes a non-event for you.

! The window matters

Converting is easy while you still have a working Publisher. It gets much harder afterward. If you have important .pub files, treat this as a this-month task, not a someday one.

Step one: save each file as a PDF

A PDF is a fixed, picture-perfect copy that opens on any device forever. It's the safety copy you want first.

- ❑ Open the .pub file in Publisher while you still can.
- ❑ Click File, then Save As (or Export).
- ❑ Choose PDF as the file type.
- ❑ Give it a clear name and save it to your Documents folder.
- ❑ Open the new PDF to confirm it looks right.

A PDF preserves exactly how your bulletin or flyer looked — fonts, pictures, layout, all frozen in place. It's perfect for printing, emailing, or keeping as a permanent record. What it can't do is let you easily edit the wording later — which is why we also do step two.

✓ PDF first, always

Even if you never edit a file again, a PDF copy means you'll always be able to open and print it. Make PDFs of every .pub you'd be sad to lose.

Step two: get an editable copy too

If you'll keep updating a bulletin or newsletter, you need a version you can still change. That means getting the content into Word.

Publisher and Word aren't identical, so a .pub won't pour perfectly into Word at the click of a button. The reliable approach is to open your .pub, copy the text and pictures, and paste them into a Word document, then tidy the layout. It takes a little patience but preserves your content in a format you can keep editing.

For simple, mostly-text newsletters this works well. For heavily designed layouts, you may rebuild the look in Word or another tool — but your words and images carry over, which is the hard part saved.

★ I'll help move your newsletters over

Transferring a church bulletin or club newsletter from Publisher into something you can keep using is exactly the sort of patient project I enjoy. We'll get your content safely across. Call (330) 200-8042.

Choosing what to use instead

For future bulletins and flyers, several tools can take Publisher's place. Here's the honest rundown.

- **Microsoft Word:** handles most newsletters and flyers well, and you likely already have it. Microsoft's own recommendation for many Publisher jobs.
- **Microsoft PowerPoint:** surprisingly good for one-page flyers and posters, with easy drag-and-drop placement.
- **Microsoft Create:** a free library of ready-made templates for flyers, newsletters, and bulletins you can fill in.
- **Free Canva:** a friendly online design tool many clubs and churches have happily moved to.
- **LibreOffice Draw:** free, and can even open some .pub files directly.

There's no single right answer — it depends on how fancy your layouts are and what you're comfortable with. For most bulletins, Word with a template is the gentlest landing.

✓ Start with what you know

If Word is familiar, start there with a newsletter template. You'll be productive immediately, and you can always try a design tool later if you want more flair.

A free tool that opens .pub files directly

Here's a handy fact for stragglers: a free program can open many .pub files even without Publisher.

LibreOffice is a free office suite (we have a whole guide on it), and its Draw program can open a lot of .pub files directly. That makes it a useful rescue tool if you find an old .pub after Publisher is already gone, or if you just want a free way to crack them open.

It won't be a flawless match for complicated designs, but for getting at your text and pictures, it's a genuine lifeline — and it costs nothing. Download it only from libreoffice.org.

! A rescue tool, not a perfect copy

LibreOffice Draw opens .pub files but may shift fancy layouts a little. Treat it as a way to recover your content, then tidy up — not as a pixel-perfect stand-in.

Working through a pile of old files

If you've got years of bulletins in .pub form, don't try to do them all at once. Here's a calm way through.

- ❑ Gather your .pub files into one folder so you can see them all.
- ❑ Make PDFs of every one first — that's the quick safety pass.
- ❑ Then, for the few you'll actually keep editing, make Word copies too.
- ❑ Don't bother converting ancient files you'll never touch again — a PDF is plenty.
- ❑ Back up the whole folder, originals and conversions, somewhere safe.

The goal isn't to lovingly rebuild every old flyer. It's to make sure nothing you care about becomes unopenable. PDFs for everything, Word copies for the living documents — that's the smart division of effort.

★ A big pile? Let's split the work

If there are dozens of old files, I can help you batch through them efficiently — PDFs for all, editable copies for the ones that matter. Call (330) 200-8042 and we'll make short work of it.

Two kinds of readers, two sets of needs

How much you need to do depends on whether you still create in Publisher or just occasionally receive a .pub. Find yourself below.

