


First Unitarian Universalist Church Columbus, Ohio		
Chapter: II. Congregational Responsibilities		Source: Chuck Wolfe, Communication Board Liaison and the 2012-2013 Communication Task Force
Title: Communication Policy		
Approved by: Board of Trustees		Date Approved: 2/27/13
Effective Date:		Date of Last Review:

Part I

Rationale

The responsibility for the policies and procedures of all church communications rests with the Board of Trustees and its designees. The media this policy includes, but is not limited to; newsletters, fliers, event promotions, website, social media and Sunday inserts. This policy also includes all press releases and media interview requests.

Policy

The content of all First Unitarian Universalist (First UU) communications should be consistent with the Mission, Vision and Objectives of First UU. All communications using the name or likeness of the First UU may operate only with the consent of the Board of Trustees or its designees.

This policy seeks to provide guidelines for ensuring appropriate, accurate, timely, and thorough communication within our church community, as well as to the community at large.

Accountability and Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees is accountable to the congregation; the ministerial staff and administrative staffs are accountable to the Board of Trustees. The Church Administrator under the supervision of the Senior Minister manages all official church communication.

Part II

Personal Permission Policy for Privacy of Adult Members

The First UU Church is authorized to publish member names, telephone numbers, email addresses and pictures (“information”) of members and friends of the church and their families (“members”) in congregation media, taking into account that some members do not want their information available to the community-at-large. For communication purposes, it is convenient for staff and recognized lay leadership to allow their names used freely in communications. Sometimes there will be pictures containing adults participating in church activities. It is the intent that names will not be associated with any picture, unless the subjects have granted verbal or written permission to the Church Administrator.

Submission of an announcement/event by a church member, including name and member information will constitute permission for publication of that information. Full names of individuals will be used in publications and other media unless a member specifically asks for their name to be withheld.

Members will have the option of having their names and contact information omitted from the directory.

Personal Permission for Privacy of Child/Teenage Members

The policy for person under the age of 18 is that no information (names, pictures, phone numbers, email addresses) will be published on any pages of the website unless written permission by a parent or guardian is granted and kept on file in the office. This permission is for only one event or one purpose. Children's names will be published in the congregational directory, unless their parent or legal guardian requests to have it withheld.

Removal of personal information from Church Media

Anyone who wants some, or all, personal information removed from the website or other publication should immediately contact the church office by email or by phone. The Office Manager will remove the information as soon as possible.

Publicity Policy

This policy is intended to support the various ways of publicizing information or events to the congregation and to the outside community. The Publicity Policy applies to all church-sponsored events. First UU does not accept any liability for publicity for events sponsored by renters of the facilities.

Internal Publicity

Internal publicity targets only the members and attendees of First UU. If a wider audience is desired, internal publicity methods can be used in conjunction with external publicity methods. For all methods, inclusion, sizes, design, are subject to the approval of the Church Administrator.

The following methods may be used for internal publicity:

- Newsletter articles
- Order of service announcements
- Email listservs
- Bulletin boards
- Information tables
- Website

External Publicity by Affiliated Groups

The Church Administrator's approval is required before publicizing events or information to the greater community. All items to be published are to be presented to the Church Administrator in a timely manner. This includes, but is not limited to, use of the following:

- Newspaper ads paid or free
- Paid and free radio community spots
- Handouts and flyers

Official Statements: Press and Media

In situations where church officials must make a statement to the press, the public, or to authorities, the Senior Minister and/or Board President are empowered to speak for First UU. If contacted by any outside entity regarding a statement, others shall refer them to the Senior Minister or Board President. If these persons are not available, no comment shall be made; it shall be stated that the Senior Minister or Board President will make contact as soon as possible.

Press Releases for Affiliate Groups

Press releases may be created and sent to media outlets to announce major activities, programs and news of the congregation. Recognized congregational groups may choose to design word process and send press releases to media outlets. It will be the responsibility of the Church Administrator to approve the content and format of press releases to be distributed to media. Press releases abide by all other policies set forth in this document, and it is expected that these groups will follow these policies.

