



First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee
Staff Policies Manual
Communications Policies

02/12/21

Director of Administration
Communications Team

Purpose

The purpose of the First Church communication policies is to:

- Support Ends statement 5, “Promote Unitarian Universalism and our shared values in the world” and Ends Statement 8, “Create accessible, courageous and innovative welcome to people who might find a sense of belonging and a spiritual home with us.”
- Ensure clear, consistent, and accurate communications to all members, visitors, newcomers, and the general public.
- Ensure all communications are appropriate within the context of the First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee’s community, and are in line with our Values, Mission, and Ends.

Content Policies

1. Promotion and announcements of church events and church-sponsored events only are accepted. While we would like to be able to allow the announcement of non-church events in our publications, the sheer number and variety of such announcements makes such a practice unfeasible. Our communications need to be focused on our numerous First Church programs. Information about non-church events of note may be posted on the “In the Greater Community” bulletin board in the main corridor and on our Facebook Group page.
2. Mass communication via digital (such as Constant Contact eblasts, Realm mail) or postal mail must be endorsed and approved by the staff lead of the group who would like the message sent. The Director of Administration oversees mass communications processes. This is intended for communication to a larger audience, such as all members, all church leaders or other large groups connected to First Church. Messages must follow brand guidelines, clearly state the group’s affiliation with First Church, and allow recipients to unsubscribe.
3. The Communications Team (Director of Administration, Office Manager, and Digital Outreach Coordinator) manage church publications and communications. Program Leads have final authority over content, after considering Comm Team input. Comm Team has final authority over methods used to communicate, after considering input from Program Leads.

4. Written permission must be obtained from a parent or legal guardian to post photographs or videotapes of children under age 18 on the congregation's social media accounts. Adults may ask to opt out of having their photos shared by requesting so. Permissions are documented in the database record of children registering for the religious education program and the record of adults who have become members in recent years. Download the photo request form (pdf): <http://2h92ys19cvmtcxv4q1ix439v-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Photo-Release-and-Consent-Agreement.pdf>
5. There are many ways to promote and educate the church community about events and programs. Currently, the most widely read are the weekly E-announcements with links to more detail on our website, our monthly Chanticleer e-newsletter, and Facebook and Instagram posts.

Weekly E-announcements

Our weekly email bulletin is one the best tools for promoting events, programs, and church needs. Content is intended to be current, **highlighting events within two weeks**. Rich in website links, it is designed to encourage readers to forward the email to friends and to interact with our website. It is distributed on Fridays.

Deadline: Thursdays at 9:00 a.m. E-announcements are emailed on Fridays.

Word Count Guideline: Please limit your announcement to 100 words. We can link to more information on the website.

Format: Events should have a title, date, time, location, contact information and brief description. Please reserve a room or schedule a Zoom event before submitting your e-announcement. All submissions are subject to editing.

Online Announcement Submission Form: <https://form.jotform.com/91695572335163>

Monthly Chanticleer E-Newsletter:

The First Church newsletter is distributed via email and is posted on our website. The Chanticleer is a great platform for informational articles and reporting about programs and celebrating their success. We recommend that major events be advertised beginning at least a month in advance, which means it is best to submit your first notice in time for the prior month's Chanticleer. Specific articles will not be published more than once.

Deadline: The third Monday of each month at 9:00 a.m.

Word Count Guidelines: Articles and announcements 250–300 words, advertisements 50–150 words.

Format: Events should have a title, date, time, location, contact information and brief description. Please reserve a room or schedule a Zoom event before submitting your newsletter article. All submissions are subject to editing.

Online Article Submission Form:

uumilwaukee.org/chanticleer-submission

Social Media Policies

This policy covers all our social media platforms (currently Facebook, Instagram, YouTube)

1. All material posted to social media represents First Church to the public and may be accessed by any user who is interested in the congregation.
2. The Digital Outreach Coordinator is the administrator of social media. Appointed staff members will serve as administrators and monitor the use of all social media and edit/delete as necessary according to the guidelines to maintain a positive public image.
3. Confidentiality of private information must be maintained. When sharing information from another person's Facebook page, do not share personal or sensitive information.
4. Copyrights must be respected. Copying other people's writing, music, videos, etc. is considered plagiarism, and such posts will be removed.
5. Postings will be removed by the administrator that contain any of the following: insensitive, inflammatory or offensive language; jokes or slanderous or harmful comments, whether in text form or image form, based on a person's gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, politics, age, or religion.
6. Personal attacks and attacks on the congregation are inappropriate and will be removed by the administrator.
7. Any content that violates or undermines our First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee's values, mission, or ends will be removed by the administrator.
8. Solicitations to support personal or organizational fundraisers are not permitted and will be removed.
9. Factually inaccurate postings will be removed by the administrator, particularly if they encourage conspiracy theories.
10. Any material that interferes in an election will be removed by the administrator. As a non-profit, we cannot have any material that interferes in an election on any of our official communications channels.
11. Personal affiliations should be noted by those posting comments. If the administrator notes postings where this information is not revealed, such postings are subject to removal.