If you make bulletins or newsletters regularly

You keep a church bulletin, a club newsletter, or flyers going in Publisher. You need both your old files rescued and a comfortable new home for future ones.

- Convert your existing .pub files to PDF and Word now.
- Pick a replacement — Word with a template is the easiest start.
- Rebuild your regular template once in the new tool, then reuse it.
- Keep your originals backed up until you're fully settled.

If you only get a .pub now and then

Someone emails you a .pub occasionally and you just need to read or print it. You don't create in Publisher yourself.

- You don't need a replacement program at all.
- Ask the sender to send a PDF instead — easiest for everyone.
- Or open the .pub in free LibreOffice Draw to read it.
- Print it to paper or save it as a PDF for your records.

★ Which one are you?

Whether you run a whole newsletter or just get the odd .pub, tell me and I'll set you up with exactly what you need — no more, no less. Call (330) 200-8042.

Rebuilding your regular bulletin once

If you put out the same bulletin every week or month, you only have to build the new template once. Then it's easy forever.

In Word (or your chosen tool), set up your masthead, your usual sections, and your favorite fonts one time, and save it as your template. Each week you open that, change the contents, and you're done — just like you did in Publisher.

Microsoft Create and Canva both offer ready-made newsletter templates you can start from instead of building from scratch, which can be a lovely shortcut. Pick one close to your style and make it yours.

✓ Build it once, coast after

The first new bulletin takes the most effort because you're making the template. After that, every issue is quick. The hump is only at the start.

Printing and sharing without Publisher

Good news: printing and emailing your bulletins is actually easier in the replacements, because PDF is so universal.

Whatever tool you move to, you can save the finished bulletin as a PDF and send that to the printer, the congregation, or the club. A PDF looks identical everywhere and prints cleanly, which sidesteps the old headaches of sending a .pub nobody could open.

For a printed run, your local print shop will happily take a PDF — in fact they prefer it. For email, attach the PDF and everyone can open it, on any device, no special program needed.

✓ Send PDFs, not source files

Always share the PDF, not the editable Word or Canva file. It looks right for everyone and can't be accidentally changed in transit.

Back up before and after you convert

Years of bulletins are worth protecting. A simple backup keeps your work safe through the whole transition.

Before you start converting, copy your folder of .pub files to a USB drive or an online folder, so the originals are safe no matter what. After you've made your PDFs and Word copies, back those up too. Then you have belt-and-suspenders protection.

This matters especially for a church or club, where the newsletter is part of the record. Our backup guides show easy, set-and-forget ways to keep everything safe.

★ Let's protect the whole archive

If your congregation or club has years of bulletins, I'd hate to see them lost in the shuffle. I can help you convert and back up the whole archive properly. Call (330) 200-8042.

Common mistakes to avoid

A few predictable slip-ups cause the only real trouble here. Skip these and you're fine.

- **Waiting too long** and losing easy access to .pub files once Publisher is gone.
- **Converting only to PDF** for files you'll need to keep editing — you also need a Word copy.
- **Trying to convert everything perfectly**, when a PDF is plenty for old files.
- **Not backing up** before starting.
- **Sending .pub files to others** who can't open them — send PDFs instead.

✓ PDF everything, Word the keepers

The simple rule that avoids every mistake: make a PDF of every file, and a Word copy only of the ones you'll keep editing. Done.

Getting comfortable with the new tool

A new program feels foreign for a week, then familiar. Here's how to ease the change.

Pick one replacement and give it a fair trial on a real bulletin, rather than sampling several at once. Lean on templates so you're arranging content, not designing from a blank page. And keep this guide and your old PDFs beside you for reference.

You built skills in Publisher; most of them carry straight over — placing text, adding pictures, choosing fonts. You're learning new buttons, not a new craft. That makes it easier than it first appears.

★ A gentle first session helps

If moving to Word or Canva feels daunting, a single patient walk-through usually breaks the ice. I'll get you comfortable with the new tool on your own real newsletter. Call (330) 200-8042.

Questions to ask yourself

A few answers point you to the right amount of effort.

Q: Do I still create newsletters, or just receive them?

Creators need to convert files and pick a replacement; receivers just need to open the occasional .pub, which free LibreOffice Draw can do.

Q: Which old files will I keep editing?

Those get a Word copy as well as a PDF. The rest only need a PDF for safekeeping.