Copyright Considerations

Any intellectual property copied to any communications or any publications or the author must release any original intellectual property written for a website page. A statement to that effect must accompany the material. Such material includes sermons, music, articles or pictures, whether they contain the copyright label or not. It is understood that a minister's sermons, printed or appearing on the website, remain the property of the minister and the congregation has no legal claim to them. Blanket permission can be granted for use of one type of material. If the author grants permission for copying of information, that statement will appear with the material and the permission supersedes the blanket copyright statement.

Photography

For purposes of these policies, "photography" includes both digital and film, still and video, and sound recordings. All comments regarding "photo," "negative," etc. is to be construed to include related media e.g. YouTube.

Many church members and friends have made significant contributions to the congregation by taking photographs documenting special events and people. The following policies are only intended to clarify the terms and conditions for photographic reproduction of events, members, or facilities under the auspices of the congregation.

Photographers who are members/friends of the congregation are welcome to take pictures at events with the limitation that the photos taken will not be used for commercial purposes. If the pictures are to be used for commercial purposes, advance written permission using a standard model release form must be obtained from those in the picture with a standard model release form, and from either the Senior Minister or Church Administrator. Pictures taken by outside photographers, such as newspaper, also require permission from the Senior Minister or Church Administrator and those in the pictures.

Those photographers, who choose to retain the originals, may make prints available at cost upon request by congregation members. The photographer will retain the rights to these pictures and will be responsible for informing recipients of the need to obtain the photographer's permission before

duplicating them; the photographer's name and telephone number will be on the prints. Unless there are specific reasons to withhold permission for duplication, as would be the case if the photograph were to be sold or used for a commercial purpose, permission would normally be granted.

If photographs taken by member/friend photographers are used in congregation publications, the photographers will be credited in the publication, if they choose to be, regardless of whether the photographs have been paid for by the congregation or donated for use by the congregation.

Restrictions

The following restrictions apply to all First UU communications:

- Endorsements: It is unacceptable to use the name or logo of the Unitarian Universalist Association in any way that implies, without advance permission from the Church Administrator, that First UU Church endorses, supports, or is affiliated with any product, service, or organization. Links from a hosted website to any website not affiliated with the church must not express or imply endorsement of the latter site's products, services, or other content, with the exception of links to officially endorsed websites.
- Advertising: Only church and church-sponsored activities may be advertised in church communications. Church-sponsored events may be advertised if such acknowledgement does not advertise a product or for profit service.
- Unlawful activities
- Commercial purposes not under the auspices of the church
- Personal financial gain
- Personal use inconsistent with that authorized by this Policy
- Uses that violate other First UU policies.

Newsletter Policy

The Church Administrator will serve as the Newsletter Editor, or will appoint and supervise a volunteer or staff member in the production of the newsletter. The primary function of the newsletter is to inform the congregation of church programs and activities.

The Newsletter Editor is granted the right to edit material that is too long or that contains incorrect grammar or spelling. The Newsletter Editor will consult with the Senior Minister and/or Board President before rejecting an article.

Any questions or problems concerning the newsletter should be addressed to the Church Administrator.

Brochures

All brochures or fliers produced for the church must be presented to the Church Administrator for final approval before distribution.

Directory of Members and Friends

Periodic publications of a directory of member and friend information are available to congregants at no cost. The directory includes name, address, phone, email, and if applicable, children's names. Please see the previous section on privacy considerations for information regarding the publication of this information.

Photos taken for the purpose of inclusion in a photo directory of the congregation are taken with consent and release of each individual or family. Please see the section regarding photographs for more information.

Part III

Electronic and Social Media Policy

Social Media Policy

These are to be used as guidelines for the content on the Facebook pages and other social media sites. The church owns all social media sites affiliated with First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus, Ohio. No individual may begin, or maintain, a social media site using the First UU name without approval of the Church Administrator. A staff member must have administrative access to all social media sites affiliated with the church.

The majority of First UU Facebook content will promote activities occurring for our members and visitors, and events in the Central Ohio area sponsored by Unitarian Universalist churches or UUA affiliated organizations. Due to the nature of social media sites in general, other types of content may include personal comments, photos, etc. from the page administrator, and people who have "liked" the page, and these customarily will relate to First UU, Unitarian Universalism, members of our congregation, etc.