Facebook & Instagram – Official Church Page

The church has one primary Facebook page: www.facebook.com/uumilwaukee.
and an Instagram page: <https://www.instagram.com/uumilwaukee/>

The Facebook page serves as a communication vehicle for First Church announcements, news, events, and other items that further the mission and Ends of First Church. You are welcome to participate in the conversation, following our social media policies.

If you'd like a church announcement or your First Church event posted, please contact the Digital Outreach Coordinator who administers the page for consideration.

Administrative privileges are granted to designated staff members.

Facebook - Closed Group

The church has one closed Facebook group: www.facebook.com/groups/UUMilwaukee.

This "closed group" is a place for First Church members and friends to have more discussions. You are welcome to share news, views, and other activities of interest to the First Church community.

"Closed" just means you need to apply first to become part of the group; then only other members of the group will see your posts. Once you join, you can directly post before an event (like a reminder & welcome) or pictures afterwards. To join, click this link:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/UUMilwaukee> . Click on "+Join Group" under the photo. You will receive approval in a day and you're in!

Administrative privileges are granted to designated staff members.

Posting privileges are granted to all members and friends and are subject to the policies outlined in this document.

Other Facebook Pages/Groups

Affiliated groups using the congregation's name and/or branding may wish to establish Facebook pages to communicate specific programs and/or establish identities to a broader audience than that served by a Facebook Group.

Establishing a Facebook page that uses the congregation's name and/or branding must be affirmed by the Digital Outreach Coordinator or Director of Administration.

Each page must be set up by a staff member using a congregational email address. The primary administrator will be designated by the sponsoring committee or group. There must be more than one administrator for each page, including at least one staff member.

The most current First Church branding must be used on all affiliated pages.

Primary administrators are responsible for conduct on their pages and will be responsible for deleting inaccurate or offensive posts or posts in violation of the policies outlined in this document. Staff members managing pages must communicate any violations of this policy, and remediation steps taken, to their supervisor and the DOC .

Other Communication Policies

Logo/Branding Guidelines: Branding is the impression First Church gives to the community and how others perceive us. The First Church logo is part of our brand identity, which provides a consistent look and feel for all communications. All communications to the public and groups in

the First Church community require the First Church logo. Please do not alter the design of the First Church logo.

The brand identity also includes colors, design elements, fonts, key messages, and images. For more information about how to use the First church brand identity, download branding guidelines (pdf):

uumilwaukee.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Branding-Guidelines.pdf

Event and Project Requests: If you think your event or project needs communication support beyond DIY tools (announcements, Chanticleer, Facebook Group), contact the Director of Administration or Office Manager 4-8 weeks prior to the event, depending on complexity. Your project or event request will be reviewed by the Communications Team. A communications plan will be developed based on the First Church communication levels.

- Bronze: DIY.
- Silver: Bronze plus some extra attention at the discretion of the Communications Staff.
- Gold: Needs longer lead time. At discretion of Communications Staff with input from a staff team, a minister, or program head. Involves a plan, with a meeting to discuss. It will have a number of connected activities over several months.

For more information, download Levels of Communication Service (pdf):

<https://uumilwaukee.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Levels-of-Comm-Service-11-6-18.pdf>

Website

Church-recognized groups and programs of the church may request to add copy to the official First Church website; they should not create a separate website. Contact the Director of Administration about updating current copy or adding information to the website.

YouTube

The congregation's official YouTube channel is:

www.youtube.com/channel/UCwWGfBuaOJdJAeqx5LE2Eg

- The channel is public and houses sermon and worship associate videos as well as other videos that highlight the congregation's mission, ends, and values.
- Administrative privileges are granted to designated staff members.
- The Office Manager administers the YouTube channel.

Media Relations

All First Church news and information communicated to the media through news releases, statements, tips, and reports, shall be initiated and approved in advance by the Director of Administration or Senior Minister. These communications will receive final authorization and approval from the Senior Minister or Associate Minister.

Any phone calls or emails from the media should be directed to the Director of Administration or Senior Minister to handle the response. If staff or lay leaders are approached by the media in-person, contact the Senior Minister or Director of Administration for permission to talk and direction. Note that it is acceptable to say “No, thank you.”

Spokespersons:

- First Church ministers are the only authorized spokespersons to communicate directly with members of the media on behalf the church.
- In situations where an employee is asked to comment as a representative of the First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee on an official policy or position on an issue, prior approval must be received from the Director of Administration or Senior Minister.

Crisis Communications

Communication concerning unexpected events or serious incidents (i.e., disaster at the church or event of church-related significance, death of a church leader, person involved in leadership or other significant church figure, event of church-related significance) must be channeled through the Director of Administration or Senior Minister. All crisis communications will receive final approval from the Senior Minister or Associate Minister.

Related Policies and Procedures

Board of Trustees policy 4.6.12 (1) which addresses asset protection and calls for communications policies to protect the congregation’s public image and credibility.

<https://uumilwaukee.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/FUSM-Approved-Board-Policies-2019.4.23-1.pdf>

Find links in the body of this document for: photo release form, announcement and Chanticleer copy submission forms, branding guidelines, levels of comm services.