Q: How fancy are my layouts?

Simple, text-heavy bulletins fit Word nicely; highly designed pieces may suit Canva or PowerPoint better.

Q: Do I have a backup of my .pub files?

If not, make one before converting anything. It's the safety net for the whole project.

✓ Match effort to value

Spend your effort on the newsletters that matter and the ones you'll keep making. Don't labor over files you'll never open again — a PDF retires them gracefully.

This is manageable, truly

If losing Publisher feels like losing a trusted tool, that's a fair feeling — and this is still very doable.

Plenty of churches and clubs have made this exact move and come out fine, often finding the new tools easier in some ways. Your years of work aren't lost; they're just moving to a format that will outlast any single program.

Take it one file and one step at a time. Rescue what matters, pick a comfortable replacement, and your bulletin will keep going strong — the way it has all along.

★ You won't do it alone if you don't want to

This is precisely the kind of change where a patient hand makes all the difference. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042 and we'll carry your newsletters into their next chapter together.

A few more worth answering

These come up a lot once folks start the move.

Q: Will my .pub files be deleted?

No. Retiring Publisher doesn't delete your files. The issue is that few programs open .pub, so convert them to PDF and Word while you still can.

Q: Can I still open a .pub after Publisher is gone?

Not easily in Microsoft's apps. But free LibreOffice Draw can open many .pub files, so it's a useful rescue tool for stragglers.

Q: What does Microsoft recommend using instead?

For many Publisher jobs, Microsoft points to Word and PowerPoint, plus its free Microsoft Create template library. Other folks like Canva.

Q: Do I have to switch today?

Converting your existing .pub files should be done soon, while Publisher still works. Choosing and learning a replacement can follow at your own pace.

★ Still have questions?

Every church and club's setup is a little different. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042 and I'll give you advice tailored to yours.

Your simple action plan

Here's the whole project as a short, calm to-do list.

- ❑ Back up your folder of .pub files.
- ❑ Open each important one and save it as a PDF.
- ❑ For the ones you'll keep editing, also copy the content into Word.
- ❑ Pick a replacement tool for future newsletters (Word is a fine start).
- ❑ Rebuild your regular bulletin template once in the new tool.
- ❑ Back up your new files, and share finished bulletins as PDFs.

Work down that list over a week or two and you'll be fully transitioned, with nothing stranded and a comfortable new way to keep publishing.

✓ One step at a sitting

You don't have to do the whole list in a day. One calm step per sitting gets you there without any stress.

Common Questions

The questions I hear most about Publisher's retirement.

Q: Is Microsoft Publisher really going away?

Yes. As of October 1, 2026 it's no longer included with Microsoft 365, and subscribers can't open or edit .pub files in it. The boxed version with Office 2021 loses support October 13, 2026.

Q: What should I do with my old .pub files?

Convert them while Publisher still works: save each as a PDF for safekeeping, and copy the content into Word for any you'll keep editing. Back everything up.

Q: What can I use instead?

Word and PowerPoint handle most bulletins and flyers, Microsoft Create offers free templates, and Canva is a popular friendly option. Free LibreOffice Draw can even open .pub files.

Q: Will I lose my newsletters?

Not if you convert them now. The files aren't deleted — the program to open them is going away, so move your work to PDF and Word while it's easy.

★ Let's rescue your work

Helping folks carry years of bulletins safely past Publisher's retirement is genuinely satisfying work. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042 and we'll do it together.

The bottom line

Here's the whole thing in a nutshell.

Publisher is retired, but your newsletters don't have to go with it. While you still have a working copy, save your .pub files as PDFs, and copy the ones you'll keep editing into Word. Then pick a replacement — Word is the easiest start — and rebuild your regular bulletin once.

Do that and the retirement becomes a small chore rather than a loss. Your work is preserved, your bulletin keeps coming out, and you're on a tool that will be around for the long haul.

✓ Convert now, relax later

The one time-sensitive piece is converting your .pub files while Publisher still opens them. Handle that soon and everything else can happen at your leisure.

You don't have to do this alone

You just have to remember that a friendly, patient person is one call away.

I hope this guide made rescuing your Publisher files and choosing a replacement feel a little less daunting and a lot more doable. Keep it in a drawer with your other home papers, come back to a page whenever you need it, and don't worry about memorizing anything.

