

WOODCLIFF UNITED CHURCH SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

This Policy represents the intention of Woodcliff United Church (WUC) with regard to engagement on social media channels. For the purpose of this policy, social media refers to online communities and networks designed for social interaction through posts, comments, and direct messaging.

This policy applies to:

- staff, volunteers, affiliates and designates, and social media activity carried out on behalf of WUC.
- social media accounts created, managed and administered by WUC and its designates.
- all content shared on social media: written information, photographs, video and audio recordings.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND BELIEF

Interacting with people and building communities was at the heart of Jesus' ministry. In the digital age of today, WUC recognizes the importance of having an online presence for ministry with its church family and beyond. Social media channels offer digital gathering places to build relationships, share faith, offer support, educate and foster spiritual growth. Online communities and networks provide immediate and far reaching opportunities to promote WUC's mission, vision and values and the programs, ministries and other services it provides. In its use of social media, WUC is committed to ensuring that what is shared on behalf of WUC is respectful, authentic, honest and representative of our values as a faith community. We acknowledge that while there are significant benefits to using social media, there also are associated risks and we have a responsibility to reduce those risks through establishing policy and guidelines and educating our users.

POLICY

This policy adheres to The United Church of Canada Social Media Guidelines and Duty of Care program.

Authorization for Access

- Access to social media channels is held with and administered by staff and their designates.
- Access or membership to closed groups on social media will be administered by the staff member or designate (site administrator) responsible for each channel.

Conduct

- All social media communications must be professional, responsible and respectful.

- Social media posts will abide by, and represent the mission, vision and values of WUC and the broader work of The United Church of Canada.
- Social media will not be used for confidential matters, sensitive information, conflicts and grievances.
- Material shared on social media will abide by the WUC Copyright Policy (please refer to the WUC Copyright Policy).

Privacy and Protection

- Privacy must be protected at all times. Personal information is not to be posted on social media channels (please refer to the WUC Privacy Policy for more information).
- Social media messaging with children in the Children's Ministry Program must be done in public areas of media channels (e.g. Facebook Wall).
- Private messaging is permitted between the Youth Ministry Coordinator or the Minister and youth in the Youth Ministry Program.
- Signed releases must be obtained for all photos, and video and audio recordings of identifiable persons used in social media by WUC. Copies of the releases will be kept in the WUC office for three (3) years.
- Financial transactions must not be conducted within social media channels. All online financial transactions must be done through secure online billing processes.

Oversight and Monitoring

- Social media account information (username, password) must be tracked and recorded by the Communications Committee and the Church Administrative Coordinator (CAC).
- Each WUC social media account must be monitored by at least one designated staff or volunteer who will oversee and moderate the account for erroneous, unlawful, immoral or obscene activity, and be responsible for reporting, blocking, deleting or removing users who engage in such activity.
- Passwords for each social media account must be changed at least every twelve (12) months by the CAC or designate.

ADMINISTRATION

This Policy is administered by the Communications Committee and Council of WUC.

Approved by the Congregation at the 2019 Annual Congregational Meeting.

Date: _____

Signatures:

Council Chair

Council Secretary

REFERENCES

Executive of Alberta and Northwest Conference. (2014). *Social media policy for Alberta and Northwest Conference*. Retrieved from <https://albertanorthwestconference.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Social-Media-Policy-for-ANW-Conference.pdf>

Mason, J. (n.d.). *Social media policy draft*. Retrieved March 8, 2018 from <http://victoriapresbytery.org/social-media-policy-draft/>

The United Church of Canada. (n.d.) *Introducing the United Church of Canada duty of care: A program to strengthen the quality and integrity of United Church ministries*. Retrieved March 8, 2018 from <http://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/resources/introducing-duty-of-care.pdf>

The United Church of Canada. (n.d.). Privacy issues: Recordkeeping and archives. Retrieved March 7, 2018, from http://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/handbook_privacy-issues-archives-recordkeeping.pdf

The United Church of Canada. (2011). *Social media guidelines for people Involved in youth ministry in The United Church of Canada*. Retrieved from <http://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/resources/social-media-guidelines.pdf>

The United Church of Canada. (2018). *Social media in church ministry*. Retrieved from <http://www.united-church.ca/leadership/church-administration/social-media-church-ministry>

Woodcliff United Church Communications Committee (Structure Document)

Woodcliff United Church Duty of Care Committee (Structure Document)

Woodcliff United Church Duty of Care Policy

Woodcliff United Church Duty of Care Procedures

Woodcliff United Church Marketing, Communications and Public Relations Policy

Woodcliff United Church Policy for Creation, Revision, Approval, and Removal of Policies

Woodcliff United Church Privacy Policy

Original Approval Date: March 17, 2019	Review Dates:	Next Review Date:
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GUIDELINES

Basic Social Media Principles

Influence - Focus your efforts on active and relevant social media sites.

Timeliness - Take your time to craft a meaningful response, within an appropriate response time.

Transparency - Your connection and role as spokesperson for the organization should be apparent.

Tone - Respond in a tone that is consistent with WUC's identity and character and creates a positive impression.

Sourcing - Where appropriate, cite your sources and include relevant outbound links.

Social Media Engagement Criteria

- Readers are welcome to respond, either agreeing or disagreeing with a post, but are expected to be respectful of the opinions of others.
- Those submitting a comment are wholly responsible for the content of their comments.

- Rants, rages, bashing, derogatory comments, profanity, comments that provoke discrimination or hatred of others, libelous or otherwise unlawful, abusive, immoral or obscene materials are not permitted and will be immediately removed from the site. If this is a repeated offence, the user will be barred from the site.
- Erroneous information will be addressed by a polite response giving factual information in the comments.
- If the posting is the result of an unhappy or negative experience, the site administrator (staff member or designate) may wish to rectify the situation and propose a reasonable solution. Depending on the nature of the “complaint”, this may be done in the comments or taken off-line.
- Responses by the site administrator (staff member or designate) to comments should take into consideration transparency, citing reputable sources, timeliness, and a professional and compassionate tone.
- Corporate followers or “friends” may be removed if their corporate identity is inconsistent with the values of The United Church of Canada (e.g., pornography site).
- When members of the public are invited to comment or respond to a social media site (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, blog), the policies regarding their conduct should be communicated on the social media site.
- If there is any question, uncertainty or concern about the proper nature of a post, the site administrator (staff member or designate) will seek guidance before posting from a leader or committee of WUC with the greatest expertise in that area.