Any logos, colors and typefaces should be consistent with First UU graphic guidelines and resemble the other media "branding" styles of First UU. Contact information should be prominently displayed, and links to the church's website should be easily accessible.

Photos should be of a presentable quality, but this is not as critical as the requirements for photos on the website. If photos of children are posted, they must comply with the photo guidelines contained in the Photography Policy. Last names, or contact information, of minors should never be posted.

The social media administrators should monitor the Facebook page for which they are responsible and remove any content that does not comply with the guidelines contained herein; habitual offenders may be banned from further contributions to the page. New content should be added by the social media administrator on a regular basis.

The Church Administrator will designate Facebook, Twitter, or other social media administrators. A social media administrator will have responsibility for monitoring content, and will have full authority to create, delete and maintain the content, provided that the content:

- Is maintained within the bounds of these policies

- Is consistent with the Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism
- Avoids slander, libel, violations of copyright, profanity, off-color humor, and advocacy of political candidates
- Does not reveal private personal information
- Does not advertise commercial businesses
- Presents information that is accurate and relevant

Website

The primary function of the church website is to make relevant church information easily available to church members, friends of the church and potential members. The website should also be easy to navigate and follow accessibility standards and be available for our entire community

Website Policy

The primary function of the church website is to communicate and promote the church and its philosophy and events to prospective and current members, news media, other religious organizations, and friends. The website should be easy to navigate and follow web accessibility standards so it is available for the entire church community. The First Unitarian Universalist Church, located in Columbus, Ohio, owns the website.

To ensure a unified image and high quality content, all website information will be directed through Church Administrator or his/her designated webmaster. Periodically, the Church Administrator, webmaster and interested parties will review the site for accuracy, currency, continuity, and compliance with these policies and procedures. These policies and procedures apply to all website pages of the church, including any special sites that have been approved to operate using the First UU name or hosted within the website domain.

Privacy of Visitors to our Websites

Personal information is collected from our visitors only on a voluntary basis, and may include name, address, phone number, and email address. This information is only used to process a request that has been placed by the visitor. Typically, this is in the form of a request for information.

The church website uses Piwik, an open source web analytics software package. Piwik uses “cookies”, which are stored on computers, to help analyze how users use the site, find the information they are seeking, and how we might improve the website for our community. Website activity tracked includes: IP address (to determine if you are a new visitor or not), what pages are visited, how long a visitor browses the website, what browser and operating systems are being used, screen resolution and so on. This is not collected as personal information, but looked at in aggregate to help us with planning and design.

Email Policy

Email lists support the needs of the congregation in communicating on a timely basis about issues of importance. Email can be used for general announcements, urgent announcements, and as a tool by committees for communicating with each other and reviewing documents and other material. It should

not be a substitute for face-to-face interaction or meetings, as it is not the proper forum for dealing with church issues.

Email communications utilizing the congregation database may be used to announce major activities or news of the congregation. Congregation-wide emails are only to be sent by the Senior Minister, or Church Administrator, or Office Manager. Congregation-wide emails will be reserved for communication regarding the most important First UU events or news. Many other opt-in email lists are maintained for purposes such as “church events updates,” specific group or committee communications, or special interest lists.

Blog Policy

First UU owns all blogs affiliated with the church. No individual may begin, or maintain, a blog using the First UU name without approval of the Church Administrator. A staff member, designated by the Church Administrator, must have access to all blogs, at all times.

Blogs will follow the same policies as set forth for email and social media policies.

YouTube Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for any content placed on, or embedded from, YouTube or other video or photo sharing sites.

First UU owns all YouTube videos affiliated with First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus. No individual may begin, or maintain, a YouTube, or other video sharing, account using the church’s name without approval of the Church Administrator. A staff member, designated by the Church Administrator, must have access to all YouTube accounts, at all times.

No videos of activities overseen by First UU should be posted on YouTube or similar sites without permission from the Church Administrator. Any video posted to a First UU affiliated account must obtain proper permission for any copyrighted music (including background music) or performance contained within it. Posted videos must also follow the Photography Policy.