When you'd rather have a hand, that's exactly what I do. I come to your home, work at your pace, and never make you feel rushed or silly for asking. A first visit is a flat \$99, and for the parts that don't need me on-site — installing Office, sorting out a sign-in, setting up a document — I can often help right on your screen for \$49. Every visit comes with a 30-day, come-back-free guarantee.

★ Bill's Home Tech — real help, close to home

Call or text me at (330) 200-8042, or visit BillsHomeTech.com. Serving Atwater and all of Portage County. 30+ years of patient, plain-English tech help — and if you're ever not 100% happy with a visit, I'll make it right or refund it. That's a promise. — Bill

What's Happening, and When

The two Publisher retirement dates

	What	When
Out of Microsoft 365	Oct 1, 2026	No .pub editing
Boxed (Office 2021)	Oct 13, 2026	Support ends
Your .pub files	Not deleted	Convert them now

The program is retiring -- your files are safe if you convert them.

Rescue Your Files in Four Steps

While Publisher still opens them



PDF everything; make Word copies of the ones you'll keep editing.

What to Use Instead

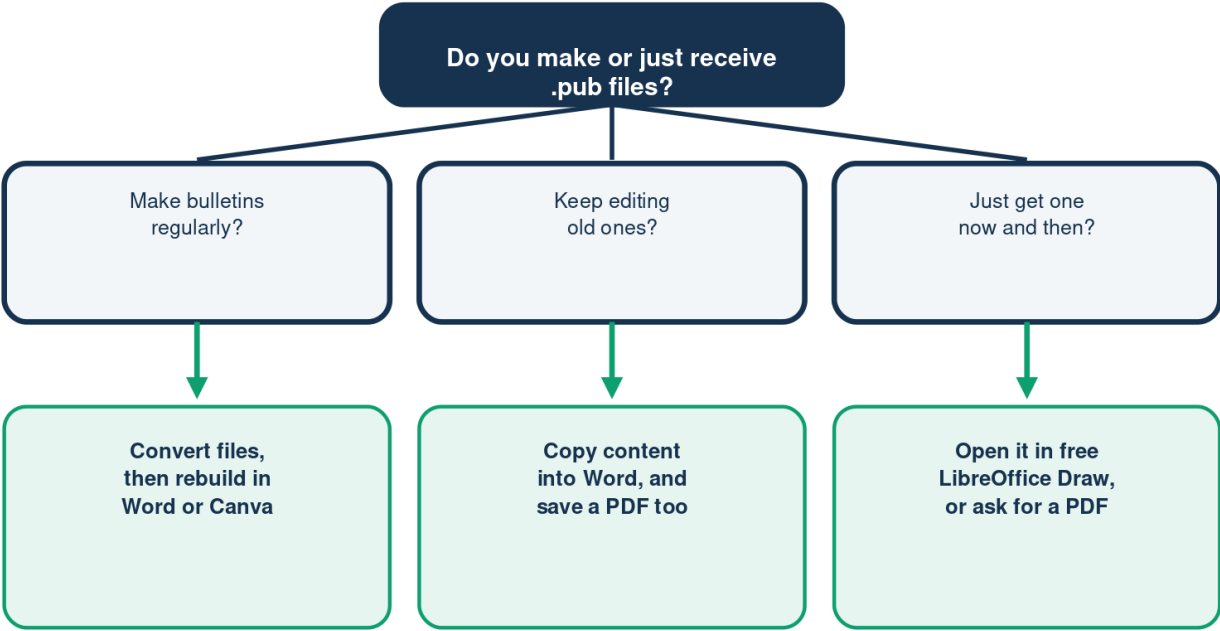
Replacements for future bulletins

	Good for	Cost
Word	Most newsletters	You may own it
PowerPoint	Flyers, posters	You may own it
Microsoft Create	Templates	Free
Canva	Fancy designs	Free option
LibreOffice Draw	Opens .pub!	Free

For most bulletins, Word with a template is the gentlest start.

What Do You Need to Do?

Depends on how you use Publisher



Convert while Publisher still works -- it's much harder afterward.

Illustration - a schematic, not to scale. Your setup may differ.



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— Bill

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Bill can screen-share and fix many things remotely — a flat \$49, free for Support Plan members.



A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill.

I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that comes from using these guides. Thanks for reading, and stay safe out there.

— *Bill*



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